

Outdoor Heritage Fund Grant Application



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

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

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

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

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

Exemptions

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

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

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 tractors, snowmobiles);
- Research;
- Projects where the applicant is not directly involved in the project.

Application Deadline

Applications for the second grant round cycle are due on **November 3, 2014 at 5:00 p.m. CT.** All information, including attachments, must be submitted by that date. See instructions below for submission information.

Instructions

Please download this Word document (available on the Industrial Commission/Outdoor Heritage Fund Program website at <http://www.nd.gov/ndic/outdoor-infopage.htm>) to your computer and provide the information as requested. You are not limited to the spacing provided except in those instances where there is a limit on the number of words. After completing the application, save it and attach it to an e-mail and send it to outdoorheritage@nd.gov or print it and mail it to the address noted in the next paragraph.

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

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

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.

Name of Organization * North Dakota Department of Agriculture

Federal Tax ID# * 45-0309764

Contact Person/Title * Carrie Larson, Director, Plant Industries Division, North Dakota Department of Agriculture

Address * 600 E. Boulevard Ave. Dept. 602

City * Bismarck

State * ND

Zip Code * 58505-0020

E-mail Address * cllarson@nd.gov

Web Site Address (Optional) www.nd.gov/ndda

Phone * 701.328.4723

Fax # (if available) 701.328.2240

List names of co-applicants if this is a joint proposal: North Dakota Game & Fish Department

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:

- X State Agency
- O Political Subdivision
- O Tribal Entity
- O Tax-exempt, nonprofit corporation.

Project Name* North Dakota Waterbank Program

Abstract/Executive Summary.

The North Dakota Waterbank Program is a cooperative effort that provides landowners with financial incentives to restore, conserve or enhance wetlands and their associated uplands. This program will allow landowners to manage excess water on their lands and provide compensation for inundated crop acres. Landowners enter into agreements with the North Dakota Department of Agriculture (NDDA) for a five or ten year lease agreement. Draining or burning or otherwise changing the character of leased land is not allowed except in emergencies or as part of an approved management plan. No more than 50% of a tract in a year may be hayed or mowed. Prescribed grazing may be used to perform management and permitted by the Commissioner with an approved grazing plan.

Wetlands and their adjacent uplands play a critical role in maintaining water quality standards, providing habitat for plants and animals and preventing soil and wind erosion. Farmers and ranchers in the state are highly dependent on conserving natural resources and they have the ability to be frontline wetland conservationists. This program will help farmers and ranchers continue and increase these benefits without adversely affecting their production.

Additionally, wetland restoration and conservation through programs like this are promoted and supported as a best management practice (BMP) by the North Dakota Non-point Pollution Management Program to reduce sediment and pollutants.

The North Dakota Waterbank Program was created by the state legislature in 1981 and first administered by the North Dakota Department of Agriculture (NDDA) in 1990. A 2005 report on the effectiveness on the state Waterbank Program found that all goals for the project were met or exceeded. Sixty-five landowners entered into agreements with the NDDA and 6,299.7 acres were enrolled in the program (105.3 drained wetlands, 1,710.1 acres of land classified as wetlands and 4,484.3 acres of uplands, including cropped federal waterbank, CRP or pastureland).

Objectives:

- Obtain a number of Water bank agreements with landowners that correlates with available funding and a future determination on leasing rates
- Complete land treatments: upland seeding and any wetland restorations identified in the landowner agreements
- Monitoring tracts for compliance with agreements
- Provide an alternative incentive to landowners for flooded cropland

Expected Results:

- Grassland restoration through upland seeding
- Mutual benefits of landowner compensation and wetland restoration and conservation
- Enhanced wildlife habitat
- Increased water quality in conserved areas due to more sediment filtration and less erosion

- Number of contracts and acres preserved will depend on available funding and leasing rates
- Increased public access

Duration: The North Dakota State Waterbank Program is, at minimum, a 10 year project.

Total Project Costs: \$1,600,000

Participants: North Dakota Department of Agriculture, private landowners

Amount of Grant request \$1,200,000

Total Project Costs \$* 1,600,000

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

A minimum of 25% Match Funding is strongly encouraged. Amount of Matching Funds = \$400,000

\$100,000 – cash, NDDA

\$50,000 – in-kind salary match, NDDA

\$200,000 – cash, NDGF

\$50,000 – in-kind salary match, NDGF

Please indicate if the matching funds will be in-kind, indirect or cash.

Source(s) of Matching Funds*

Please provide verification that these matching funds are available for your project.

NDDA – Special Funds, salary match (general funds)

NDGF – NDGF funds are derived from the Department’s Private Land Habitat and Access improvement Fund described in the North Dakota Century Code 20.1-02-05(16)

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 Department of Agriculture (NDDA) is a state agency lead by the agriculture commissioner. NDDA’s primary responsibility is to promote a healthy economy, environment, and social climate for North Dakota agriculture and the rural community. NDDA’s responsibilities include providing leadership in the formulation of policies affecting the state’s agricultural industries, serving as an advocate for the needs and concerns of farmers and ranchers on the state and national levels,

promoting and marketing North Dakota products, and disseminating information concerning agricultural issues.

NDDA is responsible for:

- Promoting improved marketing conditions for North Dakota products
- Regulating dairy and poultry industries
- Licensing and bonding livestock auction markets and individuals selling livestock
- Controlling and eradicating bee diseases and licensing of beekeepers
- Developing, supervising, and participating in programs to protect plant life from disease and insects; Administering state nursery laws
- Administering a mediation service to resolve differences between financially distressed farmers and their creditors
- Administering and enforcing state and federal pesticide laws
- Administering noxious weed laws
- Monitoring compliance with established standards by organic producers
- Administering the Agriculture in the Classroom program
- Cooperating with federal agencies in controlling animals that cause property damage
- Administering the State Waterbank program
- Promoting honey and honey products
- Promoting the turkey industry
- Registering and regulating livestock medicines
- Registering and enforcing laws pertaining to fertilizers and soil conditioners
- Licensing and inspecting anhydrous ammonia bulk facilities and enforcing laws related to anhydrous storage
- Administering a state meat and poultry inspection program
- Providing Export Certification of plant and plant products to assist in North Dakota ag trade

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.

The North Dakota Waterbank Program continues funding that is no longer available to NDDA.

Outdoor Heritage Fund Directives:

The state Waterbank program's major directive is Directive C. This project will directly develop, enhance, conserve and restore wetlands in enrolled acres. Additionally, landowners will be Each landowner will create a management plan that must be approved by the assessment of both state agencies involved to ensure that it achieves the goals of conserving and enhancing wetlands and their associated uplands—as well as aiding producers and landowners with water management. Additionally, enhancement will occur on specific lands where seeding is deemed necessary. Carrying out these steps will allow landowners to conserve and restore habitat for wildlife and fish on their private land.

Wetlands are an important part of North Dakota, yet half the wetlands one found in the state are gone. The remaining small ponds, potholes, sloughs, marshes and small lakes need to be preserved.

This program's secondary directive is Directive B. Wetlands provide a natural nutrient and sediment filter that will improve soil health and water quality. These improvements will benefit farming and ranching as the health of these natural resources is integral to agricultural production. This program enables farmers and ranchers to continue practicing good stewardship while also receiving a financial incentive to conserve specific lands. These lands, as was demonstrated by the program previously, will flourish and increase plant diversity and animal systems as well.

Another directive that will result in this program is Directive A. Landowners will also have an option to receive additional incentives for walk in public access for hunting and additional habitat enhancement on adjacent non-Waterbank acres through the NDGF Private Land Open To Sportsmen (PLOTS) program. Department biologists will work with interested landowners to discuss details of an additional PLOTS agreement; PLOTS agreements are flexible and agreement lengths can range from 2 years up to 10 years or the length of the Waterbank contract. PLOTS agreement payments can be made annually or upfront depending upon terms of the agreement.

Goals: An evaluation ranking system was developed for the original Waterbank program. It is expected that this system will be revisited and revised if needed. This system includes an assessment of wetland and upland acres to be offered, wetland types, soil types, wetland densities, amount of upland to be seeded to grass, length of agreement and whether the landowner is interested in public access. The ranking system will not designate additional points if the land is open to public hunting. The agreements developed through this program will increase soil health, decrease erosion, provide habitat and increase water quality.

Strategies: NDDA will enter into agreements with private landowners and create management plans to preserve wetlands and adjacent uplands on private lands. NDGF will assist NDDA with evaluation and assessment of applications and management plans. NDGF will hold separate agreements for public access (PLOTS) with interested landowners. As the Waterbank agreement holder, NDDA will be responsible for monitoring and compliance of the Waterbank agreement; NDGF will be responsible for monitoring and compliance of PLOTS agreements that overlay Waterbank agreements. Promotional items, such as brochures, will be updated and printed for education and outreach.

Benefits:

- Prevention of erosion—keeping silt and agricultural chemicals from entering streams and rivers.
- Returning the wetlands function as a living filter, removing nutrients and sediments from surface and ground waters, retaining or removing nutrients through uptake by plant life, absorption into sediments, deposits of detritus such as organic matter and chemical precipitation.
- Soil accumulation through sediment trapping.
- Preservation of biologically diverse ecosystems that provide for a wide range of plant and animal life.
- Wetlands also serve as temporary retention basins to slow the runoff rate during major precipitation events and reduce or prevent stream bank erosion associated with excessive runoff to streams or rivers.
- Flexible payment options of lump sum or yearly payments available to landowners
- Landowners able to buyout of their contracts if they wish

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.

If successful, the first order of business would be to assemble a state waterbank assessment team, which would be responsible for ranking and assessing applications. This team would consist of multiple partners such as but not limited to NDDA, ND Game & Fish, NRCS, and the State Trust Department. With the knowledge and expertise of the Fiscal Management Division of the North Dakota Department of Agriculture, contracts will be drafted in year one and successful applicants will enter into a contractual agreement with the North Dakota Department of Agriculture. Said agreements will be housed in the North Dakota Department of Agriculture. Contracts will contain a standard payment of \$50/acre set forth by the North Dakota Department of Agriculture on all crop, upland, and wetland acres. Once formed, the state assessment team will evaluate all applications, rank successful applications and subsequently, assess successful applicants' land tracts before entering into a contractual agreement. Agreed upon property stated in individual contracts will be monitored every two to five years depending on the term of the agreement to determine compliance. Contracts will be identified with an NDDA Waterbank sign; Waterbank tracts that will be enrolled into PLOTS will be identified with a PLOTS sign as well as being displayed in the Department's annual hunting atlas-PLOTS Guide.

Lane Kozel, NDDA - Lane Kozel is a graduate of South Dakota State University where he got his B.S. in Biological Sciences in 2010. Lane worked for USDA-APHIS-PPQ as a PPQ Tech from 2004-2011 before taking a position as a Plant Protection Specialist with the ND Dept. of Agriculture in 2011. Lane's primary duties include, noxious weed biological control, overseeing the Weed Seed Free Forage Program, and export certification.

Carrie Larson, NDDA - Carrie Larson got her B.S. in Plant Protection and Crop & Weed Science from NDSU in 1999, and her M.S. in Plant Pathology in 2001 from the same institution. She is a Director of Plant Industries Division for the ND Dept. of Agriculture, where she has been for 10.5 years.

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.

Success will be determined by the number of agreements entered into with landowners, in order to achieve the most wetland acres to be restored, as well as upland crop land acres to be planted to grass mixtures.

Financial Information

ATTACHMENT: Project Budget – Using the standard project budget format that is available on the website at <http://www.nd.gov/ndic/outdoor-infopage.htm> , please include a detailed total project budget that specifically outlines all the funds you are requesting. Note that a minimum of 25% match funding is strongly encouraged.*

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

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

Sustainability – Indicate how the project will be funded or sustained in future years. *
Include information on the sustainability of this project after all the funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund has been expended and whether the sustainability will be in the form of ongoing management or additional funding from a different source.

Project will end with funding lapse.

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

Fewer agreements with landowners will be entered into.

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

The Waterbank signs mentioned in the management section of this application would recognize the Outdoor Heritage Fund, as well as, Waterbank brochures and other promotional items.

Scoring of Grants

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

Awarding of Grants*

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

Responsibility of Recipient

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

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

North Dakota Waterbank Program Budget Standard Form

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
NDDA salary (1)	\$	\$	\$ 50,000	\$	\$	\$ 50,000
NDGF salary (2)	\$	\$		\$	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
NDGF Public (3) Access Payments					\$200,000	\$200,000
NDDA Contractual Agreements (4)	\$1,020,000	\$ 100,000	\$	\$	\$	\$ 1,300,000
NDDA Cost share (5)	\$ 180,000					
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Total Costs	\$ 1,200,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 50,000	\$	\$250,000	\$ 1,600,000

- (1) NDDA staff will review and rank applications, develop a management plan, assist in monitoring land tracts, and will manage contractual agreements. Estimated hours are ~3,300 hours @ \$15/ hour. = \$50,000
- (2) NDGF will assist in reviewing and ranking applications developing a management plan and in co-monitoring contracts with public access. Estimated hours are ~3,300 hours @ \$15/hr. = \$50,000
- (3) NDGF public access payments: Approx. 2000 acres at avg. \$10/acre X 10 years = \$200,000
- (4) NDDA Contractual Agreements will vary; however, for example = an average of 34 agreements of 60 acres each @ rental rate \$50/acre on a 10-year payment schedule. These rates allow wetland preservation of approximately 2,000 acres. = \$1,020,000
- (5) NDDA Cost share - Landowners can cost-share with NDDA for grass and wetland restorations. = \$180,000