

Contract No. 001-006
“ND Statewide Conservation Tree Planting Initiative”
 Submitted by ND Association of Soil Conservation Districts
 Principal Investigator: Brian Johnston
 Directives B & C

PARTICIPANTS

Sponsor	Cost Share
Landowners	<u>\$1,252,000</u>
Subtotal Cash Cost Share	\$1,252,000
ND Soil Conservation Districts	<u>\$ 708,338</u> (in-kind)
Subtotal In-kind Cost Share	\$ 708,338
North Dakota Industrial Commission	<u>\$1,878,000</u>
Total Project Cost	\$3,130,000

Project Schedule – 36 months
 Contract Date – 4/7/2014
 Start Date –
 Completion Date – 11/30/2017

Project Deliverables:
 Status Report: June 30, 2015 ✓
 Status Report: November 30, 2015 ✓
 Status Report: June 30, 2016
 Status Report: November 30, 2016
 Status Report: June 30, 2017
 Final Report: November 30, 2017

OBJECTIVE/STATEMENT OF WORK:

This project will engage stewards to embrace conservation practices that promote the ecological services trees provide. Tasks of the project include:

- Encourage and provide financial assistance to implement agroforestry practices in ND including farmstead, feedlot and field windbreaks; forestry, wildlife and riparian plantings, buffers, and living snow fences.

This is a new program oriented primarily to that growing number of landowners who do not qualify for other forms of cost-share or whose specific conservation practice does not attract funding due to federal priorities. The OHF monies will be used statewide for tree stock and tree planting services; weed control including fabric weed barrier; and tree growth tubes for certain species of hardwood trees to enhance growth and protect from deer.

STATUS:

The original request was for \$2,500,000. The amount awarded was \$1,878,000. Contract 001-006 has been executed.

January 6, 2015 - Although a status report is not due until June 30, 2015 the following information was provided in preparation for the 2015 Legislative Session. The purpose of the grant monies received is to promote and enhance conservation tree plantings throughout the State of North Dakota to encompass resource concerns dealing with soil erosion, wildlife, water quality, and farmstead plantings. The ND Soil Conservation Districts used a landowner and operator marketing approach when promoting this financial grant assistance opportunity by one on one producer field assistance, newsletter promotion, newspaper articles, and two promotional commercials highlighting the benefits of tree planting. Conservation Districts worked directly with landowners in submitting the grant assistance applications

for the two batching periods we have had for planting approval. Our two batching periods were held August 14th, 2014 and November 14th, 2014 for spring the 2015 field season plantings. Landowners receiving approval for their plantings are then entitled to a 60% cost share payment of their total tree and fabric planting cost not to exceed \$25,000.00 to the landowner. These payments will be made directly to the Conservation Districts on behalf of the landowner for services that have been rendered. All landowner applications go through a review process to ensure the right trees are being properly placed within the soil suitability group that can produce healthy and thriving trees. To hold respect to any cultural significance that had occurred in ND we then have a cultural resource screening on each planting. This work is completed by the North Dakota Historical Society and no producer agreements move forward for signature unless area is cleared. The following numbers are from batching periods dated August 14th, 2014 and November 14th, 2014.

Round 1 262 Landowner Applications 255 Applications approved
1,353,882 feet of trees and fabric assistance
\$1,062,537.00 total cost x 60% = \$637,552.00 financial assistance
\$424,985.00 will be producer/landowner responsibility

Round 2 265 Landowner Applications Landowner signatures being returned
1,393,784 feet of trees and fabric assistance
\$976,973.00 total cost x 60% = \$586,183.00 financial assistance
\$390,790.00 will be producer/landowner responsibility

August 17, 2015 - The following status report was submitted along with a detailed listing of the landowners participating in the plantings:

The ND State Wide Tree Planting Initiative has accomplished 1,741,087 lineal feet of tree establishment and weed barrier application. Plantings considered for funding assistance with a 60% payment based off of total cost needed to meet a resource concern to include one of the follow: soil erosion, wildlife habitat, water quality and farmstead protection plantings. The producer holds the payment responsibility of the remaining 40% payable to the Conservation District. First payment submission was for the 2015 tree planting season that started in April and concluded in August of 2015. Plantings have cleared State Historical Preservation screenings prior to installation.

The detailed listing showed that plantings had been done in over 40 counties across the state.

January 16, 2016 - A status report on this project was given to the Advisory Board at their November 30, 2015 meeting. A written status report has been submitted as follows:

The 2015 planting season for the ND Conservation Districts was a successful one with implementing 1,976,875 feet of trees and weed barrier throughout the landscape of ND. These plantings encompassed farmstead shelterbelts, living snow fences, water quality buffers, wildlife habitat and soil health with field rows. The NDASCD held two batching periods for applicants to sign up for 60% cost share of the total cost of the practiced installed for a total reimbursement of \$960,530.60 paid directly to the ND Soil Conservation Districts on behalf of the landowners in ND. This correlates to a total cost of applications submitted to be \$1,600,884.00. Practice implementation has to be installed on land that is located within the state of North Dakota. Total applicants applying for the grant totaled 1148 submitted with 447 of those granted funding. The ND Soil Conservation Districts also worked with local county and township boards to install protective plantings in areas that included parks, trails and major road ways. The last batching period for applications to cover the 2016 planting season has taken place and will fully

execute the \$1,878,000.00 that was allocated to the first grant round to the NDASCD Tree Planting Initiative.

The estimated 2016 tree planting numbers are showing 1,424,134 linear feet to be applied with \$677,099.18 in funding spent. All applicants prior to signing a tree planting agreement must undergo a State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) screening to ensure no cultural artifacts are being impacted within the planting location. If warranted a follow up walk is conducted by a certified archeologist to clear the area with correspondence being directed back to SHPO for authorization.

Landowners sign an Outdoor Heritage Agreement individually with the SCD providing the work and are required to leave the practice installed for the life span of the practice and are expected to maintain the practice free of weeds. Landowners are encouraged to place an OHF sign designed by the State by the tree planting installed where applicable.

Updated 1/28/2016