



Pheasant Stamp Program FY18-19 Project Application Guidance Materials

Prepared by Mark Witecha & Jaqi Christopher, WDNR Upland Wildlife Program
Revised February 2017

I. Overview of the Pheasant Stamp Program

Pheasant Stamp funds have been providing opportunities for ring-necked pheasant management in Wisconsin since 1993. In accordance with Wisconsin Statutes s. 20.370(1)(hr), *Pheasant Restoration*, 40% of the moneys received under s. 29.191(2), *Pheasant Hunting Stamp*, shall be applied to “**developing, managing, preserving, restoring, and maintaining the wild pheasant population in the state.**” The remaining 60% goes toward the management of the State Game Farm, which raises pheasants for release on public hunting grounds. All Pheasant Stamp project proposals received are evaluated based on merit and the best projects are selected for funding according to pre-established criteria and funding pools outlined in this document.

All non-profit conservation organizations and units of government are eligible to apply for Pheasant Stamp funds and will be equally and fairly evaluated. Habitat projects on both public and private lands are eligible for funding, but individual landowners are not eligible to receive funds directly. Projects that involve multiple DNR work-units, multiple partners, and/or leverage additional sources of funding will be given higher consideration during proposal review.

II. Dedicated Funding Pools and Allocations

To ensure broad availability of Pheasant Stamp revenue during the FY18-19 biennium, funds will be allocated to individual funding pools. Four internal WDNR funding pools will receive automatic allocations, according to Table 1, and project expenditures will be tracked using appropriate budget procedures so that adherence to established project priorities (below) can be verified. Non-DNR entities can apply for Pheasant Stamp funding via the Cooperator Pool. Proposals from cooperators will be evaluated and ranked using the criteria described below, and funds will be allocated, beginning with the highest-ranked proposal, until funds in this pool are exhausted. The WDNR Pheasant Advisory Committee reserves the right to award partial funding for cooperator projects; applicants should note on their application whether partial funding is acceptable and at what level.

Table 1: Funding pools and allocations for FY18-19 Pheasant Stamp funds.

Funding Pool	Allocation (% of total funds available)	Automatic/Competitive
Central Office Coordination of the Pheasant Management Program	7% (~\$31,500)	Automatic
Cooperator (non-DNR) Pool	6% (~\$27,000)	Competitive
DNR – Bureau of Wildlife Management	47% (~\$211,500)	Automatic
DNR – Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation	3% (~\$13,500)	Automatic
Farm Bill Biologist Program	37% (~\$166,500)	Automatic

^a Percentages will be converted to dollar values when revenue projections are received from the Bureau of Finance.

^b To be allocated among BWM Districts as follows: Northern District = 10% (~\$21,150); Southern District = 40% (~\$84,600); West-central District = 25% (~\$52,875); Northeast District = 25% (~\$52,875).

Proposals for relevant research projects or information/education endeavors that provide benefits to pheasant conservation efforts are welcome, as outlined in Section III below, and will be evaluated prior to allocation of funding to the above-listed pools. If any Research or Information/Education proposals receive funding, that funding will be provided proportionally from the five established funding pools, as indicated by the allocations in Table 1.

III. Eligibility Guidelines and Program Priorities

The following section details eligibility criteria and defines project priorities for the Pheasant Stamp program. All projects must follow eligibility guidelines and address listed project priorities, regardless of the funding pool being utilized. Project priorities are outlined in greater detail below.

Eligible Project Priorities, Categories, and Funding Caps for the Pheasant Stamp Program

*** See below for additional details ***

- Habitat development, management, restoration, and maintenance
- Information & Education
- Equipment (*not to exceed 15% of the total allotment within each funding pool; 1:1 match requirement*)
- Research & Monitoring

Ineligible Projects & Practices for the Pheasant Stamp Program

- Stand-alone invasive species management projects that have no clear link to wild pheasant populations (exception: prescribed fire).
- Funding permanent or full-time project positions (except that funds may be used to support the Farm Bill Biologist partnership). Funds may also be used to cover the salary of short-term/temporary field positions to cover their time spent on the project.
- Equipment not related to habitat management (e.g., digital cameras)
- Habitat projects within the Greater Prairie-chicken range (see map)
- Seed farms
- Stand-alone equipment repair project proposals

Habitat Development, Management, Restoration, and Maintenance

This category covers the management of existing habitat and the development of new habitat intended to benefit wild pheasant populations in Wisconsin. Funding should be directed to habitat enhancement efforts on lands that support wild pheasant populations, but areas that are stocked with DNR game farm pheasants are also eligible. While small-scale projects on individual properties will be considered for funding, landscape-scale projects that can affect regional wild pheasant populations by improving or creating nesting, brood-rearing, or wintering habitat are encouraged and will receive higher consideration during proposal review. In addition, only projects occurring within the Priority Pheasant Habitat Management Area (see map, below) are eligible for funding.

Projects that overlap with priorities and Conservation Opportunity Areas for grassland Species of Greatest Conservation Need found within Wisconsin's Wildlife Action Plan are also encouraged (<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/wildlifehabitat/actionplan.html>).

Examples of habitat practices that are eligible for funding include: grassland habitat development, management, and maintenance; projects intended to increase grassland patch size; biofuel harvest opportunities which may benefit wild pheasants; establishment of winter cover (emergent wetland vegetation, shrub plantings, shelterbelts); etc. Authors should describe how the project complements existing local pheasant habitat and addresses perceived limiting factors. For example, winter cover that is created within a grassland complex will be more valuable to pheasants than the same cover created in the absence of surrounding nesting/brood-rearing habitat.

Also, Pheasant Stamp funds will not be allocated for habitat management or manipulation on Bird Hunting Preserves (Classes A & B). Private landowners who receive cost-share as part of a DNR- or NGO-funded Pheasant Stamp project will be required to enter a ten-year agreement with the Department stipulating that the property will not be licensed as a bird hunting preserve. This applies to all expenditures of Pheasant Stamp dollars. Violation will result in the recipient repaying the entire allocation.

Equipment (not to exceed 15% of the total allotment for FY18-19 in any established funding pool; 1:1 match requirement)

Equipment purchased, repaired, or maintained using Pheasant Stamp funds must be used at least 50% of the time for the management, development, or restoration of wild pheasant populations or their associated habitat. Applications requesting Pheasant Stamp funding for equipment purchase must demonstrate at least an equivalent (1:1) contribution of matching funds. Stand-alone equipment repair projects are not eligible for funding. The 15% cap on equipment purchase/maintenance/repair costs may be waived only by the Pheasant Advisory Committee provided the project authors, BWM District Wildlife Supervisors, or the NHC Field Operations Section Chief provide sufficient justification that the work is necessary to meet pheasant habitat restoration goals.

Cooperative and coordinated equipment purchase and use is strongly encouraged.

Information & Education

This category includes the sponsoring of workshops or seminars designed to promote the understanding and management of wild pheasants and their associated wildlife habitat components, as well as educational events, publications, outreach pamphlets, and projects related to all aspects of wild pheasant ecology and management. Cooperator project proposals for workshops, classes, conferences, etc. must include the total cost of the event and the fee charged for participants, if any. Possible I&E funding categories include:

- Private landowner workshops geared toward the management of wild pheasants and grasslands
- Partnerships that promote youth pheasant hunting and the development of hunting skills (Learn to Hunt or Mentored Hunt coordination, etc.)
- Educational events or displays promoting an understanding of pheasant ecology
- Digital media
- Outreach publications and materials

The following are examples of current pheasant-related research needs in the Upland Wildlife program:

- Impacts of terrestrial invasive species management on pheasant population demography on managed lands
- Impact of biofuel development on pheasant habitat and populations
- Development of a Pheasant Stamp habitat project evaluation process
- Development and testing of an improved statewide pheasant monitoring system
- Improving the delivery/effectiveness of private lands conservation programs for pheasants in Wisconsin

Other research proposals on topics that are not listed here may be considered by the Pheasant Advisory Committee. Please contact Mark Witecha, WDNR Upland Wildlife Ecologist, at either (608) 267-7861 or Mark.Witecha@Wisconsin.gov prior to submitting a research proposal.

IV. General Pheasant Stamp Funding Procedures

Pheasant Stamp Project Requests: Cooperator (non-DNR) and Research Projects

For cooperators or those applying for Pheasant Stamp funding to support research, the first step in applying for Pheasant Stamp funds is to make sure your proposed project meets all eligibility requirements. See Section III for more information on project types and eligibility.

All project requests must be submitted using the DNR Wild Pheasant Stamp Project Application Form, available from the Bureau of Wildlife Management in electronic or paper format. You must email the Assistant Upland Wildlife Ecologist, Jaqi Christopher, at Jacquelyn.Christopher@Wisconsin.gov in order to request a copy of the form. Please note that the default application form is optimized for electronic completion; if you would like to fill out an application by hand, please send an email requesting a hard-copy version of the application. The application form differs between the three stamp programs (Pheasant Stamp, Wild Turkey Stamp, and Waterfowl Stamp), so if you plan on submitting requests for more than one program, make sure to use the correct application form. Complete detail on the project application form is critical to the fair evaluation of each project.

Completed project application forms should be returned to Jaqi at Jacquelyn.Christopher@Wisconsin.gov. Hard copies may also be mailed to the attention of Jaqi at the following address: Bureau of Wildlife Management (WM/6), P.O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707. Projects will be reviewed, ranked, and recommended for funding by the WDNR Pheasant Advisory Committee and must receive final approval from the Wildlife Policy Team.

Project requests must be received by April 12th, 2017, in order to be eligible for consideration.

Proposal Review: Cooperator (non-DNR), Research, and Information/Education Projects

Each Pheasant Stamp project proposal is subject to a ranking and review process conducted by the Pheasant Advisory Committee. Detailed evaluation criteria can be found at the end of this document, after the project application instructions. All projects are ranked by each Committee member and rankings are compiled to generate a project score. Projects receiving higher scores will receive first consideration during selection of projects for funding. Applicants may be asked to come before the Committee to make a presentation about their

project proposal, particularly for large-scale projects. The Pheasant Advisory Committee reserves the right to make partial funding awards.

The Pheasant Advisory Committee includes WDNR Wildlife, Natural Heritage Conservation, Forestry, Law Enforcement, and Science Services Bureau staff, plus representatives from Pheasants Forever, Wings Over Wisconsin, the Conservation Congress Turkey and Upland Game Committee, The Nature Conservancy, and the Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission.

Funded Stamp Projects

All applicants will be notified of their funding status by June 2017. Applicants with approved projects will work with Upland Wildlife Program staff to finalize details of the project.

Funding for all approved Pheasant Stamp projects will be for the FY18-19 DNR budget cycle, beginning 1 July 2017 and ending 30 June 2019. Allotments will be awarded on an annual basis, to be used between the following time frames: Year 1 = 1 July 2017 through 30 June 2018, and Year 2 = 1 July 2018 through 30 June 2019.

DNR Projects: Pheasant Stamp funds allocated to individual Bureau of Wildlife Management Districts and the Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation will be assigned unique, individual budget codes, and funds will be made available by 1 July 2017. Tracking the use of funds and ensuring they are invested in accordance with the eligibility guidelines and project priorities documented herein is the responsibility of individual BWM District Wildlife Supervisors and the NHC Field Operations Section Chief. Clear annual reporting of expenditures that provides detail regarding projects and practices completed within the scope of established eligibility guidelines and priorities will be important. BWM District Wildlife Supervisors and the NHC Field Operations Section Chief are required to have projects approved by their District BWM or NHC Pheasant Advisory Committee member prior to engaging in project activities or expending funds. Committee members may choose to solicit input from the full Committee regarding proposed projects which do not clearly conform to eligibility guidelines or project priorities as established in this document.

Non-DNR Projects: **Funding for non-DNR Pheasant Stamp projects is awarded via reimbursement for approved work activities.** Before funding can be awarded to agencies and organizations outside of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, each party must agree to complete a cooperative agreement or MOU with the DNR. The cooperative agreement is signed by both the Department and the recipient organization or individual. It outlines the approved project proposal, active project period, budget, and reporting requirements. Cooperative agreements will be sent to the successful applicant along with information on the financial management of the approved project and procedures for requesting changes or reimbursement of project expenditures.

The following is the procedure for receipt of payment, as outlined in the cooperative agreement signed by both parties: *“WDNR shall provide payment to the Sponsor upon completion of the following to satisfaction of WDNR: (a) payment request has been made by the Sponsor along with a report detailing expenditures and accomplishments; (b) the Sponsor has provided WDNR with copies of invoices, bills, canceled checks, and other documents which document the costs of and expenditures of the project; (c) verification by WDNR that project has been satisfactorily completed; and (d) evidence of contractor payment has been received if applicable. The Sponsor shall forfeit or repay funds where costs and expenditures have not been documented.”*

Habitat restoration or enhancement practices that take place on private land require that the landowner(s) sign an agreement ensuring that the habitat (e.g., grassland, wetland) will remain in place for at least 10 years following

practice installation. Electronic copies of the required conservation agreement can be requested from Assistant Upland Wildlife Ecologist, Jaqi Christopher, at Jacquelyn.Christopher@Wisconsin.gov. The agreement must be signed by the landowner(s) and returned before stamp funds will be disbursed to cover project expenses. If the habitat practice would already be protected under an existing agreement or contract with another agency or organization for a period of at least 10 years following practice installation, a copy of that agreement or contract can be submitted instead.

All successful applicants: The receipt of Pheasant Stamp funding must be acknowledged in any reports, publications, and presentations and be shown for habitat work and equipment acquisitions using available “Your Pheasant Stamp Dollars at Work” signs and/or stickers (provided upon request).

Project Accomplishment Reporting

A project accomplishment report is **required** for all funded projects at the end of each fiscal year in which funding was used. Accomplishment reports are due to the Bureau of Wildlife Management by **September 30th** each year. Project managers, BWM District Wildlife Supervisors, and the NHC Field Operations Section Chief are encouraged to complete and submit these reports as soon as each fiscal year’s work is complete. Accomplishment reports are vital to the Pheasant Stamp program, since staff use the information to show hunters, partner groups, and other constituents what types of projects are being approved and how the funds are being spent.

Please note that failure to submit accomplishment reports will result in future funding ineligibility. Overdue accomplishment reports will need to be approved by DNR Upland Wildlife staff.

V. Stamp Application Instructions for Cooperator, Research, and Information/Education Projects

*** Application deadline is April 12th, 2017 ***

General Information: Before filling out the application, please thoroughly review all information provided in this document, including the following instructions. Please fill out the attached application completely. This information will be used to evaluate your project proposal. The inclusion of an aerial photograph or map with the project area marked is strongly recommended; additional support documents are also welcome. Please be succinct when describing and justifying your project. The form is designed so that applicants can only enter information in certain fields; these fields will automatically expand as you enter text.

Section 1, Project Title & Summary: Provide a project title that is accurate and concise, using no more than 10 words. Provide the total cost of the project and include a breakdown of requested and contributed funds. Be sure to provide the total anticipated cost-share contribution, including both secured and unsecured funds. You may be asked to provide proof of secured match dollars.

Section 2, Applicant Information: Be sure to fill in every field in this section. It is important to include a mailing address, phone number (with area code), and email address so that you can be contacted if additional information is needed. If a person other than the applicant is to be the project lead and contact for project coordination and correspondence, please include their information.

Section 3a, Project Type: Select the ONE project type that best fits your project. A more thorough description of each project type can be found in Section III of this document. If you are unable to determine what your project's best fit is, please contact WDNR Upland Wildlife staff for assistance.

Section 3b, Project Origin & Acreage: We are tracking the DNR District in which the proposed work will take place. The Bureau of Wildlife Management divides its operations into four districts, rather than the five regions other bureaus may utilize. List all of the counties in which you plan to utilize stamp dollars if your project is funded. If any properties will be affected by the work you do, please note them in the space provided. Provide the project acreage (the acreage that will be **actively managed or developed**); if you do not know the exact acreage amount, please estimate. If the project area is part of a larger property, please list that property's acreage in addition to the project acreage. Also, indicate whether the project is impacting private land and/or public land and provide the associated acreage. Note: acreage requirements may not apply for Information & Education and Research proposals.

Section 3c, Description of Project Site: This background information provides reviewers with a better context by which to rank each project. Please describe the habitat type and current land use of the project area, as well as that of adjacent areas (within a few miles). Note any activities that currently occur in the project area. Next, select the option(s) which most closely applies to the legal status or level of protection of the project area.

Section 3d, Proximity to Established Focus Areas, Project Boundaries, and Conservation Opportunity Areas: Indicate whether the project area is part of an existing designated project boundary and indicate the project(s). Examples of designated project boundaries include DNR Habitat Restoration Areas (e.g. GHRA, WPHRA), USDA SAFE Project Areas, and Wisconsin's Wildlife Action Plan and Priority Conservation Opportunity Areas for Wildlife Species of Greatest Conservation Need. Indicate whether the project will impact any Species of Greatest Conservation Need, and list up to ten such species. Indicate the status of any wild pheasants within the proposed project area. Finally, indicate whether the project area is open or closed to pheasant hunting.

Section 4, Project Description, Goals, and Objectives: Describe in some detail what the planned accomplishments of the project will be. What exactly is planned and how will it be accomplished? If you are purchasing equipment, where possible, please list the vendor as well as the options that are available for the intended purchase. Also indicate whether the equipment will be rented or loaned to private citizens and what type of control or rental processes will be involved. Identify the project goals and objectives by identifying the expected outcome of the project. Justify the need for the project to be funded, why it is being undertaken, what problem(s) the project will address, and how it will benefit pheasants or their associated habitat type. Indicate if the project has any special considerations such as human safety, or if you wish to recognize unique partnerships.

Section 5, Project Timeline: Briefly describe the work schedule for the project, what is going to be done, and when it is anticipated to be completed.

Section 6, Evaluation & Monitoring: This information is collected to indicate a project's likelihood of success. Describe any planned follow-up or future required maintenance that will be conducted following project completion, or how the project will fit into larger established project area goals. Also describe if and how the project's success will be monitored and evaluated following project completion.

Section 7, Budget: All costs associated with the project should be described here, including details on cost-shared efforts. Keep in mind that projects leveraging a higher percentage of cost-share will be given higher consideration. The project budget should show reviewers how funds will be allocated and spent for each part of the project. Enter the projected itemized costs for each category, divided accordingly into (1) requested Stamp funds, (2) estimated cost-share contribution from applicant organization or individual, and (3) projected in-kind contributions from other partners or sources. NOTE: most projects will not have costs in all categories. For example, LTE (limited-term employment) costs should list the anticipated number of hours, the cost per hour, and associated fringe or benefits. *Please keep in mind that permanent staff time is not eligible for funding using Stamp dollars, and may not be used or considered as matching or cost-shared dollars (this includes DNR SEG-funded positions).* Organizations and partners may donate labor or work with volunteer time; the value of donated labor is \$12 / hour.

Contributing Partners & Amounts: indicate the other sources of funding that you have secured for the project, *not including* requests from other stamp programs. If you have sources that you expect will provide funding, but you have no commitment at this point, list the source and indicate that it is unsecured.

Partial Funding: The DNR Pheasant Advisory Committee reserves the right to make partial funding recommendations. Be sure to indicate the minimum percentage of your total request that you will accept should partial funding be necessary. Be sure to indicate how the project goals and objectives, as well as any anticipated match dollars, will change if partial funding is awarded.

Additional Information, Maps, and Links for Pheasant Stamp projects:

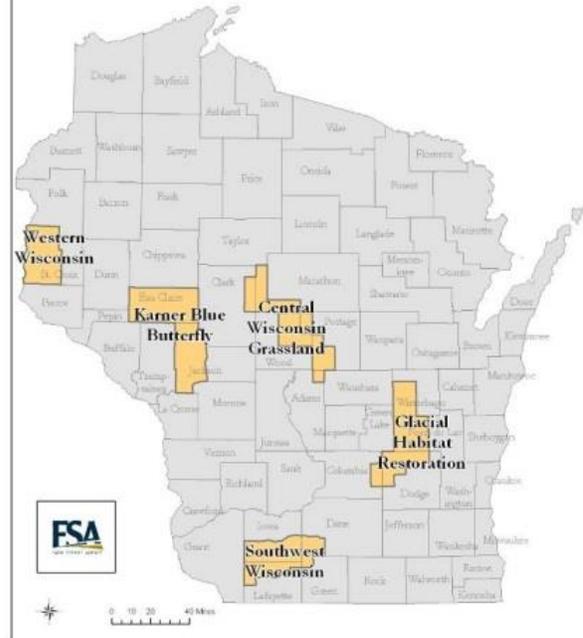
Below is a list of helpful resources on Wisconsin Species of Greatest Conservation Need, WAP Conservation Opportunity Areas, DNR Land Legacy Reports, and more:

- Pheasant Habitat Management Priority Area
- Wildlife Action Plan (WAP) Conservation Opportunity Areas (<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/wildlifehabitat/actionplan.html>)
- Species of Greatest Conservation Need (<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/wildlifehabitat/profiles.asp>)
- DNR Land Legacy Reports (<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/landlegacy/>)
- USDA SAFE Project Boundaries

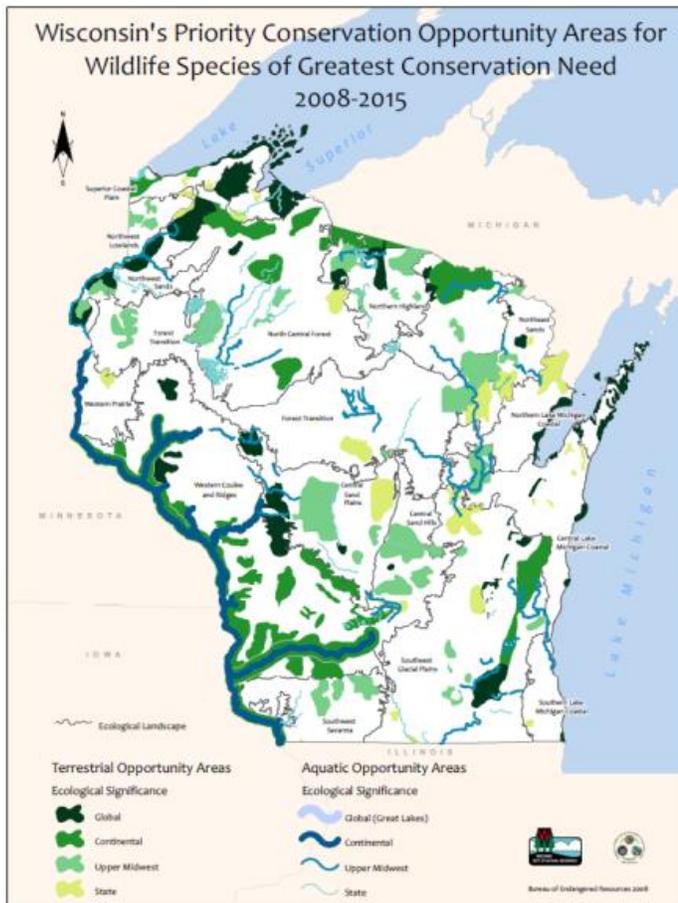
Priority Pheasant Habitat Management Area (light shading) and Ineligible Greater Prairie Chicken Management Area (dark shading)



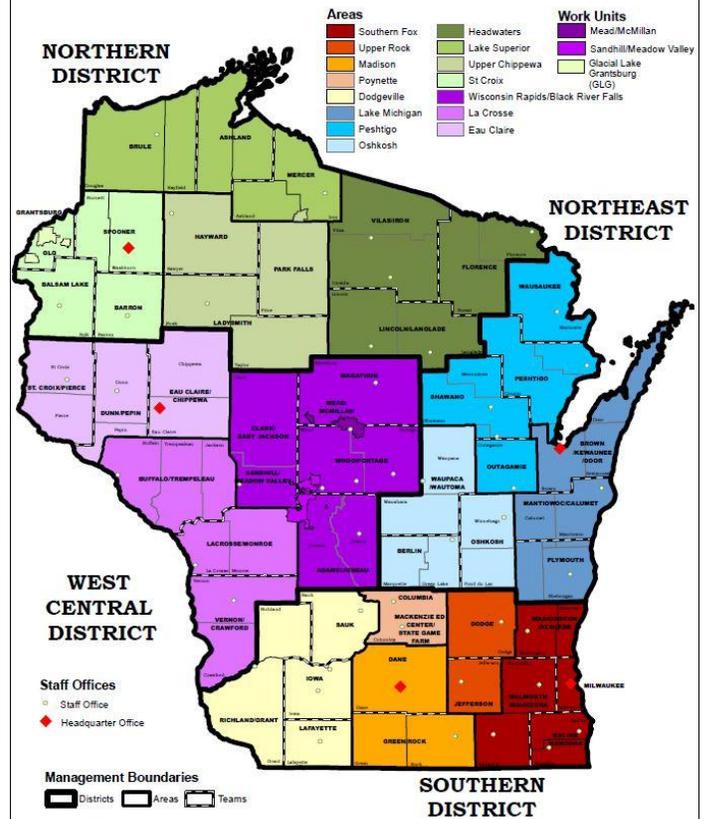
2008 Approved SAFE Projects (State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement)



Wisconsin's Priority Conservation Opportunity Areas for Wildlife Species of Greatest Conservation Need 2008-2015



WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT, AREA & WORK UNIT BOUNDARIES



FY18-19

Pheasant Stamp Program

Cooperator, Research, and Information/Education Project

Ranking & Review Criteria

Prepared by Mark Witecha & Jaqi Christopher, WDNR Upland Wildlife Program

Revised February 2017

The following criteria are an important aspect of determining which Pheasant Stamp projects are funded, and as a result, applicants should closely review the following project evaluation process to ensure that their proposals clearly address all applicable criteria. In addition, applications will be evaluated to ensure that the expected benefits to wild pheasants are reasonable, and that the project is likely to succeed based on the project objectives, methods, budget, work plan, and monitoring plan, as well as the capacity of the grantee.

DNR Pheasant Advisory Committee Evaluation

Taking the following criteria into consideration, please rank all proposals with #1 being the top project:

- Overall benefits to the wild pheasant population in Wisconsin
- Proposal is clear and complete, and demonstrates clearly defined objectives, achievable timeline and goals, and measures of success
- Long-term benefits (i.e. extend beyond the funded Stamp period)
- Stamp funds are necessary to complete the project
- Land is open to the public for hunting (preferred, but not required)
- The project falls within a current priority work area (see maps above)
- For INFORMATION & EDUCATION proposals: does the project provide for a measure or evaluation of success, such as attendance or response from the public?
- For RESEARCH proposals: does the project provide for analysis and interpretation of results relating directly to the project objectives?
- For HABITAT & EQUIPMENT proposals: does the project have evaluation and monitoring goals which apply directly to the project objectives and wild pheasants, and does it provide a verifiable, objective measure of project success?

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