

2024 Northern Lower Peninsula
Deer Private Land Assistance Network
(NLP Deer PLAN)
Handbook



Michigan DNR, Wildlife Division

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SCHEDULE FOR WILDLIFE NLP Deer PLAN GRANT PROGRAM

Request for Proposals Begins.....	June 14, 2023
Grant Application Must be Received by	July 14, 2023
DNR Review & Selection Process Completed-Awards Announced	August 31, 2023
Project Period Begins.....	Upon execution of Grant
Project Period Ends.....	September 30, 2024
Deer Heads Submitted for Testing by.....	January 5, 2025
Camp Surveys and Proof of bTB Testing Submitted by.....	January 31, 2025

Michigan DNR, Wildlife Division

2025 Northern Lower Peninsula

Deer Private Land Assistance Network

Initiative summary

The Northern Lower Peninsula Deer Private Land Assistance Network (NLP Deer PLAN) is a grant program designed to foster productive relationships between the Michigan DNR, sportsmen's organizations, private landowners, and other partners that produce tangible deer habitat improvement benefits to assist in reducing the transmission of Bovine Tuberculosis (bTB) and agricultural damage caused by deer.

This document is designed as a guide for use by applicants. It provides basic information on: project focus area, initiative goals and expectations, proposal requirements, eligibility rules, grant application process, proposal criteria and selection process, funding, and the implementation process.

Project Focus Area

This competitive program will have a focus area within the Northern Lower Peninsula. The focus area for 2024 is private land in the following counties: Alcona, Alpena, Crawford, Montmorency, Oscoda, and Presque Isle. These counties were selected because there is both Bovine Tuberculosis in the deer herd and a high incidence of crop damage by deer. **Applications for projects outside of the focus area counties will not be reviewed by the selection committee.**

Initiative goals and expectations

The purpose of the NLP Deer PLAN is to develop a collaborative approach to manage deer habitat on private land in the Northern Lower Peninsula. All projects must be feasible and will score highest if they meet the following five objectives:

1. Produce and/or improve tangible on-the-ground deer habitat in the project focus area
2. Increase partnerships between the DNR, sportsmen's organizations, private landowners, agricultural producers and other partners
3. Increase deer availability to hunters on both public and private land
4. Reduce transmission of Bovine Tuberculosis and agricultural damage caused by deer
5. Encourage the harvest of deer, especially antlerless deer, and testing of deer for Bovine Tuberculosis

NLP Deer PLAN funding

The NLP Deer PLAN is funded from the Deer Range Improvement Program (DRIP) Fund. With each deer hunting license sold \$1.50 is contributed to the DRIP fund. The intent of the DRIP fund is to improve deer habitat statewide.

NLP Deer PLAN grant funding is intended to be the initial catalyst for significant projects. Successful applicants are responsible for implementing the approved grant project. This a cost-shared grant program. Applicants must cover at least 25% of the total project cost (see Appendix A). This portion of the cost is called “local match.” It can be in the form of cash, financial matches, labor, material contributions, or other in-kind support.

A total of \$50,000 will be awarded in 2024. Applications can request \$5,000 to \$15,000 in grant funding.

Grant Application Process and requirements

Eligible applicants must be one of the following:

- conservation organization
- sportsperson group
- non-governmental organization
- local Conservation District(s)
- private landowner

Applicants interested in applying for a multiple year project may do so if they can prove completion of a portion of the project each year. Multiple year funding is not guaranteed based on acceptance of the first year’s application. Applicants must also be willing to reapply each year of the project.

If more than one project is submitted, complete a separate application with all required information for each project. You must note which project is your “priority project”.

Multiple landowners applying together should fill out one application. Be sure to include details for each property.

Completed applications and attachments must be received by the DNR Gaylord Customer Service Center no later than **5:00 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time) July 14, 2023**. Late applications will not be considered for funding. Application packages may be mailed, faxed, or delivered in person to:

DNR Gaylord Customer Service Center
Attn: Emily Sewell
1732 W. M-32
Gaylord, MI 49735

Fax: 989-732-0794

Proposal Criteria

Proposals will earn points if they meet criteria that address the five grant objectives. All scoring criteria can be found in Appendix B. Documentation must be attached to your application to receive points.

Desired habitat improvement projects include, but are not limited to:

- wildlife opening creation, rehabilitation, or existing opening maintenance
- increasing hard or soft mast by planting mast bearing trees
- non-commercial timber stand improvement activities
- direct mechanical habitat manipulation (e.g. regeneration of aspen or alder habitat)

Tree plantings must include:

- a minimum of 30 trees at least 3 feet tall from the list of acceptable species in Appendix C.
- adequate protection (fencing) where appropriate.

Specific activities that will **not** be considered are:

- planting exotic or invasive species
- commercial timber sale preparation
- constructing ponds, access roads/trails, or hunting blinds
- planting trees for the specific purposes of aesthetics or wind breaks
- Proposals that:
 - increase undesired habitat fragmentation
 - increase wildlife disease transmission potential
 - have human safety implications
 - are contrary to deer management goals
 - will have known direct adverse impacts on state or federally listed threatened and endangered species

Deer Population Management

Applicants unwilling to complete the following four components will not be considered for PLAN grant funding.

Antlerless Harvest: Antlerless deer harvest is an important part of proper deer management. It is crucial to decreasing the prevalence of bovine tuberculosis in deer. All PLAN grant recipients must commit to harvesting more antlerless deer than antlered deer during the 2023 and 2024 hunting seasons.

Bovine TB Testing: The DNR monitors the prevalence and geographic distribution of bovine tuberculosis in free-ranging white-tailed deer in Michigan. Submission of deer heads by hunters for bTB testing is critical to monitoring this disease. PLAN grant recipients must submit the heads of all deer harvested during the 2023 and 2024 hunting seasons for bTB testing. Heads can be submitted at staffed deer check stations, 24-hr. self-service drop boxes, a limited number of wild game processors partnering with the DNR, or by making other arrangements with local Wildlife staff. Perforated tabs from the bottom of all disease survey tags must be submitted to local Wildlife staff by January 31, 2025.

Deer Camp Survey: All PLAN grant recipients must complete a Deer Camp Survey. The survey is designed by local Wildlife Division staff to track deer sightings during hunting seasons. It will serve as a record for the property and help the applicant track deer population trends. A copy of the completed survey must be submitted to the local Wildlife staff by January 31, 2025. The data will be compiled, and a summary for each county will be returned to participants. Only data summaries will be sent out, no individual property information will be made public.

Online Harvest Reporting: Successful deer hunters in Michigan are required to complete a harvest report for each deer killed. The new harvest reporting system enables the DNR to estimate hunter numbers, hunter effort,

and deer harvest. Harvest reports can be completed at www.Michigan.gov/DNRHarvestReport . Hunters must submit a harvest report within 72 hours of harvesting the deer.

Selection Process

Immediately following the application deadline, a selection committee will evaluate proposed projects. Projects that meet the eligibility requirements will be reviewed and scored using the criteria in Appendix B. The selection and project scoring process are standardized to treat all applicants fairly. The selection committee may approve, reject, or request modifications to projects. All projects must score a **minimum of ten points** to be considered for funding. Selection committee decisions are final. Successful applicants will be notified by August 31, 2023. Applicants will be notified if their project was not selected shortly thereafter.

Successful applicants will be required to sign a NLP Deer PLAN Agreement and Liability Release Form before starting any work. A Project Description associated with the agreement will describe the project, clearly define the partner responsibilities, and identify the minimum duration the project is to be maintained by the applicant. Successful applicant organizations will need to complete a Partner Organization Grants Account form. Release of grant funds will occur after the project has been completed successfully as defined in the Deer PLAN Agreement. Under some circumstances, partial prepayment of grant funds may be approved depending on the financial nature and time scale of the proposed project.

Failure to meet project obligations or noncompliance as spelled out in the project contractual agreement will result in project termination and ineligibility for future applications.

Implementation/ Compliance

For all approved projects the applicant (or their representative) will be required to periodically report to the designated DNR field staff on the project status, expenditures to date, future objectives to be completed, and estimated timeline for completion throughout the implementation process. The final deadline is the end of the Fiscal Year on September 30, 2024.

*Any discrepancies in the project or compliance issues noted at the inspection must be remedied by the grantee **before** the final payment is made. The cost of any remedial action required of the grantee may be the sole financial responsibility of the grantee. Once the project is completed, the local biologist will need to conduct a site visit to verify that the project was completed. Upon review of the final report and approval by the Wildlife Division, the request for final payment will be forwarded to Grants Management for processing.*

Required Content for All Applications:

- ☐ Completion of NLP Deer PLAN Grant Program application
- ☐ Map that shows the project location(s) and proposed work
- ☐ Attachment of applicable supporting documents

- Documentation of proximity to public hunting land (aerial map that includes a scale identifying project location and nearest public land)
- Documentation of proximity to cattle farm or agricultural property (scan of plat book page or aerial map that includes a scale identifying project location and nearest farm or farmed property)
- Documentation of cooperative or multiple property partnership (map that includes a scale identifying participating properties)
- Documentation of a Forest Stewardship Plan (scan of cover page and schedule of planned activities only- entire plan not necessary)
- Documentation of regeneration timber harvest during the past three years (page from Forest Management Plan or proof from forester)
- Documentation of local match sources (i.e., monetary commitment letters, donation commitment letters, grant award letters, etc.)

Wildlife Division Northern Lower Peninsula Staff Contact List:

For technical questions about the NLP Deer PLAN Grant Handbook:

Emily Sewell, Wildlife Health Specialist
 Gaylord DNR Customer Service Center
 1732 W M-32, Gaylord 49735
 Email: SewellE@Michigan.gov
 Phone: 231-340-1821

For questions about habitat in Alpena, Montmorency, and Presque Isle counties:

Angela Kujawa, Wildlife Biologist
 Atlanta DNR Field Office
 13501 N. M33, Atlanta MI 49709
 Email: KujawaA1@Michigan.gov
 Phone: 989-785-4251 Ext. 5230

For questions about habitat in Alcona, Crawford, and Oscoda counties:

Brian Piccolo, Wildlife Biologist
 Roscommon DNR Customer Service Center
 8717 N. Roscommon Road, Roscommon MI 48653
 Email: PiccoloB@Michigan.gov
 Phone: 989-275-5151 Ext. 272-2030

Appendix A- INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING APPLICATION

Assembling the information needed to submit a complete application package takes time—it is important to start the process as early as possible.

Part I: General Information

1. Applicant Information:

- ❖ The Authorized Representative is a person who represents the applicant, is able to answer questions regarding the application, and will oversee project administration if a grant is awarded.
- ❖ The Federal Employer Identification Number is required and allows the DNR to make grant payments to the Grantee. Individuals applying for a grant must provide their social security number. If the applicant is an organization, please provide the employer ID number.

Please note: You must be registered in the State's vendor system to receive funds. All grant funds will be paid by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Once registered, it is up to you to maintain the information on the site, including the accurate Federal ID number, vendor name, bank account information, address, etc. To register for the first time or update an existing account, please visit www.michigan.gov/SIGMAVSS and access the SIGMA Vendor Self Service. For questions, please call the SIGMA Help Desk at (888) 734-9749.

2. Property Owner(s) Information:

- ❖ Provide name of current property owner(s) along with address, phone number, and email address.

3. Project Location:

- ❖ Provide map(s) and other geographic information relevant to the proposal (e.g. highlight multiple properties, proximity to agricultural areas and/or public land proximity) in clear, legible, detailed and appropriately labeled **8.5-inch by 11-inch** size.
DNR staff use these materials to help find and evaluate your site and application.

4. Description of Proposal:

- ❖ Provide a description of the project based on the six scoring criteria (See Appendix B).
This narrative is critical to the evaluation and scoring of your application.

Part II: Estimated Project Costs

1. Estimated Project Cost:

- ❖ Total project cost is the total estimated amount it will take to complete the project. This amount should equal the total grant amount requested **plus** the 25% cost share amount. The grant amount requested must be between a minimum of \$5,000 and a maximum of \$15,000.
- ❖ NLP Deer PLAN funding will not pay for travel mileage or travel time.
- ❖ NLP Deer PLAN will only pay labor costs for contracted work.
- ❖ Use the table below to calculate the cost of using your own equipment. Amounts are taken from the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Schedule C Equipment Rental Rates, Report 375 from 2021.
- ❖ Donated materials should be valued at their current market value and supported by receipts or other verification. The methods of valuing donations are subject to DNR review and approval prior to the donations being approved as match for the grant.

Cost Share Example #1:

Deer PLAN Grant Amount Requested	\$5,100
25% Cost Share (Minimum Cost Share Required for Project to be Considered)	\$1,700
Total Project Cost	\$6,800

Cost Share Example #2:

Deer PLAN Grant Amount Requested	\$7,500
25% Cost Share (Minimum Cost Share Required for Project to be Considered)	\$2,500
Total Project Cost	\$10,000

Cost Share Example #3:

Deer PLAN Grant Amount Requested	\$11,250
25% Cost Share (Minimum Cost Share Required for Project to be Considered)	\$3,750
Total Project Cost	\$15,000

2. Source of local match (all forms of match listed below are acceptable and more than one may be utilized):

- ❖ General Funds is the amount of cash the applicant commits to provide out of their own pocket toward the project.
- ❖ Cash Donations from others is the amount of cash that someone, other than the applicant, commits to provide toward the project. A commitment letter stating the amount must be attached to the application.
- ❖ Labor provided by volunteer(s) must be valued at Michigan's current minimum wage of \$10.10 per hour for each person.
- ❖ Value of Donated Material is the total estimated value of donated materials that someone, other than the applicant, commits to provide toward the project. A commitment letter stating the amount must be attached to the application.
- ❖ Other is the expenses incurred by the applicant for materials and/or equipment or other grants awarded for the same scope of work by another entity. A commitment/award letter must be provided with the application packet for other grants awarded.

4. Project Funding Breakdown:

- ❖ List all materials, costs of equipment use, contracted work, and other expenses for the project that you are requesting grant funding to cover.
- ❖ Please itemize your budget so the selection committee can clearly understand how grant funds will be used in your project.

Part III: Work Plan

- ❖ Indicate the estimated amount of work that will be accomplished in each quarter of the grant period. This information will also serve as the basis for the grant payment schedule if the project is approved for funding. Projects are required to be completed within the scheduled time frame. Project extensions will not be approved.

Part IV: Need and Benefit

- ❖ This section is important for the DNR's evaluation and scoring of the project. Be sure to relate the proposed project to the overall objectives and priorities of the NLP Deer PLAN. Briefly explain any coordinated efforts within the project area and how the public will benefit by completion of the project.

Part V: Certification

- ❖ A person authorized to represent the agency or organization applying for the grant must sign here. Be sure to clearly print or type the person's full name and title.

Appendix B-Grant Scoring Criteria

The DNR reviews all grant applications and determines their eligibility. Eligible applications are scored using the following criteria which reflect the goals and objectives of the program.

Scoring Criteria	Maximum Score
Tree Planting and Forest Management	4
Forage Planting	2
Cooperatives/Multiple Properties	5
Public Accessibility and/or Proximity to Public Lands	5
Proximity to a Cattle Farm or Active Agricultural Property	5
PLAN Partnership	5
Total Maximum Score	26

Scoring Breakdown: Each criterion is broken down below and indicates what is necessary to score each point.

Tree Planting and Forest Management	Maximum Score of 4
<p>Projects that produce a combination of long and short-term benefits that include <u>all</u> of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard Mast Tree Plantings (minimum of 30 three-foot trees must be included) • Soft Mast Tree Plantings (minimum of 30 three-foot trees must be included) • Have a current Forest Stewardship Plan or equivalent prepared by a professional resource manager available and being followed • A minimum 5-acre regeneration timber harvest has taken place within the last three years 	4
<p>Projects that produce a combination of long and short-term benefits that include <u>three</u> of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard Mast Tree Plantings (minimum of 30 three-foot trees must be included) • Soft Mast Tree Plantings (minimum of 30 three-foot trees must be included) • Have a current Forest Stewardship Plan or equivalent prepared by a professional resource manager available and being followed • A minimum 5-acre regeneration timber harvest has taken place within the last three years 	3
<p>Projects that produce a combination of long and short-term benefits that include <u>two</u> of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard Mast Tree Plantings (minimum of 30 three-foot trees must be included) • Soft Mast Tree Plantings (minimum of 30 three-foot trees must be included) • Have a current Forest Stewardship Plan or equivalent prepared by a professional resource manager available and being followed • A minimum 5-acre regeneration timber harvest has taken place within the last three years 	2
<p>Projects that produce a long or short-term benefit that include <u>one</u> of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard Mast Tree Plantings (minimum of 30 three-foot trees must be included) • Soft Mast Tree Plantings (minimum of 30 three-foot trees must be included) • Have a current Forest Stewardship Plan or equivalent prepared by a professional resource manager available and being followed • A minimum 5-acre regeneration timber harvest has taken place within the last three years 	1
<p>Projects that do not produce tangible benefits or result in a negative outcome (e.g. planting invasive species)</p>	0

Forage Plantings	Maximum Score of 2
Projects creating at least 4 total acres of new perennial and/or annual food plots by converting woods or fallow fields. Minimum individual food plot size of 2 acres.	2
Projects creating new plots and/or maintaining or re-seeding existing food plots totaling at least 4 acres. Minimum individual food plot size of 2 acres.	1
Projects that do not include food plots, or include food plots totaling less than 4 acres.	0

Cooperatives/Multiple Properties	Maximum Score of 5
Applicant must have all the following: Minimum of 5 Properties included in Application Minimum of 320 acres within a square mile included At least one agricultural property included Conservation District Forester Site Visit completed for at least one of the properties (see Appendix D for the link to local Conservation Districts)	5
Applicant must have all the following: Minimum of 2 Properties included in Application Minimum of 80 acres within a square mile included	3
Multiple properties not included in application	0

Public accessibility and/or proximity to public lands	Maximum Score of 5
Project land is currently and/or will provide free public access for all deer hunting seasons or is enrolled in the Hunting Access Program for deer hunting	5
Project land is surrounded by public land on at least 2 sides OR Project Land will have limited free public access through a special hunt (e.g. Liberty Hunt/Independence Hunt)	3
Project land is within a mile of public land	1

Project land has no public land adjacent or within 1 mile and has no public access	0
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Proximity to a Cattle Farm or Active Commercial Agricultural Property	Maximum Score of 5
Project property is itself, or is adjacent to, a property that is an active cattle farm.	5
Project property is within 1 mile of a cattle farm or property that is being actively used for commercial agricultural purposes	3
Project property is greater than 1 mile from a cattle farm or property actively used for commercial agricultural purposes	0

PLAN Partnership	Maximum Score of 5
Applicant is not a past PLAN recipient	5
Applicant is a past PLAN recipient who fulfilled project obligations.	0
Applicant is a past PLAN recipient who failed to meet project obligations.	Ineligible to apply

Appendix C- List of Acceptable Tree Species

Applicants submitting projects including tree plantings must select from the list below. These species have been selected due to their desirability to deer and suitability to the region. Although many other tree and shrub

species can be planted to enhance habitat for a variety of wildlife, the focus of PLAN is to increase deer availability in order to facilitate the harvest of those deer.

Acceptable Hard Mast Species

Burr oak
Hazelnut (American or beaked)
Red Oak
Swamp white oak
White oak
(No hybrid oaks)

Acceptable Soft Mast Species

Apple
Crabapple (except Siberian)
Pear

Appendix D- Project Area Map

Applications will only be considered for projects in the following counties: Alcona, Alpena, Crawford, Montmorency, Oscoda, and Presque Isle.

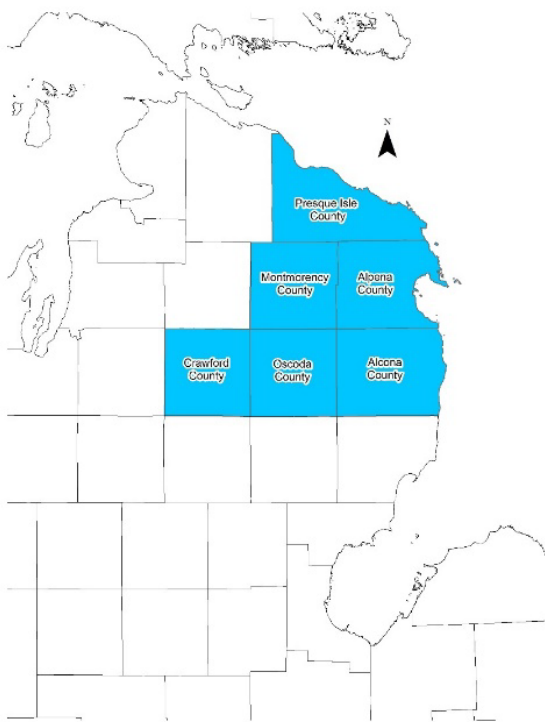


Figure 1: Map with Alcona, Alpena, Crawford, Montmorency, Oscoda, and Presque Isle Counties highlighted.

Appendix E- Equipment Rates

The rates in the table below should be used to calculate the cost of using your own equipment. Most rates have been taken from the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Schedule C Equipment Rental Rates, Report 375.

Equipment Type	Rate per Hour
Tractors - Wheel or crawler - gas or diesel powered, without optional accessories or attachments. Classified by standard machine weight including roll over protection.	
Under 1,000 lbs	22.31
1,000 lbs. minimum	43.62
6,000 lbs. minimum	47.73
10,000 lbs. minimum	47.92
16,000 lbs. minimum	56.90
21, 000 lbs minimum	59.39
35,000 lbs minimum	73.54
Tractors - Machine Rates by Horsepower	
20 - 29hp	31.25
30 - 39hp	37.50
40 - 49hp	53.13
50 - 70hp	59.38
70 - 100hp	65.63
Attachments	
Backhoe attachment for tractor, 12' minimum	3.81
Drill and chemical fertilizer spreader	6.42
Double Disk	8.58
Klod Buster	6.58
Spring tooth harrow - under 20'	2.59
Spike tooth harrow	6.79
Offset Disk	17.70
Rolling basket	11.70
Chisel Plow	12.70
Broadcast spreader	8.90
No till Drill	25.80
Grain Drill	14.50
3pt. Fertilizer Spreader	25.00
3pt. Seed Spreader	37.50
Power Hand Tools	
Hand operated post-hole digger/earth auger	15.44
Under 18" bar chainsaw	3.82
18" bar minimum chainsaw	6.26
30" bar minimum chainsaw	13.24
Other	
Stump Cutter	46.68
Mowers	
under 20"	4.94

20" minimum	11.59
24" minimum	12.49
30" minimum	14.47
36" minimum	22.72
49" minimum	26.33
61" minimum	33.27

Trailers

Under 2 ton	10.14
2 ton minimum	11.47
6 ton minimum	12.69

Sprayers

Under 60 gallon	5.18
60 gallon minimum tank capacity	9.81
200 gallon minimum tank capacity	18.44
Spray boom attachment	7.09

Front End Loaders - Attachment only (not including tractor price)

Under 1/3 cubic yard bucket	4.06
1/3 cubic yard bucket minimum	5.11
1/2 cubic yard bucket minimum	5.42
1 cubic yard bucket minimum	7.36
1 5/8 cubic yard bucket minimum	9.23
2 1/4 cubic yard bucket minimum	9.51
3 cubic yard bucket minimum	10.97

Appendix F- Helpful Information Links

- ❖ DNR Wildlife Habitat Information: www.michigan.gov/wildlife
- ❖ DNR Forestland Resources: www.michigan.gov/privateforestland
- ❖ MSU Extension: <http://msue.anr.msu.edu/experts>
- ❖ Local Conservation Districts: <https://www.macd.org/find-your-district>