

OHF FINAL REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Number: 012-131

Recipient: North Dakota Natural Resources Trust

Award Amount: \$138,850

Total Project Costs: \$300,095.12

Total OHF Funds Received: \$138,850



Goal of Project:

The goal of the "Livestock and Wildlife Dams - Wetlands Creation and Enhancement Project" was to create, enhance, conserve and restore wildlife habitat on private and public lands, to improve, maintain and restore water quality, soil conditions, plant diversity, animal systems and other stewardship practices to enhance ranching operations and to provide access to private and public lands for sportsmen and other outdoor enthusiasts.

Work Accomplished:

This project provided the partnership between the North Dakota Outdoor Heritage Fund, North Dakota Natural Resources Trust and nine separate landowners, including seven private ranchers, the Morton County Water Resources District and the North Dakota Game and Fish Department, in seven North Dakota counties to create and enhance valuable wetland habitats.

Fourteen (14) wetlands were created or enhanced covering 72.78 surface acres. The wetland development work included constructing and repairing earthen embankments, installing water control structure primary spillways, repairing and improving emergency spillways and seeding disturbed areas with grass seed. Several innovative materials and practices were implemented including the use of Pyramat25 Turf Reinforcement Mat in the emergency spillway on the Harmon Lake Wetland Project and the extensive use of Flexamat on the face of the earthen embankment on one of the dams on Fran Dobitz's ranch as armor to protect the dam and prevent erosion. Flexamat material was also used in the emergency spillway on the second wetland on Fran Dobitz's property to prevent soil erosion. Bentonite material was used in the dam on one of the wetlands on Dave Tenbroek's ranch to prevent water from seeping through the earthen embankment. Contractual Engineering services, including topography survey, construction design and construction management, were used in the enhancement of the Harmon Lake Wetland. Recognition signs of the funding provided by the North Dakota Outdoor Heritage Fund were erected on many of the wetland sites.

Project Results:

The creation and enhancement of 10 wetlands covering 67 surface acres developed on private land will supply water for livestock production for seven North Dakota ranchers, facilitate the enhancement of surrounding grassland habitat exceeding 4,000 acres and improve their ranching operations and ranch economics. Many wetland wildlife species populations will be improved by these new and enhanced wetlands sites and acres. Several of these wetland project sites are enrolled in the North Dakota Game and Fish Department's PLOTS Program and are open to public access.

Three wetlands covering 4.68 acres were created on Raab Wildlife Management Area (WMA), owned and managed by the North Dakota Game and Fish Department, in Stark County. Wetlands are a magnet for many wildlife species and these three wetlands will supply production and migration habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds and marsh birds. Other wildlife species including mammals, amphibians and reptiles will live in and around these wetlands. Raab WMA provides public access that includes hunting, bird watching and hiking in natural habitats and environment.

A 1.1-acre wetland situated on a tributary to Harmon Lake located on the Harmon Lake Recreation Area in Morton County was enhanced by this project. This wetland will help improve water quality in Harmon Lake, supply wetland wildlife habitat and a provide a scenic habitat feature along the bicycle and walking trail on the west section of the Recreation Area.

This project was completed approximately one year ahead of schedule and in line with the Budget for the project.

Budget:

Wetland Creations/Repairs: OHF Budget - \$125,000	OHF Actual - \$127,867.70
Wetland Creations/Repairs: NDNRT Budget - \$62,500	NDNRT Actual - \$63,928.00
Wetland Creations/Repairs: Landowner Budget - \$62,500	Landowner Actual - \$72,617.60
Wetland Creations/Repairs: Totals Budget - \$250,000	Totals Actual - \$264,413.30
Contracted Services: OHF Budget - \$13,850	OHF Actual - \$10,982.30
Contracted Services: NDNRT Budget - \$6,000	NDNRT Actual - \$4,706.70
Contracted Services: Totals Budget - \$19,850	Totals Actual - \$15,689.00
Staffing/Delivery: NDNRT Budget - (In-Kind) - \$7,850	NDNRT Actual - \$20,168.48
Total Project Costs: OHF Budget - \$138,850	OHF Actual - \$138,850
Total Project Costs: NDNRT Budget - \$68,500	NDNRT Actual - \$68,634.70
Total Project Costs: Landowner Budget - \$62,500	Landowner Actual - \$72,617.60
Total Project Costs: Staffing/Delivery Budget (In-Kind) \$7,850	NDNRT Actual - \$20,168.48
Total Project Costs: Budget - \$277,850	Actual - \$300,270.78

Under Contracted Services; OHF spent \$2,867.70 less than Budget. NDNRT spent \$1,293.30 less than Budget. In both cases the funds were used for Wetland Creations/Repairs. Under Wetland Creations/Repairs the Landowner Costs exceeded the Budget by \$10,117.60. This was a result of the OHF authorized funding being all spent before the final wetland creations work was completed and the landowner agreed to fund the balance of the work. NDNRT significantly under estimated the amount of In-Kind expenses necessary to deliver this project but was willing to absorb the extra expenses (\$12,318.48).

Value to North Dakota:

Developing, creating, enhancing, conserving and restoring wildlife and fish habitat on private and public lands is very important to ensure a bright future for hunting and recreation in North Dakota. Ensuring that ranchers who desire to retain grasslands as part of their livestock production operations is also very

important for wildlife populations, especially for migratory grassland birds which are experiencing steep declines in population numbers. The creation and enhancement of wetlands to facilitate better management of livestock herds on surrounding grasslands and supply water for the livestock is important to these ranchers and their livelihood. This project funded wetland habitat development on a relatively new Wildlife Management Area in Stark County. The WMA is open for public access and is popular with hunters and bird watchers. This project included enhancing a small wetland on the Harmon Lake Recreation Area in Morton County. This is a popular recreation area and is used by campers, fisherman, bicyclers, bird watchers and hikers. The project wetland is located near the bicycling/walking trail on the west portion of area and is a scenic stopping point to observe the water and whatever wildlife species may be using the wetland at the moment. Wetlands are among the most biologically productive biome systems on earth. The wetlands created and enhanced by this project will supply habitat for a large number of wildlife species, will help ranchers better manage their livestock herds and will provide public access for enjoyment of the state's natural resources.

