

Outdoor Heritage Fund Grant Application



Instructions

After completing the form, applications and supporting documentation may be submitted 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. It is preferred that both a hard copy and electronic copy are submitted.

You are not limited to the spacing provided, except in those instances where there is a limit on the number of words. If you need additional space, please indicate that on the application form, answer the question on a separate page, and include with your submission.

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. **Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit applications prior to the deadline for staff review in order ensure that proposals will be complete when submitted on deadline date.** Incomplete applications may not be considered for funding.

Please review the back of this form to determine project eligibility, definitions, budget criteria, and statutory requirements.

Project Name: **North Central Soil Health and Habitat**

Name of Organization: Pheasants Forever, Inc.

Federal Tax ID#: 41-1429149

Contact Person/Title: Rachel Bush, ND State Coordinator

Address: PO Box 3935

City: Dickinson

State: ND

Zip Code: 58602

E-mail Address: rbush@pheasantsforever.org

Web Site Address (Optional): www.pheasantsforever.org or

<https://www.facebook.com/NorthDakotaPF/>

Phone: 701-403-4853

Fax # (if available): N/A

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

MAJOR Directive:

Choose only one response

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

Directive B. Improving, maintaining and restoring water quality, soil conditions, plant diversity, animal systems and by supporting other practices of stewardship to enhance farming and ranching;

Directive C. Developing, enhancing, conserving and restoring wildlife and fish habitat on private and public lands; and

Directive D. Conserving natural areas and creating other areas for recreation through the establishment and development of parks and other recreation areas.

Additional Directive:

Choose all that apply

Directive A.

Directive B.

Directive C.

Directive D.

Type of organization:

State Agency

Political Subdivision

Tribal Entity

Tax-exempt, nonprofit corporation.

Abstract/Executive Summary.

Pheasants Forever has a long history of working with private landowners, farmers and ranchers assisting them in reaching their on-farm goals. As an Organization we pride ourselves in our ability to find innovative ways to address issues, our flexibility to create programs that meet the needs of farmers and ranchers, our ability to form partnerships with varied stakeholders and our technical knowledge to address resource concerns across the landscape. The North Central Soil Health and Habitat is a demonstration of our ability to bring unique partners together to address an identified resource concern.

Intensive agricultural production with limited crop rotation on saline and sodic soils has negative impacts on soil health and productivity. Growers often see a negative trend in overall production and return when farming marginal acres in a limited crop rotation over several years. Erosion, loss of organic matter, and soil compaction becomes a common trend

when these acres are managed with traditional farming practices. Perhaps one of the largest threats to losing farmland in North Dakota is the accumulation and expansion of damaging salts near the soil surface. Saline and sodic soils have expanded in farm fields as more simplified cropping systems have been implemented. Affected areas see restricted water and nutrient movement through soils which results in lower forage production and lower crop production. If left unmanaged, salt affected areas can expand in size and consume acres that were once productive turning them into “white deserts”. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in North Dakota recently estimated that 5.8 million acres of agricultural land are affected negatively by saline and sodic soils, with that number growing annually. Without a substantial change in land use and management, these areas will continue to expand, negatively impacting both production agriculture and available habitat.

The North Central Soil Health and Habitat project will work with growers within north central North Dakota that have expressed an interest in addressing salinity concerns on their operation that are resulting in negative impacts to crop productivity. This project will work with interested growers to remove grower designated salt impacted acres from annual crop production and establish deep rooted salt tolerant perennial vegetation. The use of cover crops on adjacent acres will be an additional practice to further promote soil health and salinity management.

The goals of this project are to reduce the impact salt affected soils have on growers in north central North Dakota and reduce the number of annual crop production acres that are negatively impacted by salts. In order to address this growing concern we will work with partner stakeholders to host saline & sodic soil workshops for cooperators in the project. We anticipate working with 10-20 growers over the 3 year project directly impacting 3,250 acres. We are requesting \$52,500 from the Outdoor Heritage Fund over 3 years to implement this project. Pheasants Forever and partners are providing \$236,125 in match, for a total project cost of \$288,625.

Project Duration: October 2018 – December 2021

Indicate the intended schedule for drawing down OHF funds.

We anticipate funding to be drawn down in the spring of 2019 as practices are established, with additional funds being utilized in the fall of 2019, continuing until all grant funds are utilized or until the grant expiration.

Amount of Grant request: \$ 52,500

Total Project Costs: \$ 288,625

Note: in-kind and indirect costs can be used for matching funds.

Amount of Matching Funds: \$ 236,125

A minimum of 25% Match Funding is required. Indicate if the matching funds will be in-kind, indirect or cash. Please provide verification that these matching funds are available for your project. Note that effective as of July 1, 2015 no State General Fund dollars can be used for a match unless funding was legislatively appropriated for that purpose.

Please see the attached letter of commitment from Pheasants Forever regarding the cash match pledge. The \$35,000 in cash match from cooperating growers will come from the 40% of seed cost, not covered by the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

Amount of Match	Funding Source	Type of Match
\$201,125	Pheasants Forever	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> In-Kind <input type="checkbox"/> Indirect
\$35,000	Cooperating Landowners	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> In-Kind <input type="checkbox"/> Indirect

Certifications

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

I certify that if awarded grant funding none of the funding will be used for any of the exemptions noted in the back of this application.

Narrative

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

Pheasants Forever (PF) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of pheasants, quail, and other wildlife through habitat improvements, public awareness, education and land management policies and programs. Formed in 1982 in response to declining pheasant populations, PF has grown to over 140,000 members and 650 chapters across North America. The board of directors includes the President/CEO and 16 volunteers from across the country. One key to PF’s success has been the model of empowering local chapters to decide how funds are raised and invested to impact the Pheasants Forever mission. North Dakota is currently home to 28 Pheasants Forever chapters, 200 volunteers and more than 3,700 members. Pheasants Forever chapters hold annual fundraising events, support statewide partnerships and programs, work on habitat projects, and promote the recruitment, retention or reactivation of hunters. North Dakota Pheasants Forever has been awarded three OHF grants, assisting landowners with establishment of rotational grazing systems (OHF GR9), habitat through our youth pollinator habitat program (OHF GR5) and our pollinator habitat partnership (OHF GR2) as well as longstanding local partnerships and programs that assist landowners, provide quality habitat, improve hunter access and engage youth. Pheasants Forever’s tagline is “The Habitat Organization” and we bring a unique model and mission that empowers local people to impact local habitat for pheasants and other wildlife in meaningful ways across North Dakota.

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

The North Central Soil Health and Habitat project is a new project developed by Pheasants Forever and Unilever that will address Directive B. Unilever, a consumer goods manufacturing company, is working with several farmers in North Dakota who supply wheat

into their supply chain on sustainable agriculture practices. Sustainable agriculture means growing crops in ways which sustain the soil, minimize water and fertilizer use, protect biodiversity and enhance farmers' livelihoods. Unilever has worked with cooperating farmers in north central North Dakota to identify issues of local concern. Through conversations with area farmers, they indicated that soil health, specifically salt impacted soils, was one of their top issues of concern. Healthy soils are important in many ways, from being able to provide more nutritious crops to better managing water (droughts or heavy rain). Practices such as cover crops and slowing the growth of salt impacted soils, can also provide long-term economic benefits to farmers. Unilever has partnered with Pheasants Forever to implement solutions to these expressed concerns.

Pheasants Forever will work directly with partners to identify and engage growers through 2021 to address soil health and salt impacted soils. Pheasants Forever will work with cooperating growers to increase sustainability and address resource concerns by identifying and enrolling areas with the highest salt concentrations into deep rooted salt tolerant perennial vegetation. The establishment of deep rooted perennial vegetation will allow salt impacted acres to begin the long recovery process and reduce the likelihood of the impacted acres expanding. The North Central Soil Health and Habitat project will provide cost-share assistance to growers for the establishment of cover crops on adjacent acres. Cover crops provide soil armor, reduce evaporation, utilize excess moisture and provide a living root after the primary crop has been harvested. Cover crops help to move salts through the soil profile and out of the root zone of plants, reducing the impacts of salinity on crop production.

Along with providing on-the-ground tools to address salt impacted soils, the North Central Soil Health and Habitat project will work to deliver outreach opportunities for cooperating growers. Not only will the North Central Soil Health and Habitat Project equip growers with on-the-ground tools, it will provide them with the opportunity to learn about salinity management and the five soil health principals directly from soil health specialist, equipping them with the most powerful tool to address soil health and sustainability, knowledge.

Pheasants Forever will design salt tolerant seed mixes that meet or exceed NRCS standards and specifications for practice 512 (Forage and Biomass Planting) and/or 550 (Range Planting) for areas enrolled in the North Central Soil Health and Habitat project. Cover crop mixes will be designed with grower objectives, budget and current research in mind. Growers will be responsible for ordering seed, site preparation, seeding operation and post-planting vegetation management. Seeding dates will follow those recommended by USDA based on geography and selected species.

Pheasants Forever and partners will engage 10-20 growers through 2021 located within north central North Dakota to enroll 3,250 acres into this project with a focus on soil health and the goal of reducing saline/sodic areas and providing high quality wildlife and pollinator habitat.

Is this project part of a Comprehensive Conservation Plan? Yes No

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.

Pheasants Forever will provide management, coordination, delivery and administration of the North Central Soil Health and Habitat Project. Pheasants Forever will also provide coordination at the local level with program participants and partners, which may include program contract development, grass seeding design, technical standard checklists, and submission of payment applications.

Rachel Bush, North Dakota State Coordinator, will be the project lead, overseeing the delivery of this grant. Rachel has been employed and an active volunteer with Pheasants Forever since 2011. As State Coordinator, Rachel is responsible for grant writing and reporting, developing partnerships, coordinating with Chapters and volunteers and overseeing contracts enrolled in Pheasants Forever programs. Rachel also oversees all Outdoor Heritage Fund Grant contracts Pheasants Forever has with the Industrial Commission. Having grown up on a farm Rachel enjoys working with private landowners and appreciates the value in finding options that work for agriculture and conservation to benefit North Dakota's farmers, ranchers and wildlife species.

Cayla Bendel, will provide on-the-ground delivery and coordinator to private landowners for the Soil Health and Habitat project. Cayla has a bachelor's degree in Natural Resources from University of Minnesota, Crookston and a Master's degree from NDSU in Range Science. Cayla has been working with private landowners since she started with Pheasants Forever in 2017. She also has extensive experience organizing and hosting outreach events focused on conservation principles and practices.

Evaluation – Describe your plan to document progress and results.

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.

Success will be measured by the number of cooperators this partnership between conservation and agriculture impacts and by leveraging private sector dollars with OHF grant funds to improve and restore water quality, soil conditions, and plant diversity while supporting practices of stewardship that enhance agricultural operations in North Dakota. We will measure success by 1) the number acres of saline and/or sodic impacted soils enrolled into the program 2) the number of at-risk acres that are planted to cover crops. We will work with willing participants to establish annual photo points on project sites to monitor perennial and annual crop response to the our management techniques. We will report the number of cooperators that participate in the project and acres enrolled along with all required reporting.

Financial Information

Project Budget – Use the table below to provide an itemized list of project expenses and describe the matching funds being utilized for this project.

Indicate if the matching funds are in the form of cash, indirect costs or in-kind services. The budget should identify all other committed funding sources and the amount of funding from each source. **A minimum of 25% match funding is required.** An application will be scored higher the greater the amount of match funding provided. (See Scoring Form.)

Project Expense	OHF Request	Applicant's Match Share (cash)	Cooperator's Match Share (cash)	Total Each Project Expense
Perennial Cover Seed	\$22,500		\$15,000	\$37,500
Cover Crop Seed	\$30,000		\$20,000	\$50,000
Perennial Cover Habitat Incentive		\$157,500		\$157,500
Project Management & Coordination		\$43,625		\$43,625
Total Costs	\$52,500	\$201,125	\$35,000	\$288,625

Certain values have been identified for in-kind services as detailed under “Budget Information” at the back of this form. Refer to that section and utilize these values in identifying your matching funds.

NOTE: No indirect costs will be funded. Supporting documentation for project expenses, including bids, must be included or application will be considered incomplete.

Note: Costs for seeding, fencing, pipelines, wells, and cover crops cannot exceed NRCS Field Office Tech Guide without justification. Projects involving perimeter fencing must follow NRCS eligibility standards.

Budget Narrative – Use the space below to provide additional detail regarding project expenses.

1. \$22,500 is requested in OHF funds to establish approximately 750 acres of perennial cover on grower designated salt impacted soils that are currently in annual crop production. Cost-share will be paid at 60% of an estimated \$50/ac seed cost.
2. \$30,000 is requested in OHF funds to implement approximately 2500 acres of cover crops on acres adjacent to salt impacted soils. Cost-share will be paid at 60% of actual seed cost. Seed cost is estimated at \$20/acre.
3. \$157,500 cash will be provided by Pheasants Forever to provide perennial cover habitat incentives, paid annually, to cooperating growers that establish perennial cover on salt impacted soils, impacting approximately 750 acres. We estimate annual payments at 75% of the ND Department of Trust Lands average county rental, set the year of contract approval per acre. Example: The average land rent for Ward County in 2018 is \$55.50/ac. Seventy-five percent of that value is \$41.63
4. \$43,625 cash will be provided by Pheasants Forever to cover project management, coordination and delivery for the duration of the project.
5. \$15,000 will be provided as cash match by participating growers that establish perennial cover. Cooperating growers will be required to pay 40% of seed costs.
6. \$20,000 will be provided as cash match by cooperating growers. Cooperating growers will be required to pay 40% of cover crop seed costs.

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

Cooperators participating in this project will be required to sign a contract with Pheasants Forever indicating they will maintain the practice on the land for the designated practice lifespan. Perennial cover shall be maintained for 5 years. Cover crops are an annual practice. Annual spot checks will be completed by Pheasants Forever to ensure contracted acres are maintained according to the guidelines specified in the contract. Salt impacted soils are rarely remedied in the timespan on five years. It is our goal to provide educational opportunities and

materials to project cooperators allowing them to realize the benefits of the implemented practice and maintain it past the contract lifespan.

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

If the project is partially funded, the number of salt impacted soils we are able to address will be reduced. Reduced funding will likely decrease the number of growers that will be able participate in this opportunity.

Partnership Recognition - If you are a successful recipient of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars, how would you recognize the Outdoor Heritage Fund partnership? *

The Outdoor Heritage Fund will be recognized when working with producers and in contract documents in both text and logo form. Pheasant Forever will highlight this opportunity and project success, acknowledging the Outdoor Heritage Fund, through its network of over 4,000 members. Pheasants Forever will also work with local media contacts to highlight successful projects completed through the Outdoor Heritage Fund and by promoting completed projects through Pheasants Forever’s social media platforms.

Awarding of Grants - Review the appropriate sample contract for your organization on the website at <http://www.nd.gov/ndic/outdoor-infopage.htm>.

Can you meet all the provisions of the sample contract? Yes No

If there are provisions in that contract that your organization is unable to meet, please indicate below what those provisions would be:

ABOUT OHF:

The purpose of the North Dakota Outdoor Heritage Fund is to provide funding to state agencies, tribal governments, political subdivisions, and nonprofit organizations, with higher priority given to projects that enhance **conservation** practices in this state by:

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

Directive B. Improving, maintaining and restoring water quality, soil conditions, plant diversity, animal systems and by supporting other practices of stewardship to enhance farming and ranching;

Directive C. Developing, enhancing, conserving and restoring wildlife and fish habitat on private and public lands; and

Directive D. Conserving natural areas and creating other 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:

- Litigation;
- Lobbying activities;
- 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;
- The acquisition of land or to encumber any land for a term longer than twenty years; or
- 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.

OHF funds may not be used, except after a finding of exceptional circumstances by the Industrial Commission, to finance:

- A completed project or project commenced before the grant application is submitted;
- A feasibility or research study;
- Maintenance costs;
- A paving project for a road or parking lot;
- A swimming pool or aquatic park;
- Personal property that is not affixed to the land;
- Playground equipment, except that grant funds may be provided for up to 25% of the cost of the equipment not exceeding \$10,000 per project and all playground equipment grants may not exceed 5% of the total grants per year (see Definitions/Clarifications for how this will be calculated);
- Staffing or outside consultants except for costs for staffing or an outside consultant to design and implement an approved project based on the documented need of the applicant and the expenditures may not exceed 5% of the grant to a grantee if the grant exceeds \$250,000 and expenditures may not exceed 10% of the grant to a grantee if the grant is \$250,000 or less (see Definitions/Clarifications for how this will be calculated);
- A building except for a building that is included as part of a comprehensive conservation plan for a new or expanded recreational project (see Definitions/Clarifications for definition of comprehensive conservation plan and new or expanded recreational project); or
- A project in which the applicant is not directly involved in the execution and completion of the project.

The goal of the Industrial Commission is that at a minimum 15% of the funding received for a biennium will be given priority for recreation projects that meet Directive D.

The following projects are not eligible for funding, unless there is a finding of exceptional circumstances by the Industrial Commission include:

- Construction or refurbishment of indoor/outdoor ice rinks,
- Construction or refurbishment of indoor/outdoor athletic courts and sports fields,
- Other substantially similar facilities.
- Infrastructure that is not part of a comprehensive conservation plan.
- Projects not meeting a minimum funding request of \$2,500.

Budget Information

In-kind services used to match the request for Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars shall be valued as follows:

- Labor costs \$15.00 an hour
- Land costs Average rent costs for the county as shown in the most recent publication of the USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Services, North Dakota Field Office
- Permanent Equipment Any equipment purchased must be listed separately with documentation showing actual cost. (For example: playground equipment)
- Equipment usage Actual documentation
- Seed & Seedlings Actual documentation
- Transportation Mileage at federal rate
- Supplies & materials Actual documentation

More categories will be added as we better understand the types of applications that will be submitted. We will use as our basis for these standards other State and Federal programs that have established rates. For example, the North Dakota Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Program has established rates. If your project includes work that has an established rate under another State Program, please use those rates and note your source.

Definitions/Clarifications:

Building - Defined as "A structure with a roof either with walls or without walls and is attached to the ground in a permanent nature."

Comprehensive Conservation Plan - Defined as "A detailed plan that has been formally adopted by the governing board which includes goals and objectives--both short and long term, must show how this building will enhance the overall conservation goals of the project and the protection or preservation of wildlife and fish habitat or natural areas." This does not need to be a complex multi-page document. It could be included as a part of the application or be an attachment.

New and Expanded Recreational Project means that the proposed building cannot be a replacement of a current building. The proposed building must also be related to either a new or expanded recreational project--either an expansion in land or an expansion of an existing building or in the opportunities for recreation at the project site.

Playground equipment calculation - Only the actual costs of the playground equipment (a bid or invoice showing the amount of the equipment costs must be provided) - cannot include freight or installation or surface materials or removal of old equipment, etc.

Staffing/Outside Consultants Costs - If you are requesting OHF funding for staffing or for an outside consultant, you must provide information in your application on the need for OHF funding to cover these costs. For example, if you are an entity that has engineering staff you must explain why you don't have sufficient staff to do the work or if specific expertise is needed or whatever the reason is for your entity to retain an outside consultant. If it is a request for reimbursement for staff time then a written explanation is required in the application of why OHF funding is needed to pay for the costs of that staff member(s)' time. **The budget form must reflect on a separate line item the specific amount that is being requested for staffing and/or the hiring of an outside consultant.** This separate line item will then be used to make the calculation of 5% or 10% as outlined in the law. Note that the calculation will be made on the grant less the costs for the consultant or staff.

Scoring of Grants

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. 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.

All applications will be scored by the Outdoor Heritage Fund Advisory Board after your ten-minute oral presentation. The ranking form 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. The Commission can set a limit on duration of an offer on each application or if there isn't a specific date indicated in the application for implementation of the project, then the applicant has until the next Outdoor Heritage Fund Advisory Board regular meeting to sign the contract and get the project underway or the commitment for funding will be terminated and the applicant may resubmit for funding. Applicants whose proposals have been approved will receive a contract outlining the terms and conditions of the grant.

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 Andrea Pfennig at 701-328-3786 or apfennig@nd.gov.

Revised: September 14, 2018



NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
1783 Buerkle Circle
St. Paul, Minnesota 55110
(651) 773-2000
(651) 773-5500 FAX
(877) 773-2070 TOLL-FREE
www.PheasantsForever.org

September 25, 2018

Karlene Fine, Executive Director
North Dakota Industrial Commission
State Capitol – Fourteenth Floor
600 East Boulevard Ave., Dept. 405
Bismarck, ND 58505

ATTN: Outdoor Heritage Fund

Dear Ms. Fine:

Pheasants Forever is pleased to support the “North Central Soil Health and Habitat” proposal submitted to the North Dakota Outdoor Heritage Fund. We appreciate the opportunity to work with private landowners to address resource concerns and create wildlife habitat. This proposal serves to address a resource concern, salinity, identified by growers within north central North Dakota and create wildlife habitat.

We pledge, \$201,125 cash to support the work of this proposal. Support and funding will come from Pheasants Forever, Unilever and other partners who believe in the results we can accomplish with this partnership to assist North Dakota growers reach their sustainability goals.

We look forward to working collaboratively with the North Dakota Outdoor Heritage Fund, our partners and North Dakota farmers to address soil health and create wildlife habitat.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Koerber". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

James Koerber
Chief Financial Officer
Pheasants Forever, Inc.



Karlene Fine, Executive Director
North Dakota Industrial Commission
State Capitol – Fourteenth Floor
600 East Boulevard Ave., Dept. 405
Bismarck, ND 58505

Unilever
816 Connecticut Avenue
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20006-2705

T (202) 828-1010
www.unilever.com

ATTN: Outdoor Heritage Fund Advisory Board

September 26, 2018

Dear Ms. Fine,

I am writing on behalf of Unilever in support of the North Central Soil Health and Habitat project.

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in North Dakota recently estimated that 5.8 million acres of agricultural land are affected negatively by saline and sodic soils, with that number growing annually. Without a substantial change in land use and management, these areas will continue to expand, negatively impacting both production agriculture and available habitat.

Unilever is very interested in enhancing the sustainability of its supply system for agricultural raw commodities. We are already working with several farmers in north central North Dakota who supply wheat into our supply chain. In conversations with these farmers, they have indicated that saline and sodic soils are of high concern. Healthy soils are important in many ways, from being able to provide more nutritious crops to better managing water (droughts or heavy rain). Practices such as cover crops and slowing the growth of salt impacted soils, can also provide long-term economic benefits to farmers.

We appreciate Pheasant Forever's work on these issues and look forward to partnering with them in north central North Dakota.

Sincerely,

Stefani Millie Grant
Senior Manager, External Affairs & Sustainability
Unilever United States