

ND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST GRANT GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

The Trust's granting process has evolved as the organization has grown and matured. We are always looking for ways to improve our grant application process by making our forms clear and efficient and, most important, informing you clearly of Trust goals and objectives to help you determine whether your grant idea fits the Trust's mission. Our grant process has a predictable annual cycle. The Trust Board of Directors considers grant proposals once a year at the December meeting. On rare occasions, in consideration of special circumstances, the Board may consider a grant proposal at another time of year. However, it is to your advantage to plan your grant request for the normal annual cycle.

If you have any questions about the Trust's granting process, the applicability of your idea, or general questions about the Trust, please contact us. Call the Trust's Bismarck office at 701/223-8501, or email Linda Roeder at nrtlinda@btinet.net.

THE GRANT APPLICATION FORM

I. Applicant Information

This section contains basic information that will help us process your grant application. Of primary importance is designating a contact person, their phone number and email address, so we know who to contact if we have questions or need additional information.

II. Project Description (200 words or less) (Schedule II).

Tell us what your proposed project is and what you intend to accomplish. List goal(s) and objective(s), making sure that objectives are quantified whenever possible, describing what outputs you intend to produce or what you intend to accomplish, and by what date. Use maps and other appropriate graphics to illustrate where and how you intend to do your work.

Predictably, grant decisions will be heavily influenced by the ability of your proposed project to further the Trust's mission. We have identified several types of priorities within our mission of preserving, restoring, enhancing and managing wetland, grassland, and riparian habitats. These include such things as geographic, habitat type, and, even in the case of educational projects, audience. Ensure you are familiar with the Trust's priorities within its strategic plan.

III. Project Needs (200 words or less) (Schedule III).

Tell us why you want to do this project, and what needs you have identified that require this project be pursued. Tell us what opportunities you are trying to take advantage of and/or what problems you are trying to solve with the project you are proposing. Tell us both the time you expect it will take you to do the project and the useful life you expect from the accomplishments.

IV. Project Finances (Schedule IV).

Give us a clear picture of the project's projected cost and expected cost/benefit. In particular, it is important for us to understand how the financial commitment you are requesting from the Trust relates both to contributions of other project partners and overall project costs. It is essential that we understand who the other partners are, what they are going to contribute, and that the Trust Board is clear whether other project funding is firm or anticipated. If some of your project funds are not confirmed, tell us the status of the anticipated funding using the fund codes listed on Schedule IVB. (NOTE: If you have already prepared a complete project budget in another format you may attach it rather than filling out the Trust form - just be sure to furnish all the financial information necessary for us to evaluate your proposed project).

It is also important for us to know what you will do with your project if you don't get the money you expect, either from the Trust or other sources. Will the project be scaled back if funding is short? Will the project be postponed while additional funding is pursued? Will you delay project implementation until you have secured adequate funding? Will the project collapse if all estimated funding needs are not met?

Finally, give us the full financial needs for your entire project. Whether you are submitting a one-time request to the Trust for this project, or whether you are asking for an initial commitment from the Trust and plan to approach the Trust for funding again in the future on the same project, be explicit.

V. Evaluation

Be explicit about how you intend to evaluate the success of your project and make sure your measurement of success is tied to the goals and objectives you outlined in your project description. Wherever possible, evaluation criteria should be "output" oriented. For example, in education projects it is common for evaluation to be based on "inputs" such as the number of instructors using the material, number of students exposed to the material, etc. For educational projects the Trust would prefer to see evaluation based on innovative pre and post instructional testing that assesses what students exposed to the material actually learned and retained. For on-the-ground projects "outputs" are commonly units of habitat affected (ie. acres of wetlands restored, acres of grassland protected, etc.), units of wildlife produced, units of public use, or some combination of a variety of these factors.

Grant applications commonly respond to requests for evaluation criteria as follows (an excerpt from an actual grant application):

“A direct evaluation of the success of this project will be based on the number of NPS BMPs applied, the environmental benefits they achieve and the level of expertise obtained by the local 319 watershed project staff after the project ends.”

To illustrate how we would like grantees to structure their evaluation criteria, the following questions might be asked:

- Regarding the number of NPS BMPs applied, could the applicant tell us how many NPS BMPs there are? Are there 10, or 20, or 30? And, of the number of NPS BMPs that could potentially be applied, how many, or at least what range, need be applied before the project is considered successful? If there are 20 that could be applied, does application of five indicate success, or does it take ten?
- Once applied, how will the sponsor assess the environmental benefits achieved? And, what level of achievement is required to consider the project a success?
- Regarding measurement of the level of expertise obtained by local 319 watershed staff, how will this be measured? And, what level of expertise exemplifies success?

Project results cannot always be measured quantitatively. However, the key to clarity and to assisting us in evaluating your proposal is to set clear goals and objectives and use them in developing your measurement criteria. If you can't quantify expected or measured results, be as clear as possible about which subjective measurement criteria you plan to use and how you plan to apply them.

HOW TO MAKE YOUR GRANT SUBMISSION

To receive a copy of the Trust's grant guidelines and proposal application, contact the Trust's Bismarck office at 701/223-8501 or email Linda Roeder at nrtlinda@btinet.net

The deadline for submitting grant proposals is October 15 of each year. Grant proposals should not be submitted after October 31. Proposals may be mailed to the ND Natural Resources Trust, 1605 E. Capitol Avenue, Suite 101, Bismarck, ND 58501-2102 or emailed to: nrtlinda@btinet.net. Proposals sent electronically are available in WordPerfect and MS Word format. All proposals must be kept in the original layout.

GRANT DEFINITIONS

Restored/Created - Restoration would apply to natural habitat that was previously destroyed or altered to a point where it lost its ability to function. Creation would describe establishment of habitat where none of that type previously existed. Examples include:

● WETLANDS

- ✓ Restoration would result from plugging a man-made drain at its natural elevation, OR removing sediment from a wetland basin, restoring its natural depth.
- ✓ Creation would result from impounding water, through dirt fill or man made structure, in a basin or waterway that did not hold water under normal circumstances.

● GRASSLANDS

- ✓ Restoration would result from reestablishing grass (native or tame) on land that was previously cultivated.
- ✓ Creation would not be a practical grassland habitat activity since all of North Dakota (with the rare exception of native woodland areas) was previously in grassland. As such, putting grass back on the landscape would fall under the restoration category.

● RIPARIAN LANDS

- ✓ Restoration would result from reestablishing or reinvigorating native woodland vegetation on land that was previously forested, or reestablishing native grass vegetation on altered lands that were previously riparian grasslands.
- ✓ Creation would result from planting trees or woody vegetation on land with some other current use, usually either grassland or cropland. Creation of woodland vegetation might be applicable for some projects, such as planting field windbreaks, block plantings for winter wildlife cover, or establishment of trees around recreation areas.

Enhanced/Managed - Enhanced would apply to some type of improvement, either one time or long term, of an existing habitat type. Managed would generally apply to a long-term strategy for keeping an existing habitat type in good condition, often, but not always, done by a governmental agency or NGO.

● WETLANDS

- ✓ Enhancement would result from altering a wetland's water level to improve its function, altering a wetland's watershed to reduce sediment and/or nutrient inflow, adding or removing vegetation (eg. cattail removal) to improve a wetlands function, etc.
- ✓ Management would result if the improvement strategies were ensured periodically for a medium to long term in an attempt to keep the wetland functioning in optimum condition.

● GRASSLANDS

- ✓ Enhancement would result from altering usage in a way favorable to the grassland community. This would include, but not be limited to, excluding agricultural use for a period of time, introducing or modifying agricultural practices such as grazing or haying, or utilizing burning to improve grassland condition or alter species composition in a favorable manner.
- ✓ Management would result if the improvement strategies were ensured periodically for a medium to long term in an attempt to keep the grassland functioning in optimum condition.

● RIPARIAN LANDS

- ✓ Enhancement would result from altering usage in a way favorable to the riparian community. This would include, but not be limited to, excluding agricultural use for a period of time, introducing or modifying agricultural practices such as grazing, or utilizing other proven techniques to improve riparian condition or alter species composition in a favorable manner.
- ✓ Management would result if the improvement strategies were ensured periodically for a medium to long term in an attempt to keep the riparian habitat functioning in optimum condition.

Protected - Protection would result from some type of contractual relationship that would ensure a viable habitat condition for some defined period of time. Protection would be compatible with and complementary to the previously defined habitat actions, especially management. In its most basic form, protection could involve something as short as a 10-year CRP contract. However, to be effective, we would like to see longer contracts or midterm easements from 30 to 50 years, with optimum protection involving a perpetual easement or fee title acquisition.

Example Budget

Estimated Program Expenses

	2002	2003	2004	2005
Lease Development	\$10,000*	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Lease Payments	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000
Administration	\$10, 000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Field Review	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
Information/Education	<u>\$ 5,000</u>	<u>\$ 5,000</u>	<u>\$ 5,000</u>	<u>\$ 5,000</u>
TOTAL	\$85,000	\$85,000	\$85,000	\$85,000

*In-kind contribution provided by the US Fish and Wildlife Service in terms of providing seed, landowner contracts and follow-up project needs.