

# Outdoor Heritage Fund Grant Application

The purpose of the North Dakota Outdoor Heritage Fund is to provide funding to state agencies, tribal governments, political subdivisions, and nonprofit organizations to:

**Directive A.** Provide access to private and public lands for sportsmen, including projects that create fish and wildlife habitat and provide access for sportsmen;

**Directive B.** Improve, maintain, and restore water quality, soil conditions, plant diversity, animal systems and to support other practices of stewardship to enhance farming and ranching;

**Directive C.** Develop, enhance, conserve, and restore wildlife and fish habitat on private and public lands; and

**Directive D.** Conserve natural areas for recreation through the establishment and development of parks and other recreation areas.

## Exemptions

Outdoor Heritage Fund grants may not be used to finance the following:

- A. Litigation;
- B. Lobbying activities;
- C. Any activity that would interfere, disrupt, or prevent activities associated with surface coal mining operations; sand, gravel, or scoria extraction activities; oil and gas operations; or other energy facility or infrastructure development;
- D. The acquisition of land or to encumber any land for a term longer than twenty years; or
- E. Projects outside this state or projects that are beyond the scope of defined activities that fulfill the purposes of Chapter 54-17.8 of the North Dakota Century Code.

## Application Deadline

Applications for the first grant round cycle are due on **December 2, 2013 at 5:00 p.m. CST.** All information, including attachments, must be submitted by that date. See instructions below for submission information.

## Instructions

It is our intent to have this form available on line. However, until that on-line form is available we are asking that you submit your application as a Word document. Please download this Word document (available on the Industrial Commission/Outdoor Heritage Fund Program website at <http://www.nd.gov/ndic/outdoor-infopage.htm> ) to your computer and provide the information as requested. You are not limited to the spacing provided except in those instances where there is a limit on the number of words. After completing the application, save it and attach it to an e-mail and send it to [outdoorheritage@nd.gov](mailto:outdoorheritage@nd.gov) .Then submit the Word document as noted in the following paragraph.

Attachments in support of your application may be sent by mail to North Dakota Industrial Commission, ATTN: Outdoor Heritage Fund Program, State Capitol – Fourteenth Floor, 600 East Boulevard Ave. Dept. 405, Bismarck, ND 58505 or by e-mail to [outdoorheritage@nd.gov](mailto:outdoorheritage@nd.gov) . The application and all attachments must be received or postmarked by the application deadline. You will be sent a confirmation by e-mail of receipt of your application.

You may submit your application at any time prior to the application deadline. Early submission is appreciated and encouraged to allow adequate time to review your application and ensure that all required information has been included. Incomplete applications may not be considered for funding. Any item noted with an \* is required.

**Oral Presentation.** Please note that you will be given an opportunity to make a ten-minute Oral Presentation at a meeting of the Outdoor Heritage Fund Advisory Board tentatively scheduled for the week of January 13, 2014. These presentations are strongly encouraged.

**Open Record.** Please note that your application and any attachments will be open records as defined by law and will be posted on the Industrial Commission/Outdoor Heritage Fund website.

Name of Organization \* **Delta Waterfowl**

Federal Tax ID# \* **53-025-9796**

Contact Person/Title \* **Joel Brice/VP of Conservation Programs and Hunter Recruitment**

Address \* **1312 Basin Ave**

City \* **Bismarck**

State \* **North Dakota**

Zip Code \* **58504**

E-mail Address \* **jbrice@deltawaterfowl.org**

Web Site Address (Optional) **www.deltawaterfowl.org**

Phone \* **701-222-8857**

Fax # (if available) **701-224-1924**

List names of co-applicants if this is a joint proposal

**MAJOR Directive: (select the Directive that best describes your grant request)\***

Choose only one response

**Directive A.** Provide access to private and public lands for sportsmen, including projects that create fish and wildlife habitat and provide access for sportsmen;

**Directive B.** Improve, maintain, and restore water quality, soil conditions, plant diversity, animal systems and to support other practices of stewardship to enhance farming and ranching;

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**Directive D.** Conserve natural areas for recreation through the establishment and development of parks and other recreation areas.

**Additional Directive: (select the directives that also apply to the grant application purpose)\***

Choose all that apply

**Directive A.** Provide access to private and public lands for sportsmen, including projects that create fish and wildlife habitat and provide access for sportsmen;

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**Directive D.** Conserve natural areas for recreation through the establishment and development of parks and other recreation areas.

**Type of organization: (select the category that describes your organization)\***

State Agency

Political Subdivision

Tribal Entity

Tax-exempt, nonprofit corporation, as described in United States Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. § 501 (c))

**Project Name\*** North Dakota Hen House Project I

**Abstract/Executive Summary.** An Executive Summary of the project stating its objectives, expected results, duration, total project costs and participants.\* (no more than 500 words)

Since the annual Waterfowl Breeding Population and Habitat Survey began in the 1950s, waterfowl populations have fluctuated largely in response to drought cycles in the Prairie Pothole Region (PPR). With above average wetland counts and 5 million additional acres of nesting habitat in the U.S (Conservation Reserve Program—CRP), duck populations have been at or above the long-term average for nearly 20 years. During this time, hunters have been blessed with liberal hunting seasons and limits.

Unfortunately, drought is unpredictable and could return to the prairies at any time, limiting wetland habitat for nesting ducks. Continued loss and fragmentation of wetland and nesting habitat have only compounded the problem. Many hunters certainly remember the 1980s and early-1990s when duck seasons were short and waterfowl hunting participation declined severely. These periods of low waterfowl numbers and restrictive hunting regulations have been a major driver of waterfowl research, habitat restoration and innovation. One such innovation is Delta Waterfowl's Hen House (HH; artificial nest structure for mallards).

Like most waterfowl management techniques in the PPR, the goal of a HH program is duck production. Hen Houses enhance existing habitat by providing a safe place for mallards to nest. Nest success, the percentage of nest attempts that successfully hatch, typically ranges between 60 and 90 percent in HHs, well above typical nest success for mallards in North Dakota (< 20%). After nearly 5 decades of research, HHs have been found productive and cost-effective in nearly every location in North America where significant numbers of mallards nest. Delta Waterfowl currently has HH partnership programs throughout the PPR.

**With this proposal, Delta Waterfowl is requesting \$60,530 (\$65,030 total project cost) to establish 200 new Hen Houses (each with 10 year maintenance agreements) in North Dakota.** The Hen Houses would be installed in February 2015 and would be operational through the 2024 nesting season. Delta Waterfowl estimates these Hen Houses would produce over 400 additional mallards each year and nearly 4,500 over the course of the project. In combination with our other Hen House projects in North Dakota, over 1,000 mallards would be produced annually. This project would enhance wildlife habitat on both public and private lands, boost duck production in North Dakota, and provide an opportunity to work with private landowners on their property, where most ducks nest.

Project partners would include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and North Dakota Game and Fish Department who will provide assistance with landowner permission, potential Hen House locations and access to public lands.

**Amount of Grant request \$60,530**

**Total Project Costs \$65,030**

(Note that in-kind and indirect costs can be used for matching funds)

**Amount of Matching Funds \$4,500 (in-kind)**

**Certifications \***

X I certify that this application has been made with the support of the governing body and chief executive of my organization.

X I certify that if awarded grant funding none of the funding will be used for any of the exemptions noted on Page 1 of this application.

**Narrative**

**Organization Information – Briefly summarize your organization’s history, mission, current programs and activities. \***

Include an overview of your organizational structure, including board, staff and volunteer involvement. (no more than 300 words)

The Delta Waterfowl Foundation is a non-profit waterfowl conservation organization that was founded in 1911 by James Ford Bell, then owner of General Mills. Bell was a passionate waterfowl hunter that sought the best ways to manage and sustain duck populations. With the help of Aldo Leopold and Albert Hochbaum, Bell founded Delta’s prestigious waterfowl research program in 1938. For most of the last 75 years, Delta has been focused on waterfowl research and development of effective waterfowl management techniques. In the late 1990s, Delta began a chapter/membership program that has grown to include 300 chapters and over 46,000 members throughout North America, including nearly 1,000 in North Dakota. Delta’s mission is to efficiently conserve waterfowl populations and secure the future of waterfowl hunting.

Delta Waterfowl’s research program serves as a guide for our waterfowl management programming. Since 1993, Delta has been conducting waterfowl research in North Dakota, including studies on two significant Delta programs—predator management (targeted predator removal to increase duck production) and Hen Houses (mallard nest structures). These programs are now operational in key duck production areas of North Dakota and Delta will be expanding them as funding allows. Delta’s waterfowl hunter recruitment program is called First Hunt, and is our targeted effort to promote waterfowl hunting. First Hunt is primarily delivered by Delta chapters and includes mentored hunts, hunting information days, and outdoor expos.

Delta Waterfowl is governed by a Board of Directors and led by President Dr. Frank Rohwer, a distinguished waterfowl research scientist and passionate duck hunter. The Conservation Programs department, led by Joel Brice (VP of Conservation Programs and First Hunt), would be responsible for execution of this grant. Additional staff involved include Conservation Biologist Matt Chouinard and contractors who would be responsible for installation and maintenance of the Hen Houses.

**Purpose of Grant – Describe the proposed project identifying how the project will meet the specific directive(s) of the Outdoor Heritage Fund Program \***

Identify project goals, strategies and benefits and your timetable for implementation. Include information about the need for the project and whether there is urgency for funding. Please indicate if this is a new project or if it is replacing funding that is no longer available to your organization. Identify any innovative features or processes of your project.

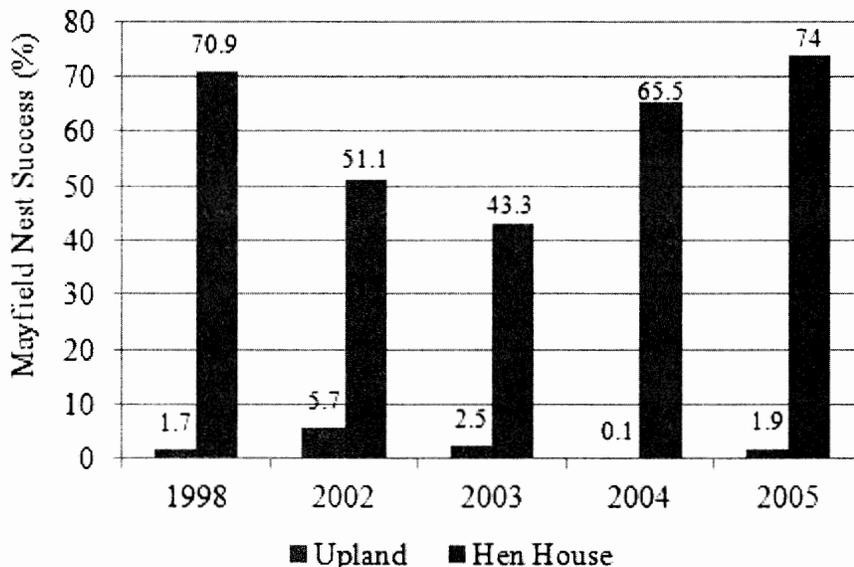
One of the most effective ways to boost duck production is through management techniques that improve nest success, the percentage of nests in which at least one egg successfully hatches. Fifteen to 20% nest success is believed necessary to sustain duck populations, but in many areas of the PPR, including portions of North Dakota, nest success has been consistently below this threshold. Reasons abound for these low reproductive rates—reduced nesting cover, fewer wetlands and changes in the predator community—and many of these factors will not improve significantly for generations. As a result, techniques that help improve nest success have the greatest impact on duck population growth.

In an effort to develop techniques with potential to increase duck production, Delta Waterfowl began research on mallard nest structures in 1991. Early success led Delta to label these structures “Hen Houses” (HH). Also called nest tunnels or nest cylinders, HHs are erected on a post above a wetland (Figure 1), safe from many terrestrial predators including badgers, coyotes, red fox, and striped skunk. A string of Delta HH research projects—including nine graduate research studies—were conducted from 1993 to 2008. In contrast to upland nests, nest success in HHs typically averaged over 60% and exceeded 90% in some areas.



Figure 1. A nesting mallard hen exits a Hen House.

Near Minnedosa, Manitoba, nest success for mallards nesting in upland sites averaged less than 3% from 2002-2005, while nest success in HHs ranged from 43 to 74 percent—a dramatic improvement (Figure 2). Hen Houses are consistently among the most cost-effective methods of producing additional ducks.



**Figure 2.** Mallard Mayfield nest success in upland sites and Hen Houses near Minnedosa, Manitoba (Coulton and Clark 2008).

The goal for this project is to enhance waterfowl nesting habitat by providing safer locations for mallard hens to nest. Delta Waterfowl would utilize grant monies from the North Dakota Outdoor Heritage Fund to create two new HH Supersites. Supersites are congregations of 100 HHs that are strategically located to maximize duck production, while minimizing installation and maintenance costs. One Supersite would be located on public and private lands east of Bismarck, North Dakota in Burleigh and Kidder Counties. The second Supersite would be located near Woodworth, North Dakota in Stutsman County. These areas have significant populations of breeding mallards and suitable wetlands for nest structures.

Delta Waterfowl will work with the USFWS, NDGF, and private landowners to locate and gain access to suitable HH locations. Because HHs are installed in existing wetlands, this project offers an excellent opportunity to work with private landowners to boost duck production, without impacting farming/ranching operations. Hen House projects create good working relationships with landowners and, in some cases, open the door to other conservation discussions.

In total, 200 new HHs will be installed bringing the total number of Delta HHs in North Dakota to nearly 500. The HHs will be installed during the 2014-2015 winter and will be operational for 10 nesting seasons. Delta estimates that the Supersites will produce approximately 420 additional ducks each year or 4,200 over the course of the project. This project will be one part of Delta Waterfowl's initiative to offset the loss of duck production as a result of declining

nesting habitat. Over 750 new HHs are being installed in the PPR this year as a result of Delta's efforts and we anticipate over 1,000 being installed prior to the 2015 nesting season.

**Management of Project – Provide a description of how the you will manage and oversee the project to ensure it is carried out on schedule and in a manner that best ensures its objectives will be met.\***

Include a brief background and work experience for those managing the project.

Delta Waterfowl staff have extensive experience delivering large-scale nest structure projects throughout North America, including over 300 current Hen Houses (HH) in North Dakota. Joel Brice, Delta's VP of Conservation Programs and First Hunt, has lived and worked in North Dakota for nearly 15 years and has great working relationships with regional USFWS and NDGF staff. Joel has extensive experience working with HHs and has directed delivery of successful predator management and HH programs throughout the state. Joel would supervise and assist with management of the project.

Matt Chouinard, Delta's Conservation Biologist, conducted his graduate research on Hen Houses and has installed over 1,000 HHs in his career. Currently, Matt is managing productive HH projects in Iowa, Minnesota and Manitoba, Canada that include over 4,200 nest structures. For this project, Matt would manage the contractors responsible for HH construction, installation and maintenance.

Delta would hire and oversee regional contractors responsible for HH construction, installation and maintenance. During winter installation and maintenance, contractors would collect and provide GPS coordinates and other information for all HH locations, including duck usage rate and estimated nest success. This information must be provided by the contractor before payment will occur. Each spring during the project, Matt Chouinard or other Delta Biologists would tour HH sites to ensure proper nest structure installation and maintenance has taken place.

**Evaluation – Describe your plan to document progress and results. \***

How will you tell if the project is successful? Please be specific on the methods you will utilize to measure success. Note that regular reporting, final evaluation and expenditure reports will be required for every grant awarded.

Delta Waterfowl would use several measures to gauge success of this project. First, all 200 HHs must be installed by March 31, 2015, prior to the return of nesting ducks. Our goal for this project is to have 200 HHs available to ducks each nesting season from 2015–2024.

A second metric of success is called the usage or occupancy rate, the percentage of HHs that were used by ducks during each nesting season. Simply put, the more hens that use HHs each year, the more productive the program. The usage rate of HHs is often low (<20%) during the first nesting season after installation but increases annually for several years. This project will be deemed a success if the usage rate meets or exceeds 40% within 3 years of installation. Usage rate will be determined during winter maintenance by Delta

contractors. Delta Waterfowl will provide annual reports to the North Dakota Outdoor Heritage Advisory Board detailing the number of available HHs and estimated usage rate.

## **Financial Information**

**ATTACHMENT: Project Budget – Using the standard project budget format that is available on the website at <http://www.nd.gov/ndic/outdoor-infopage.htm> , please include a detailed total project budget that specifically outlines all the funds you are requesting.\***

The project budget should identify all matching funds, funding sources and indicate whether the matching funds are in the form of cash or in-kind services. As noted on the standard project budget format, certain values have been identified for in-kind services. Please utilize these values in identifying your matching funds. **NOTE: No indirect costs will be funded.**

X I certify that a project budget will be sent to the Commission\*

**Sustainability – Indicate how the project will be funded or sustained in future years. \***

Include information on the sustainability of this project after all the funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund has been expended and whether the sustainability will be in the form of ongoing management or additional funding from a different source.

Through numerous HH projects over the last two decades, Delta Waterfowl has found that the average lifespan of a Hen House is 10 years. Grant funding provided in 2014 by the North Dakota Outdoor Heritage Fund would be used to build, install, and maintain HHs for the entire lifespan of the project. If necessary, Delta Waterfowl has an escrow account that could be used to hold annual maintenance payments during the lifespan of the project.

At the conclusion of the project, Delta Waterfowl would evaluate the productivity of the project and determine if it will continue in the current site or move to an alternate area. In either circumstance, Delta Waterfowl would seek funding opportunities to sustain the project.

**Partial Funding – Indicate how the project will be affected if less funding is available than that requested. \***

If this project was partially funded, Delta Waterfowl would still be able to deliver a smaller version of this project. However, Delta would need to receive a minimum of \$30,250 to establish one Supersite. Funding above this minimum level, but below the full grant request, would be used to establish one Supersite with an increased number of HHs. Partial funding would result in reduced duck production and fewer ducks for North Dakota hunters.

## **Scoring of Grants**

All applications will be scored by the Outdoor Heritage Fund Advisory Board after your ten-minute oral presentation. The ranking sheet(s) that will be used by the Board is available on the website at <http://www.nd.gov/ndic/outdoor-infopage.htm> .

## **Awarding of Grants**

All decisions on requests will be reported to applicants no later than 30 days after Industrial Commission consideration. Applicants whose proposals have been approved will receive a contract outlining the terms and conditions of the grant. Please note the appropriate sample contract for your organization on the website at <http://www.nd.gov/ndic/outdoor-infopage.htm> that set forth the general provisions that will be included in any contract issued by the North Dakota Industrial Commission. Please indicate if you can meet all the provisions of the sample contract. If there are provisions in that contract that your organization is unable to meet, please indicate below what those provisions would be. \*

## **Responsibility of Recipient**

The recipient of any grant from the Industrial Commission must use the funds awarded for the specific purpose described in the grant application and in accordance with the contract. The recipient cannot use any of the funds for the purposes stated under Exemptions on the first page of this application.

If you have any questions about the application or have trouble submitting the application, please contact Karlene Fine at 701-328-3722 or [kfine@nd.gov](mailto:kfine@nd.gov)

**Delta Waterfowl  
North Dakota Hen House Project I Budget**

Project Expense	OHF Request	Applicant's Match Share (Cash)	Applicant's Match Share (In-Kind)	Applicant's Match Share (Indirect)	Other Project Sponsor's Share
Structure Const.	\$15,000	\$	\$	\$	\$
Contractor Install	\$5,000	\$	\$	\$	\$
Contractor Maintenance for 9 years <sup>1</sup>	\$27,000	\$	\$	\$	\$
Replacement Structures <sup>2</sup>	\$2,000	\$	\$	\$	\$
Flax straw/supplies	\$2,500	\$	\$	\$	\$
Two Earth Augers <sup>3</sup>	\$1,030	\$	\$	\$	\$
Project Administration	\$	\$	\$2,500	\$	\$
Evaluation of Nest Structure Locations and Landowner Contact/Annual Reporting	\$2,000	\$	\$2,000	\$	\$
Contractor Recruitment and Training	\$1,000	\$	\$	\$	\$
Annual Evaluation and Mapping	\$5,000	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Total Project Costs</b>	<b>\$60,530</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$4,500</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>

<sup>1</sup> Maintenance funds will be held in escrow account and used to pay contractors for annual maintenance during the 10-year lifespan of the project.

<sup>2</sup> During the project, a small number of HHs will need to be replaced due to damage by ice and wind.

<sup>3</sup> Earth augers are used to install HHs through ice during winter. Because wetlands may be shallow, earth augers are better equipped to drill into frozen dirt. Augers will be used throughout the project when nest structures need to be replaced.

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