

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, with higher priority given to projects that enhance conservation practices in this state by:

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

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

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

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

Exemptions

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

- 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 a finding of exceptional circumstances by the Industrial Commission, the following projects will NOT receive consideration for funding:

- A completed project or project commenced before the grant application is submitted;
- A feasibility or research study;
- Maintenance costs;
- A paving project for a road or parking lot;
- A swimming pool or aquatic park;
- Personal property that is not affixed to the land;
- Playground equipment, except that grant funds may be provided for up to 25% of the cost of the equipment not exceeding \$10,000 per project and all playground equipment grants may not exceed 5% of the total grants per year (see Budget Form for how this will be calculated);
- Staffing or outside consultants except for costs for staffing or an outside consultant to design and implement an approved project based on the documented need of the applicant and the expenditures may not exceed 5% of the grant to a grantee if the grant exceeds \$250,000 and expenditures may not exceed 10% of the grant to a grantee if the grant is \$250,000 or less (see Budget Form for how this will be calculated);

- A building except for a building that is included as part of a comprehensive conservation plan for a new or expanded recreational project (see Budget Form for definition of comprehensive conservation plan and new or expanded recreational project); or
- A project in which the applicant is not directly involved in the execution and completion of the project.

Application Deadline

Applications for this grant round cycle are due on **March 1st, 2016 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 * Morton County Soil Conservation District

Federal Tax ID# *45-0307907

Contact Person/Title * Brandon Schafer – 319 Watershed Coordinator

Address * 2540 Overlook Lane

City * Mandan

State * ND

Zip Code * 58554

E-mail Address * brandon.schafer@nd.nacdn.net

Web Site Address (Optional): www.mcscd.com

Phone * (701)-667-1163 Ext. 3

Fax # (if available)

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

Grant County Soil Conservation District
Oliver County Soil Conservation District

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

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

Choose all that apply

- 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.

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

State Agency

Political Subdivision

Tribal Entity

Tax-exempt, nonprofit corporation.

Project Name*

O-M-G Grassland Improvement Project

Abstract/Executive Summary. An Executive Summary of the project stating its objectives, expected results, duration, total project costs and participants.* (no more than 500 words).

The landscapes of Oliver, Morton, and Grant Counties in North Dakota are all heavily influenced by livestock production. Unmanaged grazing of livestock can have a negative impact on soil and grassland health, water quality, as well as wildlife habitat. These negative impacts can be countered by implementing practices that facilitate improved grazing management and increase forage recovery time after livestock grazing. This is accomplished in large part through cross fencing and providing a localized water source to improve grazing distribution.

The primary goal of the project would be to improve grassland health and address resource concerns while achieving secondary goals of restoring and maintaining water quality and conserving wildlife habitat in Oliver, Morton, and Grant County. This will be accomplished by providing technical and financial assistance to producers that are interested in implementing practices to improve their existing grazing system. These grazing systems will focus on adequate recovery/rest periods during the growing season and alternate timing of grazing and pasture deferment to enhance and promote diverse grassland vegetation.

The project would last 4 years (2016-2019) and is requesting \$900,000 from the Outdoor Heritage Fund for a \$1.5 million project.

The 3 counties currently have at least 32 producers that have contacted their local Soil Conservation District offices with a need for grassland improvement practices. Site visits with these producers have resulted in rotational grazing plans which would require the following estimated facilitating practices: 108,800 feet of fence, 165,660 feet of pipeline, 12

wells or rural water hookups, 71 water tanks, 18 water pumping plants, 10 electrical/power hookups, and 1,000 acres of grass seeding's.

Project Duration:* 4 years (2016-2019)

Amount of Grant request \$ *\$900,000.00

Payments will be issued to a producer for 60% of the actual documented cost(s) of the practice(s).

Total Project Costs \$* \$1,500,000.00

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

A minimum of 25% Match Funding is required. Amount of Matching Funds \$* \$600,000.00

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

Matching funds will be cash contributions from the Applicant.

Source(s) of Matching Funds*

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.

The Applicant will be responsible for 40% of the actual practice installation cost.

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 – 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 three Soil Conservation Districts in this grant proposal were formed by a vote of the people in their county and are overseen by a Board of Supervisors consisting of five members (3 elected and 2 appointed).

The East and West Morton County Soil Conservation Districts were formed in 1943 and 1946, respectively, and later combined to create the current Morton County Soil Conservation District (MCSCD) in 1976. The Mission Statement of the MCSCD is “To help the residents of Morton County protect its natural resources by education, financial and technical assistance.” The MCSCD staff consists of a District Clerk, District Technician and a 319 Watershed Coordinator. The 319

Coordinator oversees the Morton County Northeastern Watershed Project as well as the Soil Health Mentorship Program. The MCSCD promotes conservation with crop and grassland tours, shop talks, Water Festival, annual Winter Workshop, several newsletters per year and a website www.mcscd.com.

The Grant County Soil Conservation District (GCSCD) was established in 1948 and currently employs a full time district manager and district technician/watershed coordinator. The district manager has 23 years of experience with 6 years as the district technician and watershed coordinator. The current district technician/watershed coordinator has one and a half years of experience at the position. The GCSCD has been a part of six previously implemented 319 watershed projects, has one current project started in 2014, and has completed an assessment of a possible future project. The district also offers various equipment and services to producers including a First-time Users Cover Crop Incentive and Bale Grazing Incentive. Their Mission Statement is “to assist landowners and land operators with conservation practices by providing educational, financial and technical assistance.”

The Oliver County Soil Conservation District was officially established in 1946. The Mission Statement of the Oliver County Soil Conservation District is “to promote the conservation of our natural resources through information programs, demonstrations, and by offering technical services and programs which assist landowners in implementing conservation practices.” The district employs a District Manager that will reach his tenth year of service in 2016. He has also served as Vice President of the North Dakota Conservation District Employees Association.

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. Please note that 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.

The primary goal of the O-M-G Grassland Improvement Project is to address natural resource concerns and improve the overall health of grassland in Oliver, Morton, and Grant Counties. This would be accomplished by providing technical and financial assistance for the implementation of livestock water systems, cross-fencing, grassland plantings, and grazing plans. According to the 2012 National Agricultural Statistics Service publication, Morton, Grant, and Oliver Counties rank 1st, 7th, and 13th, respectively, in the state for “all cattle” inventory by county. However, only 332 of the 980 farms with cattle in our three counties said they “practiced rotational or management-intensive grazing.” That leaves us with approximately 940,000 grassland acres that could be positively impacted by the proposed grant.

The use of a rotational grazing systems have positive impacts on grassland health by mimicking pre-settlement grazing of bison and other herbivores with periods of heavy use followed by long periods of rest. These periods of heavy use allow for an impact to be made on the entire plant community and not just select forages. The long periods of rest allow plants to recover and create a deeper, more robust root system. All of these factors, typically, add up to more stable production during poor growing conditions, greater yield potential, higher quality forage, decreased weed and erosion problems, more uniform soil fertility levels, and increased plant diversity.

The traditional grazing methods that are commonly used in the area, such as season long grazing, have largely negative effects on the native plant community as a whole. Season long grazing can result in poor plant health and generally has the opposite effect of what is desired in a

rotational grazing system. Therefore, we currently have 32 interested producers within the 3 counties wanting to improve their grazing systems.

Secondary goals to be addressed with the proposed grant would be improving water quality by providing alternative water sources to livestock, reducing erosion, and reducing runoff. Additionally, the practices involved would aid in improving habitat for upland and large game species, nongame species, and pollinator species.

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.

Background and Experience

Brandon Schafer has been the Watershed Coordinator for Morton County since May 2015 and previously for Foster County beginning in July 2014. He also served as the Watershed Technician in Stutsman County for 3 years under Watershed Coordinator Ryan Odenbach.

Connie Schily has been with the Grant County Soil Conservation District for 23 years. Six years were served as the Watershed Coordinator/District Technician and the rest have been as the District Manager.

Daniel Devitt has been the Watershed Coordinator/District Technician for the last year and a half with the Grant County Soil Conservation District.

Jeremiah (JD) Hanson has been with the Oliver County Soil Conservation District for the last 10 years as their District Manager/Technician.

Management

The project will be jointly managed between the 3 counties.

Grant County Soil Conservation District's manager, Connie Schily, would be in charge of the grant funds and reporting to the industrial commission for the project.

Each district employs a district technician and/or a 319 coordinator who will coordinate the project at the local level. Their duties would include, but not be limited to, meeting with landowners to discuss feasibility, help interested producers with the application process, and develop a conservation plan for each approved applicant in their respective county. These employees would also be responsible for sending payment applications to the Grant County SCD for completed projects.

A ranking committee, comprised of 1 board member from each county, will establish a list of criteria based on local resource concerns. Each application will be reviewed and scored based upon the criteria that are established at that time. Once applications are reviewed and scored by the committee, they may be approved for funding. The application score will be taken into account during the approval process.

An approved contract will contain a conservation plan, operation and maintenance (OM) agreement, and 3-year prescribed grazing plan. The prescribed grazing plan and all structural practices must meet NRCS standards and specifications or receive special ranking committee approval for an equally efficient system that addresses the resource concerns. OM agreements will use the established NRCS lifespans for practices that will be implemented.

Timeline

If the proposed project is funded, a sign-up period would occur from August 1 to October 1, 2016. Scoring and approval of contracts would occur by October 31st. Implementation could take

place as early as November 2016. Batching deadlines would occur quarterly in each subsequent year of the project except during the final year (2019) which will be left for implementation.

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 measured by the number of successfully implemented grazing systems and the acreage that they cover. Monitoring and photo points will be established to show the impacts on the plant community over time.

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 required.*

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. Effective July 1, 2015 no State General Fund dollars can be used for a match unless funding was legislatively appropriated for that purpose. 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.

The sustainability of this project will be that of ongoing management. Producers who apply to receive funding from this grant will be required to sign an operation and maintenance agreement and follow a 3-year prescribed grazing plan (using NRCS standards and specifications). This agreement would specify that they are expected to maintain practices, for their lifespan, even if the agreement has expired. Random field checks would occur to determine if the producer is meeting their compliance agreement.

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

Partial funding would result in a reduced number of grazing systems that could be implemented.

Partnership Recognition - If you are a successful recipient of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars, how would you recognize the Outdoor Heritage Fund partnership? * Please note it is a requirement that there be signage at the location of the project acknowledging the funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund if appropriate for your project.

- 1) Producers that apply for assistance with this grant would be made aware of the funding source and the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) logo would be displayed on the agreement.
- 2) The OHF would be recognized in newsletters/mailings by the districts and on the tours that will be held on land impacted by the grant.
- 3) SCD websites would describe the O-M-G Grassland Improvement Project and recognize the OHF for making it possible.

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

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.) 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. Note 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.)

Please feel free to insert 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 June 10, 2015 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 a finding of exceptional circumstances by the Industrial Commission, the following projects will NOT receive consideration for funding:

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

Table 1. O-M-G Grassland Improvement Project Budget

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
Project costs at the 60:40 rate	\$900,000	\$600,000	\$	\$	\$	\$1,500,000
Total Costs	\$900,000	\$600,000	\$	\$	\$	\$1,500,000

Cost-Shared Practices:

Cross-Fencing
 Livestock Water Wells
 Livestock Water Tanks
 Livestock Water Pipelines
 Electrical/Power Hookups
 Livestock Water Pumping Stations
 Rural Water Pasture Taps
 Grass Seedings (Seed Cost Only)

***Table 1 is for all anticipated project costs. On the next page, Table 2 represents the estimated costs for the currently interested producers. We are anticipating more producers willing to take part in this project than just those that have contacted our offices to date. Therefore, we are requesting \$900,000 from the Outdoor Heritage Fund to fully fund all of the planned grassland improvement practices and allow for additional practices to be implemented.

Table 2. Estimates for Currently Planned Projects

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
108,800 ft fence	\$88,128	\$58,752		\$	\$	\$146,880
10 livestock water wells	\$90,000	\$60,000		\$	\$	\$150,000
71 livestock water tanks	\$85,200	\$56,800		\$	\$	\$142,000
165,660 ft pipeline	\$298,188	\$198,792		\$	\$	\$496,980
10 electrical/power hookups	\$30,000	\$20,000		\$	\$	\$50,000
8 solar pumping stations	\$28,800	\$19,200				\$48,000
10 submersible water pumps	\$3,600	\$2,400				\$6,000
2 rural water hookups	\$4,200	\$2,800				\$7,000
1,000 ac grass seedings	\$51,000	\$34,000				\$85,000
Total Costs	\$679,116	\$452,744		\$	\$	\$1,131,860

- Fencing is estimated at \$1.35/ft
- Livestock water wells are estimated at \$15,000 each
- Livestock water tanks are estimated at \$2,000/unit
- Livestock water pipeline is estimated at \$3.00/ft
- Electrical setups are estimated at \$5,000 per site.
- Solar water pumping stations are estimated at \$6,000 per site.
- Rural water hookups are estimated at \$3,500 each
- Submersible water pumps are estimated at \$600 each
- Grass Seedings are estimated at \$85.00/ac