

## Project Proposal Summary Sheet

**PROJECT TITLE:** North Dakota Watershed Leadership Academy

**NOTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY CONTACT PERSON:**

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**WATERSHED:** Red River Basin, James River Basin, Lower Missouri River Basin, Upper Missouri River Basin, Souris River Basin.

**PROJECT TYPES:** Information/Education

**WATERBODY TYPES:** Groundwater, lakes/reservoirs, rivers, streams, wetlands

**NPS CATEGORY:** Other

**PROJECT LOCATIONS:** Various North Dakota watersheds to include Red River Valley as a piloted site, other locations to be determined based on request.

**SUMMARIZATION OF MAJOR GOALS:**

The overall goal of this project is to increase the capacity of watershed leaders in North Dakota to lead watershed and community-based projects that will protect water quality for future generations.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

This project will help develop the leadership skills of watershed coordinators, watershed advisory groups and others working on water-related issues to help them guide and collaborate with others, apply organizational management skills to engage people in public decisions, and understand how local, state and federal policies impact water resources. In addition it will help these watershed leaders recognize watershed challenges through proper assessment practices and the development of attainable solutions. These outcomes will be accomplished through a two month ND Watershed Leadership Academy, a cohort-based training academy to be delivered locally. Follow-up coaching for watershed groups will be provided as well as a train-the-trainer program for current watershed coordinators to use with local boards in the future.

FY 2017 funds requested: \$85,363

Non-federal match: \$56,909

**TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$142,272**

## 2.0 SITUATION

2.1 The North Dakota Watershed Leadership Academy would help strengthen system-wide water quality priority issues specified in the state Nonpoint Source Pollution (NPS) Management Program Plan by building skills and confidence in local water coordinators and advisory boards to implement local priority projects efficiently and effectively.

Leadership programs are designed to increase the critical mass of informed and capable people and to build the capacity of citizens for civic engagement. If communities and organizations are to create a high quality of life locally, and compete successfully in the new global, social, political and economic realities, they must invest in people (Pigg, Martin, Gasteyer, Apaliyah, & Keating, 2015).

Effective leadership can provide the inspiration and mobilization of others to undertake collective action in pursuit of the common good. (Crosby & Bryson, 2005). Leadership and civic engagement programs collectively address key issues in an organizations, enhance individual and team leadership skills, and connect leaders to reliable information so they can appropriately frame challenges and look for solutions.

Effective leaders help organize, develop their local groups, and see projects to fruition. They can assist their organizations through decision making processes, determine strategies and procedures, solve problems, engage others, work towards goals, and communicate impacts.

The goals of the NPL Management Plan in North Dakota are 1) coordination with the TMDL Program and local partners to assess 15 priority watersheds, 2) development and implementation of watershed restoration or protections plans for 15 priority sub-watersheds and 3) increased public awareness and understanding of water quality. The role of local leaders in this framework is the development and implementation of projects supported by the NPL Pollution Management Program and stronger local leadership will help ensure the NPS Program goals can be met and sustained over the long term.

Individuals serving on local boards, project advisory committees and in professional roles involving water quality management all provide leadership to decisions that are made long-term for NPS pollution management in the major basins in North Dakota. Some of these individuals may have had some type of leadership training, more often than not, people in elected or appointed leadership positions are doing so without any type of formal leadership training. Serving in a leadership position demands skills such as working together, serving as a coach, motivator, mentor and being able to make decisions for the organization as a whole.

The supply and demand for leaders in North Dakota poses a challenge. Based on 2010 Census data, North Dakota had 2,686 governmental units that required leadership or civic engagement for local activities. These units included counties, cities, townships, school districts, and special districts such as those providing oversight for cemeteries, highways, water/sewer systems, and soil and water conservation areas. These data indicate there is one governmental unit for every 250 people in the state over the age of 18 – many opportunities to serve. When these governmental units requiring engagement were combined with the number of non-profits in the state, the total number of public organizations reached 8,780, requiring that one in every 60 people need to serve in some sort of civic capacity to allow them to run effectively. If North Dakotans would step up to a leadership role in one

of these organizations, then one in every 20 people over the age of 18 would need to serve as the chairperson or presiding officer. North Dakota has the lowest ratio of supply to demand of individuals to serve in organizational roles. The slides below show the supply and demand of leaders for public organizations in the state of North Dakota as presented during a recent conference on rural development.

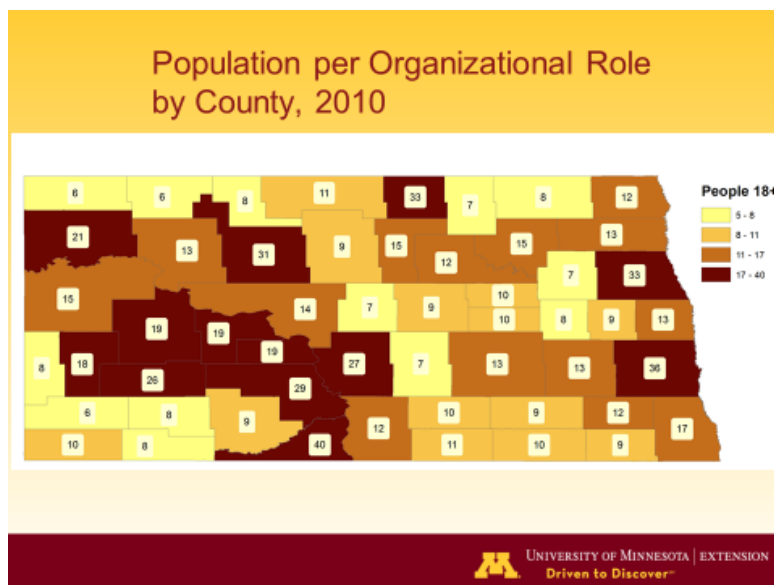
**Figure 1.** Leadership supply and demand, 2010

	<i>Demand: Total Public Orgs</i>	<i>Supply: Pop Age 18 +</i>	<i>Pop Per Org</i>	<i>Pop Per Org Role</i>
Iowa	31,637	2,318,362	73	24
Kansas	22,578	2,126,179	94	31
Minnesota	38,415	4,019,862	105	35
Nebraska	16,070	1,367,120	85	28
<b>North Dakota</b>	<b>8,780</b>	<b>522,720</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>20</b>
South Dakota	9,078	611,383	67	22
Texas	110,393	18,279,737	166	55

Source: Winchester (2016). University of Minnesota Extension. Presentation for Rewriting the Rural Narrative conference, Bismarck, ND. September 14, 2016.

In most North Dakota counties, the population by county to fill each organizational role becomes a challenge to meet.

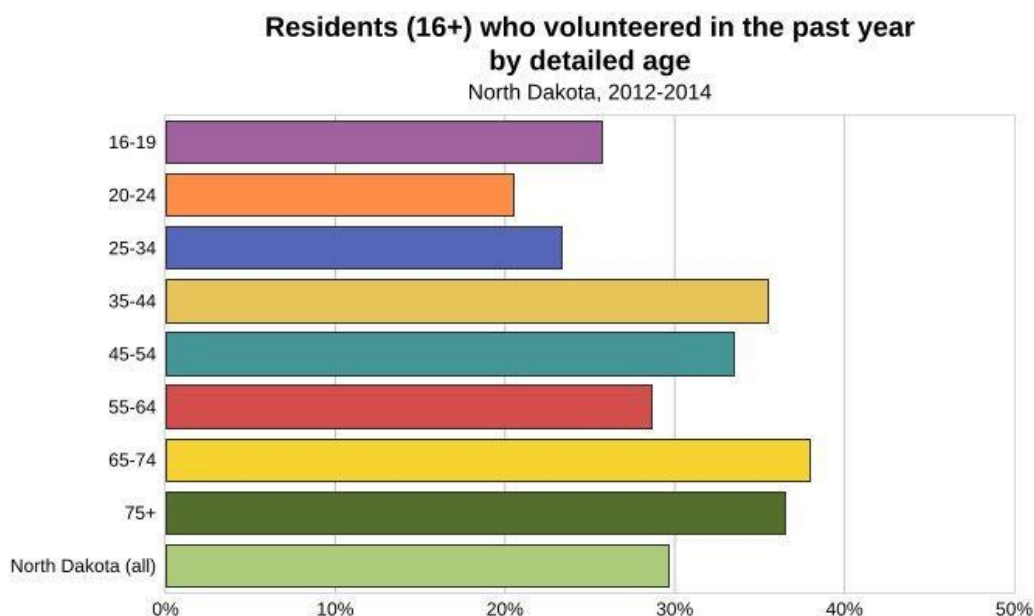
**Figure 2.** North Dakota population supply per organizational role by county, 2010



Source: Winchester (2016). University of Minnesota Extension. Presentation for Rewriting the Rural Narrative conference, Bismarck, ND. September 14, 2016.

Besides the challenge of an overall limited supply of people to meet the leadership demand in North Dakota, the age differential of individuals volunteering should be noted. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the largest cohort of volunteers in North Dakota are 65 and older. There are opportunities to build confidence in other age cohorts and potentially increase the volunteerism and leadership roles in the state through programs such as the Watershed Leadership Academy.

**Figure 3.** North Dakota Compass - Residents who volunteered in the past year



Source: Current Population Survey, Volunteer Supplement, conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Leadership and civic engagement programs can further build confidence in emerging and aspiring leaders to serve in these multiple roles available across the state regardless of the age. Programs should include suggestions for involvement as well as how to mentor your successor in leadership to insure continued support.

In addition to leadership and civic engagement educational programs that assist in individual skill building and behavioral changes, organizational coaching can offer additional ways to make use of best practices and outside expertise to assist the group. Coaching offers an added layer to facilitate a leader's ability to energize and mobilize people around a change agenda. Coaching increases the return on investment in capacity building, leadership development and other watershed development efforts. Coaching can strengthen teams and relationships, trigger results, frame reflection, expand reach and reframe possibilities (Emery, 2008). Follow-up coaching can help mobilize cohort participants and teams working on local water projects to maximize effectiveness as they work to implement projects

supported by the NPS Program. Through leadership training and follow up coaching, the anticipated benefits stated in the NPS program such as a closer coordination between local stakeholders and state and federal partners, more local involvement to ensure efficient use of funds, more diverse and engaged partnerships that can lead to strong local activities, and increased communication for basic level resource management between local resource managers and partners, may be more likely to develop.

**2.2** The audience for the ND Watershed Leadership Academy will include local North Dakota watershed project coordinators, ND Department of Health staff, Soil Conservation District board members, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) staff members, volunteers, natural resource management students, and other partners that assist in meeting the water resource needs of the state. These groups are all involved in water and natural resource management and in many cases have been given authority for oversight.

### 3.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

#### 3.1 – Goals

The overall goal of this project is to increase the capacity of watershed leaders in North Dakota to lead watershed and community-based projects that will protect water quality for future generations. By building capacity, these watershed leaders will be better equipped to address the three primary goals in the NPS Management Plan of 1) coordinating with the TMDL Program and local partners to assess 15 priority watersheds, 2) developing and implementing watershed restoration or protections plans for 15 priority sub-watersheds and 3) increasing public awareness and understanding of water quality.

#### 3.2 Objectives and Tasks

**Objective 1:** Develop cohort based leadership training program for watershed coordinators, staff members, board members and volunteers to help them guide and collaborate with others, apply organizational management skills to engage people in public decisions, and understand how local, state and federal policies impact water resources. In addition it will help these watershed leaders recognize watershed challenges through proper assessment practices and the development of attainable solutions. Cohort training program will be two separate face-to-face sessions with materials also available online for follow-up work.

**Task 1:** Form and convene advisory committee to set priorities for implementation of a ND Watershed Leadership Academy. Advisory committee members will assist Extension staff in defining the details of the program, recruiting and selecting participants, coordinating publicity and assessing the final outcomes of the program.

**Product:** Position description with responsibilities and expectations developed for diverse advisory committee to be convened. Advisory committee will consist of NDSU Extension staff working with the ND Leadership Academy, SCD local board members and Department of Health representative.

**Task 2:** ND Watershed Leadership Academy program developed to include 12-15 hours of face-to-face educational programming provided in two separate sessions for 20-30 cohort members over a three month time period. NDSU Extension specialists will provide training to include the following modules:

- Understanding of personality styles and how they can work together effectively
- Recognizing the components of an effective meeting
- Navigating conflict successfully
- Building partnerships and developing a vision
- Group facilitation skills
- Project planning, management and monitoring
- Understanding local and regulatory policy
- Sustainability – mentoring your successor
- Communicating to stakeholders and working with the media effectively
- Enhancing ethical leadership

**Product:** Watershed Leadership Academy program manual developed based on sound leadership and civic engagement practices. Focus will be on the adult learner to include experiential learning opportunities and activities related to watershed projects.

**Task 3:** Online site developed for participants to provide supplemental water-related technical information. Technical information will be linked from NDSU Extension, ND Department of Health, SCD, and NRCS.

**Product:** Website developed and linked to current technical information available.

**Task 4:** Pilot cohort based leadership training program in Red River Valley watershed during first six months of grant. Formative evaluation done throughout the pilot to determine program changes.

**Product:** Final analysis of pilot cohort program with suggested changes.

**Task 5:** Retrospective post then pre survey developed for cohort participants to determine knowledge gained and potential behavioral change.

**Product:** Evidence of knowledge gained and potential for behavioral change by participants.

**Objective 2.** Coordinate with ND Soil Conservation Districts and NDSU Extension for a local field tour to educate ND Watershed Leadership Academy participants on proper watershed assessment practices and monitoring.

**Task 6.** Develop field tour agenda and assessment protocol in partnership with local coordinators, SCDs, NRCS district conservationists, and NDSU Extension agents. Field tour completion will be expected for those involved in the ND Watershed Leadership cohort. Virtual field tours will be considered for cohort groups meeting during winter months.

**Product:** Field tour agenda and virtual online tour developed.

**Objective 3.** Provide follow-up coaching for cohort members on local watershed projects and/or board development activities after completion of the Leadership Academy training.

**Task 7:** Cohort participants will be coached to move from a state of readiness to a state of performance. Site visit coaching will be provided by an NDSU Extension specialist one or two times after leadership training and field tour to assist cohort members and individual boards with project visioning, implementation activities and communication strategies for the public.

**Product:** Coaching site visits completed.

**Objective 4.** Complete formative evaluation of Watershed Leadership Academy following cohort training. A 3-6 month interview will be done with local coordinators to determine behavioral change.

**Task 8:** Retrospective post-then-pre evaluation will be done with cohort participants for future program recommendations, an assessment of knowledge gained, and behavioral changes expected.

**Product:** Final program recommendations and evidence of knowledge gained and potential for behavioral change by participants.

**Task 9:** Interviews will be completed with watershed Coordinators to better understand changes that have been made by cohort participants. Changes expected include increased confidence and engagement by participants in local water issues.

**Product:** Evidence of local knowledge, skills and behavioral changes based from watershed coordinator interview results.

**Objective 5.** Provide a train-the-trainer program for watershed coordinators and others involved in natural resource management (NRCS, SCD, Extension, and ND Department of Health) to allow for sustainability for leadership development with future board members.

**Task 10:** Synthesize all training materials used for ND Watershed Leadership Academy participants and develop a final curriculum to be used for further distribution to future watershed leaders. A binder will be developed with all resources and contacts.

**Product:** Final curriculum binder for use by watershed coordinators with local boards, councils and advisory committees.

**Task 11:** Provide a train-the-trainer session to watershed coordinators and other professionals that work with local water-related boards to enable them to use the developed materials with future groups. Best practices learned during the pilot phase and subsequent two year training sessions will be incorporated into the final leadership program and training for trainers.

**Product:** Completed training for 20 watershed coordinators and other professionals that work with water-related boards.

### **3.3 Milestone Table – (See Appendix A)**



## **4.0 COORDINATION PLAN**

**4.1** The NDSU Extension Center for Community Vitality will be the lead project sponsor. Responsibilities will include oversight for the program for four Watershed Leadership Academy cohort groups each year. Specialists will convene advisory group, develop the program, provide educational trainings, coaching, and evaluation and coordinate the field experience. Local Extension agents, the State Soil Conservation Committee (SSCC) and North Dakota Association of Soil Conservation Districts (NDASCD) will assist in recruitment of cohort participants through their networks. NDSU Extension will pilot the Academy initially and make required changes based on a continual evaluation. Ultimately the program will be “packaged” for others to utilize locally to ensure a long-term sustainable practice for local watershed boards and councils.

**4.2** Local support will be provided by NDSU Extension specialists that work with leadership and civic engagement programs as well as local Extension agents in the counties involved in each Academy cohort. Additional support and online resources will be provided by NDSU Extension specialists that work on watershed management technical issues along with Soil Conservation Districts, Natural Resource Conservation Service offices, SSCC, NDASCD, and local water boards.

**4.3** Each cohort Academy participant will comprehend the inventory of watershed projects currently being carried out in the region as part of the overall watershed plans. Each Academy member will be involved in either an ongoing local 319 water project, a new 319 water project, or can choose to bring a secondary group-driven project to fruition during the Academy experience.

**4.4** The NDSU Extension Center for Community Vitality responds to local needs by inspiring, equipping and connecting leaders in order to help them solve community challenges through education, local projects and activities. These 319 funds would assist in expanding the current work more specifically to boards and councils directed to address challenging water related issues.

Current work includes the Rural Leadership North Dakota (RLND) program, an 18 month statewide program designed for men and women who are dedicated to strengthening their community and the state of North Dakota for the future. The program involves multiple activities and personal skill development opportunities culminating in a project designed to solve a community challenge. Over \$4 million has been acquired by RLND participants for local projects since 2003, five businesses have been started by RLND alumni employing 19 people, and nine RLND alumni have run for public office.

Lead Local is a newly developed, one-day boardsmanship training for emerging, elected and appointed leaders serving on boards, councils and committees. The goal is to help individuals become more civically engaged due to an increase in leadership skills and confidence. Over 130 have participated in a Lead Local training in the past nine months and 91.7% have indicated they feel prepared to serve on a local board, council or committee. A youth Lead Local is being developed for 2016.

The Community Impressions program inspires, equips and connects leaders from two similar sized North Dakota communities to help them learn about their community strengths and challenges through the eyes of a first time visitor. This program has helped build community leaders and solve local problems. CCV staff facilitate the visits and coach communities through this community exchange.

Leadership conferences, a newly formed leadership network, and leadership programs such as Stronger Economies Together (SET), local foods, and rural grocer leadership programs, are all facilitated by the Center for Community Vitality to help inspire, equip and connect North Dakota leaders.

Leadership programs developed and presented by staff at the NDSU Extension Center for Community Vitality have strong ripple effects in the state. These program offer the opportunity to transform others through appropriate leadership and followership activities so they can in turn make a difference in their communities and organizations.

## **5.0 EVALUATION AND MONITORING PLAN**

5.1 A retrospective post- then pre- survey will be completed after each face-to-face learning session with the watershed leadership cohort. This survey will measure knowledge gained and intended behavioral change by participants. These changes may include new patterns of behavior or procedures at local board meetings, decisions made, local recommendations adopted, practices implemented, actions taken, mentees determined, and policies enacted.

A six month post evaluation will include Individual interviews with watershed coordinators to determine behavioral changes they see in their respective local boards after completing the Watershed Leadership Academy. Observation will also be done by an NDSU Extension coach to determine if behavioral changes have been made by participants.

5.5 All data gathered during the Watershed Leadership Academy project will be housed on the Center for Community Vitality Director's password-protected computer with back-up files created. Any paper copies of participant's surveys will be kept in a locked file cabinet.

5.7 After the initial grant dollars have been expended, cost recovery through user fees will be considered to sustain the program indefinitely.

## **6.0 BUDGET**

6.1 (See Appendix B)

## References

Crosby, B. & Bryson, J. (2005). *Leadership for the common good: Tackling public problems in a shared-power world*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Emery, M. (2008). *Coaching for community change*. Foundations of Practice course.

North Dakota Compass (2016). [www.ndcompass.org](http://www.ndcompass.org)

Pigg, K., Martin, K., Gasteyer, S. Apaliyah, G., & Keating, K. (2015). *Community effects of leadership development education: Citizen empowerment for civic engagement*. West Virginia University Press.

Winchester (2016). University of Minnesota Extension. Presentation for Rewriting the Rural Narrative conference, Bismarck, ND. September 14, 2016.



**NORTH DAKOTA ASSOCIATION OF SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICTS**

OWNER AND OPERATOR OF LINCOLN-OAKES NURSERY

3310 University Drive  
Bismarck, ND 58504  
(701) 223-8518 • 223-8575

Brian Johnston, CEO

Richard Knopp, Jr.,  
President

January 4, 2017

Lynette Flage  
NDSU Extension  
NDSU Dept. 7390, Box 6050  
338 Minard Hall  
Fargo, ND 58108-6050

Dear Lynette,

This letter is to provide the support of the North Dakota Association of Soil Conservation Districts for the North Dakota Watershed Leadership Academy program to be delivered by NDSU Extension. I understand this program will help increase the leadership capacity of watershed leaders in North Dakota as they are involved with local projects to protect water quality and quantity for future generations.

A local training such as this can assist participants from Soil Conservation District (SCD) boards and others working on water related activities for their region. Training information topics such as group facilitation skills, communicating to stakeholders, managing conflict, working with the media, and building partnerships to reach a vision will all assist SCD board members and others involved in the program.

I recognize that this program is entirely voluntary for SCD board members and others but if there are ways to communicate the program opportunities to those working with SCD's, our Association would be happy to assist.

Sincerely,

Brian Johnston  
NDASCS CEO  
3310 University Drive  
Bismarck, ND 58504  
701-223-8518

**NORTH DAKOTA STATE SOIL CONSERVATION COMMITTEE**

2718 Gateway Avenue, Suite 104, Bismarck, ND 58503-0585  
Phone 701-328-9715 — FAX 701-328-9721

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December 28, 2016

Lynette Flage  
NDSU Extension Center for Community Vitality  
NDSU Dept. 7390, Box 6050  
338 Minard Hall  
Fargo, ND 58108-6050

Dear Lynette,

Please accept this letter as my support of the North Dakota Leadership Academy program with a goal of increasing the capacity of watershed leaders in North Dakota to lead watershed and community-based projects that will protect water quality for future generations. I understand that this project will help develop the leadership skills of watershed coordinators, watershed advisory groups and other working on water related issues to help them guide and collaborate with others and apply organizational management skills to engage people in public decisions.

This training will help local people as they work together on water related activities for their region.

Sincerely,



Scott Hochhalter  
Soil Conservation Specialist  
2718 Gateway Ave., Unit 104  
Bismarck, ND 58503  
scott.hochhalter@ndsu.edu

**APPENDIX A.** Milestone Table for North Dakota Watershed Leadership Academy

<b>Tasks/Responsible Organizations</b>	<b>Output</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>Objective 1</b> Task 1 – Form and convene a diverse advisory committee – NDSU Extension staff, watershed coordinators, SCD and NRCS partners	Advisory committee job description Advisory committee convened	X		
Task 2 – Develop Watershed Leadership Academy program – NDSU Extension	Watershed leadership manual complete	X		
Task 3 – Provide supplemental watershed related information online – NDSU Extension linked to NRCS, SCD and other partners	Website for Watershed Leadership Academy with links to appropriate North Dakota technical information	X	X	X
Task 4 – Pilot first cohort of Watershed Leadership Academy – NDSU Extension	Final analysis of pilot with suggested changes		X	
Task 5 – Retrospective post then pre survey – NDSU Extension	Evidence of knowledge gained and potential behavioral change	X	X	X
<b>Objective 2</b> Task 6 – Develop field tour agenda and assessment protocol – NDSU Extension, watershed coordinators, SCD and NRCS partners	Field tour agenda complete and virtual online tour developed	X	X	
<b>Objective 3</b> Task 7 – Coaching of cohort participants – NDSU Extension	100% of coaching site visits completed		X	X
<b>Objective 4</b> Task 8 – Completion of program evaluation following all cohort training – NDSU Extension	Final program recommendations and evidence of knowledge gained and potential behavioral change			X
Task 9 –Interviews with watershed coordinators – NDSU Extension	Evidence of local knowledge, skills and behavioral changes		X	X
<b>Objective 5</b> Task 10 – Synthesize all training materials for further distribution – NDSU Extension	Final curriculum binder completed			X
Task 11 – Train the trainer session to watershed coordinators and partners – NDSU Extension	Training completed for 20 or more coordinators and partners			X

**APPENDIX B. BUDGET TABLE FOR North Dakota WATERSHED LEADERSHIP ACADEMY****July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2019****FUNDING SOURCES**

	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
EPA Section 319 FY 2017 Funds	13,250	40,091	32,022	85,363
State/Local Match 1)NDSU* (TA, FA)	5,397	25,500	26,012	56,909
Total Budget	18,647	65,591	58,034	142,272

TA: Technical Assistance

NDSU: North Dakota State University

**BUDGET TABLE FOR North Dakota WATERSHED LEADERSHIP ACADEMY****BUDGET**

	<b>2017 July 1 – Sept. 30</b>	<b>2018 October 1 – Sept. 30</b>	<b>2019 October 1 – June 30</b>	<b>319 Funding</b>	<b>Matching Funds</b>	<b>Total Costs</b>
<b>PERSONNEL</b>						
<b>Salaries and Wages</b>						
.4 FTE specialist to assist in delivery and follow-up coaching of leadership cohort program.	5,500	22,165	16,995	44,660		44,660
Undergraduate student – web design, website updates, materials layout	1,250	5,000	3,750	10,000		10,000
Community Vitality Director – project development, curriculum writing, oversight, evaluation	1,337	7,868	8,026		17,231	17,231
Leadership specialist - curriculum development, provide training to cohort groups, evaluation	1,448	5,906	6,025		13,379	13,379



Community/Leadership specialist – curriculum development, provide training to cohort groups, follow-up coaching	877	3,577	3,648		8,102	8,102
<b>Fringe Benefits</b>						
.4FTE – 10%	550	2,217	1,700	4,467		4,467
Undergraduate student – 10%	125	500	375	1,000		1,000
Community Vitality Director – 30%	401	2,360	2,408		5,169	5,169
Leadership specialist – 30%	434	1,772	1,808		4,014	4,014
Community/Leadership specialist – 41%	360	1,467	1,496		3,323	3,323
TRAVEL – year one includes Red River Valley cohort trainings. Years two and three include 2-3 cohorts/year requiring 3 trips for each cohort. Apx. 5000 total miles for each year 2-3 year plus lodging and per diem budgeted.	1,500	3,500	3,500	8,500		8,500
MATERIAL/SUPPLIES – flip chart paper, markers, notepads, post-it notes, various supplies for leadership trainings.	500	1,200	1,000	2,700		2,700
PRINTING – estimated \$25 per leadership binder for participants. 100 in year one, and 60 each in years 2&3.	2,500	1,500	1,500	5,500		5,500
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>16,782</b>	<b>59,032</b>	<b>52,231</b>	<b>76,827</b>	<b>51,218</b>	<b>128,045</b>
F & A – 10%	1,865	6,559	5,803	8,536	5,691	14,227
<b>TOTAL COST</b>	<b>18,647</b>	<b>65,591</b>	<b>58,034</b>	<b>85,363</b>	<b>56,909</b>	<b>142,272</b>

\*NDSU match sources are North Dakota state appropriated funds.