

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 ND Statewide Tree Planting Initiative

Name of Organization North Dakota Conservation District Employees Association (NDCDEA)

Federal Tax ID# 45-0420359

Contact Person/Title Sarah Tunge

Address 123 Main Street, PO Box 346

City McClusky

State North Dakota

Zip Code 58463

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Web Site Address (Optional)

Phone 701-873-2101

Fax # (if available)

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.

Summarize the project, including its objectives, expected results, duration, total project costs and participants. (no more than 500 words)

Conservation tree planting is an important component of agricultural systems, improves rural life and enhances wildlife. Field wind breaks reduce soil erosion during years of drought, reduce water evaporation from adjacent cropland and increases crop yields. Conservation plantings are designed to stabilize streambanks, filter water runoff from adjacent agricultural lands, provide wildlife habitat, protect stretches of roads from snow accumulation, provide winter protection for wildlife or livestock, or protect rural homes from snow and wind. These resources are critical for the present and future needs of residents that live on rural landscape.

The NDSTPI will engage stewards to embrace conservation practices that promote the ecological benefits trees provide. This initiative will focus on encouraging and providing financial assistance to implement agroforestry practices in North Dakota including farmstead, feedlot and field windbreaks, forestry, wildlife and riparian plantings, buffers and living snow fences.

The ND Statewide Tree Planting Initiative has grown based on the publicity of the ND Outdoor Heritage Fund exposure, working with our partners promoting tree plantings, Soil Conservation District promotion with landowners, public press releases, and visual landscape changes with tree and fabric installation in our ND Counties.

SCD's promotion of the Outdoor Heritage Fund allows district staff to conduct on site field visits with interested landowners. Staff requirements of the program for landowners to qualify include proper site preparation prior to field installation, completion of the CONS 4 plan to meet soil suitability and field office technical guide requirements. All OHF applications are required to go through a State Historical Preservation screening prior to installation. If additional cultural screenings are required by SHPO the landowner must complete the requirements along with concurrence with SHPO to move forward with the installation. All plantings are paid based on actual footage installed in accordance to their OHF/SCD contract. Eligible landowners enter into a 10 year contract and must maintain the tree site for the duration of the lifespan. Replacement trees to establish on going years is the responsibility of the landowner.

The grant request is \$3,070,000.00 for a three year program with total project costs expected to exceed \$4.9 million. The landowners obligation will be 25% of the practice installation cost and maintenance outline in the ten year contract.

Project Duration: Planting season 2020 to conclude planting season 2022 (3 years)

Indicate the intended schedule for drawing down OHF funds. OHF fund draw down will take place during the reimbursable period of the completion of SCD tree plantings concluding in June. Fund reimbursement to the Industrial Commission will be submitted upon completion of field verifications in August/September of 2020, 2021 and 2022 upon tree planting field certifications.

Amount of Grant request: \$ 3,070,000.00

Total Project Costs: \$4,920,000.00

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

Amount of Matching Funds: \$ 1,000,000.00 Landowner responsibility at 25% for the remaining cost share on a reimbursable basis of 75/25

InKind Cost: \$850,000.00 will be contributed by the ND Soil Conservation Districts in 54 counties for implementation through technical labor.

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.

Amount of Match	Funding Source	Type of Match
\$1,000,000.00	Landowner Obligation of 25% cost of actual tree planting footage installed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> In-Kind <input type="checkbox"/> Indirect
\$850,000.00	SCD Employee Technical Staff wages	<input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In-Kind <input type="checkbox"/> Indirect
\$		<input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> In-Kind <input type="checkbox"/> Indirect
\$		<input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> In-Kind <input type="checkbox"/> Indirect
\$		<input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> In-Kind <input type="checkbox"/> Indirect
\$		<input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> In-Kind <input type="checkbox"/> Indirect

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 in the back 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 ND Conservation District Employees Association (NDCDEA) was officially adopted and formed on February 11, 1991. The purpose of the NDCDEA is to promote professionalism, provide implementation training, and a delivery method for conservation planning. NDCDEA aids with conservation delivery between SCD Supervisors, Districts, North Dakota Association of Soil Conservation Districts (NDASCD), North Dakota State Soil Conservation Committee (NDSSCC) and USDA agencies. Representation of NDCDEA consists of 12 conservation district employees elected for a two-year term to serve as directors in their demographic area.

A President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer are elected by the Area Directors to serve in the capacity of the Executive Committee which has the power to act in the name of the Association between regular and special board meetings. NDCDEA holds representation on various national boards including Natural Resource Policy, National Conservation Partnership Leadership Team, National Employee Development Board and National Conservation Partnership Planning. A Northern Plains Regional Director capacity is held by an individual within NDCDEA along with the current National Conservation District Employees Association President.

Throughout the year, NDCDEA sponsors several training opportunities for district employees to attend. These include conservation implementation, youth and adult outreach, leadership development, and coordination of partnership meetings. NDCDEA leverages sponsorship and utilize partnerships in coordination of sound technical training. Two Outdoor Heritage Fund Grants have been awarded to NDCDEA for \$3,928,000.00 concluding in October 2019. NDCDEA was the recipient of grant funds through our partnering agency of the National Association of Conservation Districts in 2018 to foster a leadership program for the conservation district employees of North Dakota. Most recently a new implementation tracking tool (DART) was developed to show representation of work provided, financial accountability and needs assessment for technical training spearheaded by NDCDEA along with partnership of our State Soil Conservation Committee. In 2018, NDCDEA was awarded a Conservation Collaborative Grant through NRCS for technical services for implementation of NRCS conservation programs.

Additionally, NDCDEA strengthens communications and working relationship with SCD Supervisors, instill pride, encourage dedicated service to employers, and provides positive partnership building. While NDCDEA is represented by district employees they are the boots on the ground, consistent face behind the desk, and locally led representation of the needs of our agricultural producers. NDCDEA also hosts a state legislature day every two years to show the importance of SCD's at work.

Conservation District Employees are required by state century code to complete financial accountability for their local SCD programs along with State and Federal requirements. NDCDEA has implemented working templates along with an employee handbook assisting in the day to operations of a district.

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. 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. Note: if your proposal provides funding to an individual, the names of the recipients must be reported to the Industrial Commission/Outdoor Heritage Fund. These names will be disclosed upon request.

For tree/shrub/grass plantings: provide a planting plan describing the site design, planting methods, number of trees/shrubs by species and stock size, grass species and future maintenance. A statement certifying that the applicant will adhere to USDA-NRCS tree/shrub/grass planting specifications along with the name of the governmental entity designing the planting may be substituted for a planting plan.

For projects including Section 319 funding: provide in detail the specific best management practices that will be implemented and the specific projects for which you are seeking funding.

For projects including fencing: A minimum cost share of 40% by the recipient is preferred. Include detailed information on the type of fencing to be installed, whether funding is requested for boundary fencing, new or replacement of existing fencing, and/or cross fencing.

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

If yes, provide a copy with the application.

Note: Projects involving buildings and infrastructure will only be considered if part of a Comprehensive Conservation Plan. Please refer to the "Definitions" section at the back of the form for more details.

The purpose of the grant is to continue with funding for the 2020-2022 tree planting season for conservation tree installation to include tree and fabric installation. This is not a replacement program for current federal conservation tree planting programs including USDA NRCS – Environmental Quality Incentives Program or USDA FSA – CRP Continuous Sign Up for trees. Over the number of years the USDA programs have capped enrollment acres or reduced funding; allowing a decrease in funding to meet the demand of the participants wanting to install conservation tree plantings. This program is orientated primarily to the growing number of landowners who do not qualify for other forms of cost share or whose specific conservation practice doesn't attract funding due to federal priorities.

This would be additional funding being requested to continue with the unmet tree planting needs in the state of North Dakota. This cost share program has encouraged a large number of landowners to come forward for financial assistance to address their resource concerns. This increased awareness has brought forth a better working relationship within our partners by connecting the dots on how we can accomplish more when working together.

Directive A: Field Windbreak reduce soil erosion during years of drought, reduce water evaporation from adjacent cropland and increase crop yields. Similarly, other conservation plantings are designed to stabilize streambanks, filter water runoff from adjacent agricultural lands, provide wildlife habitat, protect stretches of road from snow accumulation, provide winter protection for wildlife and livestock, or protect rural homes from snow and wind.

Directive C: Trees are vital for many different species of wildlife whether it be for providing shelter, winter thermal protection, travel corridors and shade in the summer. Wildlife tree plantings also provide a food source that is needed to survival.

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.

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

The NDSTPI program opportunity will be targeted for the entire State of North Dakota. Willing landowners both public and private, will be encouraged to participate. A continued three year financial commitment effort is required to attain the programs goals. The North Dakota Conservation District Employees Association (NDCDEA) will coordinate the project at the state level with program partners utilizing leadership and expertise for guidance. The NDCDEA will provide an effective tracking and reporting mechanism for project resource information, location and accounting. Conservation Districts Employees will be required to submit timely their program applications, producer contracts, payments submissions and status reviews for grant requirements. NDCDEA – grant administrator will provide oversight and coordination of the program. Prior to contract acceptance their will be adequate paperwork requirements sent to the State Historical Preservation Office to ensure planting areas are free of any cultural resource impacts.

Partners will focus on developing a closer working relationship through a cooperative program to attain mutual goals. NDCDEA has a working relationship with both state and federal conservation programs. They will ensure grant funds are spent appropriately and with a high level of accountability. They will continue with a framework that is easy to understand and navigate for public and private landowners seeking cost-share assistance.

Funding for the program can be used to leverage other sources of federal, state, private and local funds. The cost for replacement trees and shrubs are not included in this program and will be the responsibility of the landowner, who will be required to maintain the project through a signed 10 year contract.

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.

If awarded OHF funding, NDCDEA will be able to measure success by the number of landowners participating along with a quantitative footage of trees installed. This will also be measured individually within the 54 Soil Conservation Districts with contract administration. Project reports will be provided timely and cumulative totals along with payment reimbursement request will be completed upon the spring planting season for the years of 2020, 2021 and 2022. Status reviews and actual footage installation cost will be completed and certified for payment in August/September based on planting season completion.

Conservation tree planting records will be held at individual county locations along with grant administrator. An important measure of success is the increase in conservation tree planting practices and tree planting numbers to combat the accelerating amount of tree removal. NDCDEA does not promote in discriminant tree plantings but follows NRCS practice specifications using national and state standards.

We can evaluate success from previous appropriations we have received through the ND Outdoor Heritage Fund. The ND Soil Conservation Districts have received two grant awards; the first round with \$1,878,000.00 with a project duration date of 2013 through 2016. The SCD's exhausted those funds within two years of planting installation and submitted another funding application on October 1, 2015 for consideration of \$2,050,000.00 with conclusion in 2019. The reason for submitting for early funding consideration is field visits need to be conducted early based on land preparation requirements along with application consideration and State Historical Preservation Office clearance.

Tree Plantings Completed:

❖ 2015	447 Applicants	1,976,875 linear feet installed
❖ 2016	142 Applicants	994,079 linear feet installed
❖ 2017	128 Applicants	839,487 linear feet installed
❖ 2018	152 Applicants	767,026 linear feet installed
Totals Submitted	869 Applicants	4,577,467 linear feet installed (867 Miles)
2019	210 Applicants	1,413,193 linear feet estimated to be installed

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.)

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.

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	Total Each Project Expense
Heritage Funding	\$3,000,000.00	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$3,000,000.00
Landowner Obligation	\$	\$1,000,000.00	\$	\$	\$	\$1,000,000.00
District Employee Labor	\$	\$	\$850,000.00	\$	\$	\$850,000.00
Administrative	\$60,000.00	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$60,000.00
Cultural Reviews	\$10,000.00	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$10,000.00
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Total Costs	\$3,070,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	\$850,000.00	\$	\$	\$4,920,000.00

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.

Administrative – To coordinate producer applications and county correspondence. Ensure all applications are completed along with facilitating review committee for application acceptance. Develop landowner contracts, file folder maintenance and process payment applications. Application submission and coordination with SHPO. Completion of grant reports and payment submissions along with SCD payment distribution.

Cultural Reviews – If SHPO deems a site to require additional survey walks to be completed by outside firm and report filed with the state for acceptance. Cultural review cost to be allowed with 75% for payment reimbursement with OHF funds for planting installation.

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

Include information on the sustainability of this project after OHF funds have been expended and whether the sustainability will be in the form of ongoing management or additional funding from a different source.

Conservation tree planting is an important long-term management tool. Trees provide opportunities to integrate productivity and profitability with environmental stewardship. Resulting in healthy, sustainable agricultural systems that can be passed on to future generations. Trees help purify the air by absorbing pollutants, protect property and livestock from wind, enhance natural beauty, reduce soil erosion and improve crop yields, provide food and cover for wildlife and improves water quality. Trees control drifting snow, reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide, reduce heating and cooling costs, improve livestock weight, reduce calving losses and increase our supply of renewable resources.

Individual conservation tree plantings will be managed to ensure effectiveness by the landowner. Overall survival requirements will be outlined within the landowner agreements as well as unacceptable land management practices – burning, grazing or destructive tree removal. As the landowners will be 25% financially vested in their project, they have an incentive to ensure the practice is successful. Additional assistance by partnering agencies can help landowners identify potential insect and disease or long-term forest health issues. ND Conservation District Employees will be on site for contract reviews to ensure proper management of the tree plantings are meeting contract requirements.

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

If partial funding is awarded footage and applicants applying will be reduced. These adjustments can be made to accommodate financial allocations if awarded funding. A reduced level of funding would simply result in fewer landowner participation.

Partnership Recognition - If you are a successful recipient of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars, how would you recognize the Outdoor Heritage Fund partnership? * *There must be signage at the location of the project acknowledging OHF funding when appropriate.*

The Outdoor Heritage Fund is listed as primary sponsor on our press releases, tree applications, payment submission and landowner contracts. The OHF will have visible recognition on advertisements, pamphlets, county newsletters and statewide press releases. Soil Conservation Districts host a number of tours and meetings showcasing best management practices. The SCD's would utilize this time to highlight accomplishment of our partnerships through technical and financial contributions. The SCD's have also participated in capital events where we have highlighted partnership recognition for our cost share dollars.

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: