

Outdoor Heritage Fund Grant Application

Name of Organization RED RIVER REGIONAL COUNCIL
Federal Tax ID# 45-0318558
Contact Person/Title SARAH BRAATEN JOHNSTON, RIPARIAN PROGRAM MGR.
Address 516 COOPER AVE, SUITE 101
City GRAFTON
State ND
Zip Code 58237
E-mail Address sarbraaten@nd.gov
Web Site Address (Optional)
Phone (701) 352-3550
Fax # (if available) (701) 352-3015

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

MAJOR Directive:

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;
- 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:

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;
- 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.

Type of 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 **RED RIVER RIPARIAN PROJECT**

Abstract/Executive Summary

The primary focus of the Red River Riparian Program (Riparian Program) is the restoration of impaired streams back to acceptable water quality standards for aquatic life and recreation. The targeted reaches of impaired watersheds within this project are listed on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 303(d) list of impaired water bodies. We accomplish improvements in water quality through the restoration and conservation of riparian areas along impaired stream segments on both private and public lands. This project helps farmers and non-agricultural landowners by providing onsite technical assistance, project planning and implementation management, education, and financial assistance.



Non-point source pollution in the targeted watersheds of the Middle Sheyenne, Forest and Park Rivers stems from pollutants such as excess nutrients, sediment, and at times fecal coliform. Through implementation of best management practices for riparian areas we are able to better manage the amounts of non-point source pollution found in runoff. These practices include enhanced stream buffers, native vegetation plantings, riparian forest enhancements, and off channel cattle watering systems. Stream bank erosion, which contributes to excess sediment found in the targeted reaches is addressed through stream bank stabilization and restoration practices. Ultimately, the goal is to restore water quality to the EPA water quality standards for beneficial designated uses including benefits to recreation, fisheries, and aquatic life. This goal matches the Outdoor Heritage Fund's (OHF) Directive B.

Additionally, education on the benefits of properly managed riparian areas is a preventative component of the Riparian Program. The Riparian Program educates students in the targeted watersheds about non-point source pollution through participation in annual EcoEd programs, sponsored by local soil conservation districts. Watershed stakeholder meetings and annual tours are held to educate landowners and natural resource managers on responsible riparian management. Tour sites include restoration efforts that area landowners have implemented. The tour allows landowners the opportunity to share their experiences with implementing riparian management principles and practices.

Riparian projects provide enhancement to much needed ecological services and habitat conservation and it is difficult to calculate when calculating a return on investment. In our experience, landowners often have high motivations to implement a riparian restoration plan, and are willing to invest time and energy into planning and implementation. Over the past 16 years, we have developed hundreds of riparian management plans. There are numerous management plans that have not been implemented solely due to cost. We would like to be able to offer our landowners additional cost share as needed to achieve excellent riparian conservation efforts on the ground.

OHF will be used to solely supplement cost share to landowners. Historically we have provided 60 percent cost share using EPA 319 funds from the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDH). We were notified by the NDDH that our EPA 319 grant request for the next two years of funding (October 2014-September 2016) will not be awarded the full funding level by the EPA, due to available funding limitations. The anticipated funding amount seen below is an estimate of the pending EPA funding.

For cost share to landowners, we would offer 50 percent EPA 319 funds, and seek additional grant funds to maintain and enhance our cost share to landowners. Landowners would be responsible for 20 percent of the total project cost, and the OHF funds would be used to supplement the remainder of the cost.

Grant objectives will be completed in the period from October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2016.



Amount of Grant request **\$ 230,000**

Total Project Costs **\$ 568,394**

EPA Section 319 Funding (pending approval): \$ 223,800

Landowner/Participant Match: \$ 114,594

Outdoor Heritage Funds: \$ 230,000

Total Project Costs: \$ 568,394

Amount & Source of Matching Funds

Federal Match

EPA Section 319 \$ 223,800

Local Match

Landowners (cash & in-kind) \$ 114,594

Total Local Matching Funds: \$ 338,394

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 on Page 1 of this application.

Narrative

Organization Information

In 1973, the Red River Regional Council (RRRC) was organized as a comprehensive planning and development organization serving North Dakota Planning Region IV including the counties of Grand Forks, Nelson, Walsh, and Pembina. As outlined in the North Dakota Century Code, the State found it in its fundamental interest to have orderly development of the state and its resources. Further, by the establishment of consistent, comprehensive statewide policy for planning and other related functions, enhance the ability of and opportunity for local governments to revolve issues and problems transcending their individual boundaries. The RRRC is charged with coordinating planning and development of several areas such as land use, social and economic planning, water and sewerage, flood relief, and environmental quality.

The mission of the RRRC is "*in a global context, facilitate a regional, comprehensive approach promoting community cooperation and improving quality of life.*" The RRRC is governed by elected and community leaders and soil conservation district supervisors from each of the four counties. The Riparian Committee, a standing committee of the RRRC, meets approximately once a month and provides program oversight and funding recommendations on proposed Riparian Projects to the Board of Directors.



Dawn Keeley joined the RRRRC as its Executive Director in July 2013. Keeley was also employed by the RRRRC for 15 years from 1993 to 2008 as the Business Development Director. Keeley holds a Bachelors of Arts degree in Business Administration and Political Science and is a certified Economic Development Finance Professional. She has 23 years of experience in the areas of program and project development and management; grant writing; fiscal management; and business consulting.

Keeley oversees one full time Program Manager, Sarah Braaten Johnston, and one part time Administrative Assistant, Janet Dvorak, related to the Riparian Program. These positions are funded via federal and local funds. Further description of the skills of the Program Management staff is included under the "Program Management" section.

Purpose of Grant

This Riparian Program will improve water quality by enhancing riparian health. Riparian health is continually challenged in our watersheds by changes in adjacent land use and management decisions by private landowners. Educating landowners is key to having beneficial changes to riparian management. After we educate landowners on how to best manage riparian areas, we provide financial assistance to implement practices that enhance or restore the riparian corridor. Runoff will be better filtered, with nutrients, sediment, and fecal coliform being captured by restored riparian vegetation buffer. This enhanced filtration through the riparian area will lead to less pollution entering the stream via runoff.

Scope of Work for October 2014-September 2016:

- Provide technical support to develop a minimum of fifteen riparian management plans for targeted 303(d) listed streams.
- Provide financial support to facilitate the installation of 10 river miles of riparian restoration in targeted reaches of the Park River, Forest River, and Middle Sheyenne Rivers.
- Promote stewardship of riparian areas through outreach to local school and volunteer groups.
- Educate stakeholders, landowners, and local natural resource professionals on riparian practices.

Significantly damaged riparian areas resulted from a series of three separate floods that affected the Forest and Park River watersheds in 2013. We will work to restore damaged and inadequately buffered riparian areas in the targeted watersheds. Riparian restoration practices must be designed to take on sudden high stream flows, which increases the costs of projects. Addressing stream bank damage and riparian re-vegetation will continue to be at the forefront of our efforts to improve water quality.



Estimated Quantities of Riparian Best Management Practices to be installed:

- 80 acres of filter strips, riparian forest buffer, and/or forest stand improvement.
- 50 acres of critical area planting and/or riparian herbaceous cover for erosion control.
- Rangeland planning assistance and off channel watering sites for two or more producers with livestock.
- Stream channel stabilization or stream bank stabilization using bio-engineering methods in critical areas. Total quantity to be implemented - up to 1000 linear feet.

Management of the Riparian Program

The Riparian Program Manager presents landowner requests and management plans to the appropriate watershed committee for approval. Each watershed committee is comprised of soil conservation district board members, water resource district board members, and advisory members. After the proposed project passes the watershed review, it is then reviewed by the Riparian Committee for cost share review and further technical review. The Riparian Committee is comprised of members from each soil conservation district in the Riparian Project work area. After Riparian Committee approval, the proposed project is recommended to the RRRRC Board of Directors for final approval.



The RRRRC manages the Riparian Program staff. To date, we have had several successful projects completed by the current project manager, Sarah Braaten Johnston. Sarah has built



a rapport with many landowners in the targeted watersheds, and has a long waiting list of requests for projects.

We believe that excellent project management skills are essential for the planning and completion of projects. Riparian projects can involve unique project management challenges, as sometimes the windows of opportunity for implementation is strictly seasonal, and are subject to changes in weather and stream flows. The Riparian Project Manager is in charge of all project coordination and construction oversight. After project implementation, the Best Management Practices (BMP) Team engineer or the Riparian Project Manager certifies the project as completed to plan specifications.

Evaluation

Landowners are required to sign an Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Agreement for the practices implemented with 319 cost share. Landowners must agree to the proper maintenance and care of cost shared projects for the life of the installed project. For example, stream bank stabilization projects typically must be maintained for ten years.

Riparian restoration sites will be monitored using photo point monitoring and vegetation transects. This allows us to determine the success of the implemented practices in terms of the developing recovery of an area. In regards to water quality sampling, the NDDH samples these targeted rivers periodically during their assessment for total maximum daily load (TMDL) reporting.

The RRRC is fully accountable for all financial management. Monthly financial reports are submitted to the NDDH outlining program and project expenditures of the Riparian Program. The RRRC also submits an annual project report and annual audit report to the NDDH.

Financial Information

Project Budget

Proposed cost share of BMPs:

- **50% EPA 319 Funds**
- **30% Outdoor Heritage Funds**
- **20% Landowner Funds & In-Kind**



The following budget summarizes the cost share funding sources:

Funding Sources	Q4 2014	2015	Q1-Q3 2016	TOTAL
EPA Section 319 Funds*	\$27,975	\$111,900	\$83,925	\$223,800
Outdoor Heritage Funds**	\$28,750	\$115,000	\$86,250	\$230,000
Local Match				
Landowners (Cash & In-kind)	\$14,324	\$57,297	\$42,973	\$114,594
Total Project	\$71,049	\$284,197	\$213,148	\$568,394

*319 Funding amount is exclusively dedicated to landowner projects.

**OHF funds will be used exclusively for landowner projects

● I certify that a project budget will be sent to the Commission

Sustainability

The projects the Riparian Program implements with landowners are sustainable through ongoing management by landowners. Each landowner receives a riparian management plan to follow with recommendations for ongoing management of their riparian areas. We educate landowners on how to specifically maintain the practices that have been installed. Landowner project plans meet NRCS standards and specifications, to which each installed practice has a lifespan assigned. They agree contractually to maintain the practices in an operation and maintenance agreement for the lifespan of the best management practices. Each landowner is responsible for maintenance costs. If the landowner voluntarily destroys the practices installed, they are responsible to repay the 319 cost share. If control or title of the land is transferred, the new owner or operator of the land is responsible for the maintenance requirements of the cost shared practices.

Partial Funding

Providing adequate cost share to landowners is key to getting water quality projects installed. Riparian restoration practices can be expensive and benefits to water quality would be difficult to measure monetarily speaking, therefore, it is not an easy monetary investment for landowners to make. With that said, most are willing to give their time, energy, and best foot forward toward conservation practices if cost share is adequate. Receiving less cost share from OHF equates to possibly less water quality enhancing practices being installed due to the cost threshold.



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. *

We can meet the provisions of the sample contract.

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

Revised January 29, 2014



Budget Standard Form

Please use the table below to provide a detailed total project budget that specifically outlines all the funds you are requesting and the matching funds being utilized to fund this project. Please note 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. Match can come from any source (i.e. private sources, State and Federal funding, Tribal funding, etc.) Note a minimum of 25% match funding is strongly encouraged. An application will be scored higher the greater the amount of match funding provided. (See Scoring Form.)

Please feel free to add columns and rows as needed. Please include narrative to fully explain the proposed budget.

Note that NO INDIRECT COSTS will be funded from the Outdoor Heritage Fund. Also by law several items are ineligible for funding -- see Exemptions in the Application Form. Effective January 29, 2014 the following guidelines were approved by the Industrial Commission:

NO CONSIDERATION:

In addition to those specific items in law that are ineligible for funding, in the absence of exceptional circumstances, the following projects will NOT receive consideration for funding:

- Projects that are already completed;
- Projects that are on-going (Phased projects would be considered);
- Staffing;
- Feasibility studies;
- Annual maintenance;
- Paving projects for roads and parking lots;
- Swimming pools;
- Non-permanent equipment (such as snowmobiles, tractors);
- Research;
- Projects where the applicant is not directly involved in the project.

Project Expense	OHF Request	319 Funds (Federal)	Applicant's Match Share (Cash) Landowner	Total Cost
Landowner Projects (Best Management Practices)	\$ 230,000	\$ 223,800	\$ 114,594	\$ 568,394
Total Project Costs	\$ 230,000	\$ 223,800	\$ 114,594	\$ 568,394

Cost Share Details:

- 50% EPA 319 Cost share would be offered
- 30% Outdoor Heritage Funds will be applied to project costs (materials, labor)
- 20% Landowner Share (in some instances, this will be in-kind from landowner)



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.

Approved by OHF Advisory Board: October 17, 2013
Approved by Industrial Commission: October 22, 2013
Revised by OHF Advisory Board: January 22, 2014
Approved by Industrial Commission: January 29, 2014





Chase Building
516 Cooper Avenue, Suite 101
Grafton, ND 58237
T: 701.352.3550
F: 701.352.3015
E-mail: RRRC@nd.gov

March 28, 2014

Outdoor Heritage Fund Advisory Board
ND Industrial Commission
State Capitol – Fourteenth Floor
600 East Boulevard Ave. Dept. 405
Bismarck, ND 58505

Re: Red River Riparian Program– Outdoor Heritage Fund Application

Dear Advisory Board Members:

The Red River Regional Council is pleased to submit the enclosed application to the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF). We are requesting \$230,000 for the implementation of landowner projects that will enhance riparian areas and improve water quality as part of our Red River Riparian Program. The OHF funds will be matched with \$223,800 in federal funds and \$114,594 in local funds. These projects will take place in targeted stream reaches of the Middle Sheyenne, Forest, and Park Rivers that have water quality impairments according to the EPA 303(d) list.

The OHF Directive B shares our Riparian Program objectives, which are supported by the North Dakota Department of Health Non-point Source Pollution Task Force. The best management practices that landowners adopt and install through our program improve water quality, restore plant diversity and soil conditions along our rivers and tributaries. Riparian habitat is also improved in the restoration of river areas. The goal of our program is to restore impaired rivers to an acceptable level of water quality for aquatic species and recreational use. The program assists private and public landowners by providing technical planning and US Environmental Protection Agency 319 cost share assistance for riparian best management practices.

The cost of implementing riparian restoration projects is commonly a prohibitive hurdle which could be overcome with additional cost share from the OHF. Your support will expedite the implementation of projects, increase areas successfully restored, and improve river areas for the future generations.

Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,

Sarah Braaten Johnston
Red River Riparian Program Manager