

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 April 1, 2015 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. **Any item noted with an * is required.**

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 * Grant County SCD

Federal Tax ID# * 45-0357212

Contact Person/Title * Daniel Devitt
District Tech/Watershed Coordinator

Address * 103 Dakota Street
PO Box 257

City * Carson

State * North Dakota

Zip Code * 58529

E-mail Address * grantscd@westriv.com

Phone * 701-622-3381 ext. 118

List names of co-applicants if this is a joint proposal
NONE

MAJOR Directive: (select the Directive that best describes your grant request)*

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;

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Additional Directive: (select the directives that also apply to the grant application purpose)*

Choose all that apply

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Type of organization: (select the category that describes your organization)*

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

**Project Name* Grant County Area: Cover Crops for
Prevented Plant Ground utilized as Grazing**

Abstract/Executive Summary. An Executive Summary of the project stating its objectives, expected results, duration, total project costs and participants.*

Project Description: The project will initiate sustainable planting of cover crops, and will focus on prevented plant grounds, also allowing another option for farmer's to utilize in their rotational grazing, producers in Grant County using existing measurement tools to evaluate, document and share results through Field Days and Workshop presentations. This project encompasses farms and communities in the Grant County geographic area.

Project Abstract: The project goals would be to encompass between 15 - 20% of reported prevented plant acres according to the FSA reports. The 2014 reported prevented plant acres was approximately 33,000 acres. Farmers will document their planting and rotational grazing; make fields available for research and hosting field tours, and share successes and challenges with fellow farmers. A variety of farm operations utilized in the prospect area will include: farms with and without livestock, on farms using conventional and/or no-till methods

Cover crops are being studied and adapted in many parts of the United States. However, Grant County area farmers experience unique challenges in raising cover crops due to a shorter growing season for cash cropping, and a shorter post-crop growing season for cover crops. Having this additional ground in conjunction with current rotational grazing will offer more flexibility in planning of herd management. This project will connect farmers and provide tools to measure the impact of cover crops to enable rapid and effective innovation of cover crops in this county. Prevented plant areas are the primary focus and allowing these newly planted cover crops these new acres can be utilized in rotation for grazing purposes. Another aspect that will be closely monitored is the benefits that cover crops can have on rotational grazing when implemented into an existing rotation.

Meetings of project farmers and staff from the Grant County Soil Conservation District along with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Carson Field Office, will provide education on cover crops, soil health, rotational grazing methods, and give farmers an opportunity to learn from each other.

Fields will be monitored pre-, during, and post-season to record data of the results of the cover crop planting. The positive effect of new rotational grazing outcomes will also be documented to show how this practice can have a favorable response from herds. Desired long-term outcomes of planting cover crops in our project area are: improved soil health and productivity, increased economic benefits to our farmers, increased agri-business benefit through new seed sales, improved water quality, and reduced watershed runoff.

Project Duration:* 3 years

Amount of Grant request \$ * 274,395.00

Total Project Costs \$* 502,245.00

(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 \$* 227,850.00

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

Source(s) of Matching Funds*

- Matching Cash: Farmer's investment of initial cover crop planting \$165,000.00
- Matching Cash: Grant County SCD Field Days \$10,500.00
- In-Kind: Farmer's/SCD Staff documentation expenses \$40,500.00
- In-Kind: NRCS Staff attend Field Days \$750.00
- In-Kind: Solvita Burst Test \$2,100.00
- In-Kind: SCD Staff Compensation \$9,000

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 State of North Dakota issued a charter to the Grant County Soil Conservation District in August of 1948 after a vote of the people on June 29, 1948 indicated the desire of the general public to address conservation issues. As a legal subdivision of the State of North Dakota, the purpose of the District is to assist farmers and ranchers in planning and applying conservation practices.

Presently employing a full time district manager, district technician/watershed coordinator, the District assists the Natural Resources Conservation Service with the administration and implementation of the 2014 Farm Bill, which provides cost share and technical assistance to area farmers and ranchers to plan and implement conservation practices necessary to protect the natural resources of Grant County.

Grant County Soil Conservation District has also implemented six (6) 319 Watershed programs in the past. Currently has a 319 Watershed Project that started this summer and completed assessment on another possible 319 Watershed Project Area.

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

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.

Relevance:

This project will improve the sustainability and economic viability of farms by teaching, and providing measurement tools to producers as to how the addition of cover crops will provide agronomic, economic, and soil health benefit to their operations.

Increased and diversified farm incomes improve the sustainability of farm communities. Cover crop seed sales also add to a new income stream for local businesses.

The water usage of full-season cover crops and the improved soil health will allow for better nutrition and water retention, improving water quality and reducing runoff from excessive rainfall. This will improve the viability of small communities in these watersheds by reducing water treatment costs and the potential for flooding and the associated costs for communities.

Positive soil health and agronomic benefits of cover crops include: harvesting excess water, controlling erosion, building organic matter, fixing and sequestering nitrogen and carbon, avoiding or treating compaction from excessive traffic, controlling soil salinization, and additional benefits to wildlife and flood water reduction.

Having more fields that are being utilized in rotational grazing management practices gives more flexibility for producer's which can lead to more land being put into beneficial use, declining the need for additional feed for individual herds.

Impact:

This project will document and demonstrate the successful agronomic, economic, and soil health impact of cover crops and extend those benefits to Grant County farmers. These improvements from incorporating cover crops will strengthen the viability and sustainability of their farming operation.

Expanded cover crop use provides an agri-business benefit through new seed sales and the potential new commodity from raising cover crops for seed, adding new income streams to the community.

This project would also allow the farmer an opportunity to utilize the cover crops as an alternative for grazing. Which allows for more distribution and relying less on bale grazing techniques. Farmers can institute a more exhaustive rotational grazing method which lends to increased production of herds.

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

Wildlife is receiving an interesting side benefit of cover crops that are just beginning to be appreciated. The most obvious is the additional forage and cover that is provided to deer, which will be good replacement for some of the CRP that has been discontinued.

Research published by Jonathon Lundgren and Janet Fergen, USDA-ARS Brookings, SD shows they have found that cover crops reduce the infestation of corn rootworm and increase the presence of beneficial insects which may lead to a decrease in the use of chemicals harmful to insects. Other research is showing an increase in numbers and diversity of songbirds where cover crops are present, an indicator of a healthy ecosystem.

Management of Project – Provide a description of how you will manage and oversee the project to ensure it is carried out on schedule and in a manner that best ensures its objectives will be met.*

The SCD and NRCS staff will jointly manage and oversee the project in order to implement the project fully with the desired results.

Daniel Devitt is the current District Tech/Watershed Coordinator and has been in the position for just over 6 months, but has completed the required training for the position.

Cody Hatzenbuhler is the Soil Conservationist with the NRCS Field Office, Carson, ND and has been working with the NRCS for about 10 years.

Evaluation – Describe your plan to document progress and results. *

A key project outcome is increased knowledge and workable approaches for cover crops to be a sustainable addition to farms in the very short growing season of Grant County. This would include best methods to plant cover crops, best species selection based on desired outcome, and the best farm operation strategies to maximize the benefits of raising cover crops.

Meetings with farmers and professional staff will provide another important short-term outcome: connecting like-minded farmers. Much of cover crop experimentation has been isolated, and these working group meetings will encourage farmers in pursuing cover crop practices.

Farmers' project fields will be monitored throughout the season by SCD staff to measure results of cover crop adoption. Planned measurements include biomass production, nutrient uptake by the cover crop and availability for the following crop season, soil bulk density, water usage, and soil microbial activity.

A second medium-term outcome is that project farmers will evaluate their operation to include less or no tillage to maximize the sustainable economic and soil health value of cover crops. Non-livestock operations may buy or lease livestock to utilize their cover crops or rent cover crop fields for grazing, improving farm profitability.

Successful incorporation and increased use of cover crops by project farmers can and will validate this practice within this county. A long-term outcome is that farmers in the county increase the sustainability of their farm by expanding cover crop acres to realize the economic gain from captured soil nutrients or livestock grazing, and the additional benefits of increased soil health. This may also increase seed sales in business opportunities.

Information on the rate of water infiltration, water usage, and nutrient retention from planting cover crops will also increase the knowledge of watershed management authorities and area communities. A desired long-term outcome is recognition of the benefits of cover crops in improving water quality and reduced runoff that leads to future watershed partnerships in encouraging farmers to plant cover crops.

Evaluation Plan: Regular interaction between SCD and NRCS will give evidence of farmer adoption of cover crops.

An analysis of current and future applications to EQIP or CSP funding that involve using cover crop will provide numbers to measure interest and adaptation in the county.

Field measurements will be taken pre-, during, post-cover crop of plant height, rooting depth, and biomass along with measurements of soil bulk density, aggregate size, and retained moisture levels. Microbial activity will be recorded with tests such as the Solvita or Haney tests.

Forms will be distributed to producers so that they can accurately document the additional benefit that the herd has gained from having a new source for grazing during the latter months of the year. Utilizing this information will be able to assist producers in determining that cover crops can be used instead of regular grazing methods.

Field days and workshops presentations during the second and third years will convey the ongoing cover crop results to other farmers. By the end of Year Three of this project some patterns of successful innovative approaches should emerge.

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. *

We are in hopes that the data collected and shared with fellow agencies that cover crop planting will lead to more widely accepted idea of cover crops are beneficial not only for the ground, but as an essential part in a producers management practices.

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

If this funding request is limited in the amount that is awarded the impact will be a direct relationship to the amount of acres that are proposed. The less money received; the less acres planted.

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

I would like to recognize the Outdoor heritage Fund by having their name placed on all print media sources, mentioned in articles pertaining to the project. It would also be nice to have placards or signs posted at all cover crop planted sites to recognize the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

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

Project Expense	OHF Request	Match Share (Cash)	Match Share (In-kind)	Total Each Project Expense
Cover Crop Planting	\$247,500.00	\$165,000.00		\$412,500.00
Cover Crop Analysis	\$10,395.00		\$40,500.00	\$50,895.00
Solvita Burst Test			\$2,100.00	\$2,100.00
Education/Outreach	\$1,500.00		\$11,250.00	\$12,750.00
SCD Staff Compensation	\$15,000.00		\$9,000.00	\$24,000.00
Total Costs	\$274,395.00	\$165,000.00	\$62,850.00	\$502,245.00

Cover Crop Planting entails the following figures:

Cost to plant acres was figured using the average cost of \$75.00/acre

5,500 acres @ \$75.00 is \$412,500.00

OHF Request portion of cost share is \$247,500.00 or \$45.00/acre this will be done as a stipend to the Producer

*Stipend figured on data from NDSU Extension Crop Budget for Southwest North Dakota

*Expenses are a per acre basis: Fuel \$12.84, Repairs \$16.47, Misc. \$8.04 Total Cost \$37.35.

*These costs do not include any labor incurred.

Farmers cost is \$165,000.00 or \$30.00/acre this expense is only figuring seed cost.

Cover Crop Analysis is figured using price lists from WardLab, Inc.

Total estimated cost for running 210 tests needed to evaluate success is \$10,395.00

Documentation Expenses are figured on 35 Farmers each year and three(3) visits per year and will be an in-kind estimate of \$40,500.00

Donated test for Solvita \$2,100.00

*Education and Outreach will be 3 Field Days over the life of grant. The SCD will pay for the cost of each Field Day valued at \$10,500.00

*The NRCS staff that will assist will be giving an in-kind match of \$750.00 to attend the Field Days

*The previous two entries are located in the same box for Education/Outreach for in-kind match

Print materials, advertisement, and miscellaneous expenses are asked for from OHF valued at approximately \$1,500.00

Soil Conservation District Staff will oversee all aspects of the project including:

preparing and hosting Field Days, documentation, education, advertising and any other aspect of the project.