

Livestock and Wildlife Dams – Wetlands Creation and Enhancement

Name of Organization: North Dakota Natural Resources Trust

Federal Tax ID#: 36-3512179

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MAJOR Directive:

- 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.

Additional Directive:

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

X **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;

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

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

Type of organization:

O State Agency

O Political Subdivision

O Tribal Entity

X Tax-exempt, nonprofit corporation

Project Name: Livestock and Wildlife Dams - Creation and Enhancement (LWC Program)

Abstract/Executive Summary

In the past several years we have experienced drier than normal weather in North Dakota, especially in the spring to early summer of 2017. Several state agencies provided helpful resources to landowners with drought planning and livestock water supplies. These state agencies include the ND Water Commission's Drought Disaster Livestock Water Supply Project Assistance Program and the ND Department of Agriculture's drought interactive map and hotline to connect landowners with available pasture and hayland with landowners in need. The ND Natural Resources Trust (Trust) also assisted landowners with water supplies and grazing development through programs like Working Grassland Partnership when associated with expiring Conservation Reserve Program acres. Through these conversations, landowners have expressed high interest in partnering on the creation of small dams and/or repairing of existing dams on their land. As important as all the listed programs were for landowners, they did not provide assistance for wetland creations. This grant proposal will provide that partnership between the Outdoor Heritage Fund, Trust, and landowners to complete these new wetlands or repair small, nonfunctional dams for livestock and wildlife benefits. Interest in this program is high and nearly two dozen site-ready projects located on privately and publicly owned and managed lands have been identified in eleven North Dakota counties. The requested funding will allow the creation and enhancement of aquatic habitats of twelve separate wetlands covering approximately 78 acres. When functional, these wetlands will facilitate the enhancement of surrounding grassland habitat

exceeding 4,000 acres. The program will be completed in four years. Project development activities will include the construction of new dams and emergency spillways, repair of existing, nonfunctional dams and emergency spillways, and installation of primary spillways and water control structures. With professional project design and management these wetland creations should have a lifespan of 30 plus years.

North Dakota's wetlands are among the most biologically productive biome systems on earth. The 2015 North Dakota State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP), prepared by the ND Game and Fish Department, provides a conservation strategy for specific conservation habitats. Specifically, the conservation habitat of wetlands was identified in SWAP with suggested conservation actions that include incentives and programs that restore and enhance wetlands. Obligate wetland migratory bird species such as waterfowl—including mallards and Northern pintails; shorebirds—including willets and avocets; wading birds—including long-billed curlews and American bitterns; and marsh birds—including horned grebes and black terns (all listed in SWAP) will use this program's project wetlands for production, brood-rearing and during migration. Resident wildlife species including ring-necked pheasant, white-tailed deer, mule deer, and Pronghorn antelope will also use the created and enhanced habitats resulting from this program.

The Trust requests \$138,850 of Outdoor Heritage Funds for construction contracts, engineering contractual services and cultural resources contractual services. This amount will be matched with \$138,850 of Landowner and Trust funds used for similar contracts and services.

Project Duration: 4 Years

Amount of Grant request \$138,850.00 (50%)

Total Project Costs \$277,700.00

Amount of Matching Funds \$138,850.00 (50%)

Cash - \$131,000

In-kind - \$7,850

Source(s) of Matching Funds

NDNRT - \$76,350.00 (\$68,500 cash and \$7,850 in-kind)

Landowners \$62,500 (cash)

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:

The North Dakota Natural Resources Trust was created in 1986 and was originally called the North Dakota Wetlands Trust until 2000. The Trust's mission is to preserve, restore, manage, and enhance wetlands and associated wildlife habitat, grasslands, and riparian areas in the state of North Dakota. The Trust achieves this mission by partnering with agricultural and conservation organizations to promote the productive use of private agricultural lands and to support private property rights that result in enhancement and protection of private lands, to effectively use North Dakota's public lands both for agriculture and recreation, to promote good land use planning along urban river corridors, and to enhance the state's significant water resources. The Trust helps shape the landscape through its programs and does its best to help shape both public attitude and public policy to support natural resources protection.

The Trust is managed by a six-member Board of Directors. Three of the Directors are appointed by the governor of North Dakota, one by the National Audubon Society, one by the National Wildlife Federation, and one by the North Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society. The North Dakota Game and Fish Department Director is an ex-officio member. The Trust has an Executive Director and three staff.

From its inception, the Trust has played a role as facilitator between agricultural and conservation interests. In addition to facilitating and funding sound, on-the-ground conservation of natural resources, its goal is to identify common issues, create dialogue, and resolve conflicts.

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.

Project Goals, Strategies and Benefits: The goal of this grant proposal is to assist landowners with approximately 12 dam creations and/or dam repairs located throughout the state. This project will impact approximately 78 surface acres of wetland habitat (Mean = 6.5 acres). These wetland creations will provide a stable source of livestock water, provide water storage, improve water quality and supply wildlife benefits to local areas. The grant will provide 50% cost-share assistance for wetland construction from OHF funds with the remaining cost-share coming from landowners 25% and Trust 25%. The cost-share assistance will be provided to contractors and to purchase necessary site specific materials.

This Livestock and Wetland Creation (LWC Program) addresses OHF Directive C and will develop, enhance, conserve, and restore wildlife habitat on private lands. It also addresses Directive B by improving and restoring water quality and supports other practices of land stewardship. The LWC Program and corresponding water storage programs will provide water supply sources for livestock and enhance haying and grazing for grassland-base producers.

An additional goal of the LWC Program is to focus 50% of the funding toward project sites that have public access. This will address OHF Directive A by providing funding for projects that are located on lands that have access to sportsmen or are on public lands.

Projects Locations:

- Burleigh County – Repair of one 1-acre wetland.
- Dunn County – Repair of two wetlands, 2.2 and 2.8 acres.
- Emmons County – Repair of two wetlands, 13 and 7 acres.
- Grant County – Repair of one 7-acre wetland. Land is enrolled in the NDGFD PLOTS Program
- McLean County – Repair of one 20-acre wetland.
- McKenzie County – Repair of one 5.1-acre wetland.
- Morton County – Repair of three wetlands, 10.0, 7.2 and 1.8 acres. The 1.8-acre wetland is located on public land, is available for public access and has an existing bicycle trail that goes directly across the dam.
- Oliver County – Repair of one 3.2-acre wetland.
- Slope County – Repair of one 6.5 wetland, creation of one new 7.5 acre-wetland that is located on land enrolled in the NDGFD PLOTS Program.
- Stark County – Repair of one wetland, 4.7 acres, creation of two new wetlands, 2.5 and 2.6 acres. All three wetlands are located on public land and available for public access.
- Williams County – Repair of four wetlands, 0.8, 2.5, 2.0 and 2.6 acres.

The Trust will prioritize this list of 21 project sites and select the sites that have highest landowner interest, reasonable project costs, sportsman access, and project site feasibility to complete the creations and/or repairs.

This OHF proposal will be directed to wetland creations that do not require a conditional water permit through the ND Water Commission or already have an approved permit. This means new wetland creations will be less than 12.5 acre-feet in size.

Timetable for implementation: The LWC Program outreach and landowner communication has already been completed prior to submitting this grant. Trust has already identified almost two dozen landowners and locations for the LWC Program. The LWC Program will assist these landowners and, if any projects come in under budget, the Trust will find additional project sites on which to use all of the funds. Currently, landowner interest in creation and/or repair of small dams is very high, especially in western North Dakota.

The LWC Program will start working with landowners immediately, if funded. The Trust will continually manage and monitor the committed funds and completed projects. The design and engineering of these projects can require additional experience to ensure that the structures can withstand the fluctuating water conditions that are common in North Dakota. This proposal is requesting a smaller portion of OHF funding, along with additional Trust funds, to pay for properly engineer-designed dams. Wetland creation construction is dependent on weather, construction design/management, and the availability of contractors.

Because of these factors the estimated total time frame for grant completion will be from 1 to 4 years to achieve the LWC Program goals.

Management of Project – Provide a description of how 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.

The Trust will oversee and coordinate all activities associated with the LWC Program proposal. The LWC Program will be developed on 12 of the sites identified in the proposal, but the Program could be offered to additional projects, if funding allows. The Trust will develop site specific agreements with landowners which will include a map defining project boundaries, proposed construction activities, the cost-share estimates and the responsibility of each landowner and the Trust. All agreements will be signed and dated by the landowner and the Trust. In addition, all project agreements will have the OHF logo at the header of the agreement and all landowners will be informed about OHF funding as part of the project.

The Trust’s staff will coordinate the LWC Program from our office located in Bismarck. Rick Warhurst, Biologist, will serve as the Program Coordinator. Rick has 30 years of experience in delivering wetland conservation projects throughout the Dakotas. The Trust will coordinate with landowners and partners to ensure that the LWC Program funds are spent effectively. The Trust will provide all tracking and reporting of all participant agreements following grant guidelines.

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.

The Trust will measure success of LWC Program by completing the creations and then monitoring the sites periodically in spring, summer, and fall. These on-site visits and electronic photos of preconstruction and post construction will document the success of the project. All grant administration will be completed for this grant by the Trust. The Trust’s programs are structured to be flexible and accommodating to agreement participants.

Budget:

Project Expense	OHF Request	Applicant’s Match Share (Cash)	Other Project Sponsor’s Share-Landowners (Cash)	Applicant’s Match Share (In-Kind)	Totals
Wetland Creations/Repairs	\$125,000.00	\$62,500.00	\$62,500.00		\$250,000.00
Contracted Services – Engineering/Design/Cultural Resources	\$ 13,850.00	\$6,000.00			\$19,850.00
Staffing/Delivery				\$7,850.00	\$7,850.00
Total Project Costs	\$138,850.00	\$68,500.00	\$62,500.00	\$7,850.00	\$277,700.00
	(50%)				

Budget narrative

Wetland Creations and/or Repairs – (\$250,000) These funds will pay for the construction of new, small wetland creations and/or repair of existing, wetland creations throughout North Dakota. The payments will be to contractors for dirt work to construct earthen dams across water drainages, install primary spillways/water control structures and develop emergency spillways (OHF 50%/Trust 25%/Landowners 25%)

Contracted Services – (\$19,850) Engineering design of wetland creations and/or repairs is important to ensure proper design of the projects, to ensure long life of the structure and to ensure each project wetland functions in desired manner. The Trust will contract for these services, so that engineering standards are used in the project design. The Trust will consult with the State Historical Society for SHPO review and approval and if outside cultural resources field reviews are necessary, then a cultural review company will be hired to complete the reviews.

Staffing/Delivery – (\$7,850) The ND Natural Resources Trust will provide \$7,850 over the Program duration as in-kind match. This administration of the LWC Program is based on actual staff time, benefits, travel, and overhead (20%) to deliver LWC Program agreements. This includes promotion and outreach, meeting with landowners, meeting with partners, processing payments, and agreement monitoring.

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.

This proposal represents a short list of landowners who have contacted the Trust or other partners about their interest in wetland creations and wetland structure repairs on their property.

Many of these wetland projects need repair because of inadequate construction design and not necessarily any fault of the landowners. With updated wetland creation designs that include properly sized primary spillways and emergency spillways the projects completed in this proposal will have a long life span. The LWC Program participants will manage their property to ensure that the integrity of the structures developed is properly maintained. These landowners will agree to provide the annual maintenance of the installed structures to maintain the integrity and proper function of the project.

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

The Trust would like to thank OHF Advisory Board for the consideration of this proposal. The LWC Program brings 50% matching funds from Trust and landowners to assist in wetland

creations projects. If OHF does not recommend full funding, then a smaller portion of the listed projects will be completed and matching funds will be reduced proportionally.

Partnership Recognition

The Trust will place signage at each project site recognizing the OHF as a partner in the project. Any news releases, publications, and Trust website information will include OHF recognition.



Image of breached dam in southwest North Dakota. Wetland creation repairs will require a new overflow structure for a primary spillway, excavation of portions of the breached dam and reshaping and armor material on emergency spillway.



Image of successful wetland creation in southwest North Dakota. Providing livestock water and wildlife benefits.