

# Dakota Prairie Grasslands Heritage Program



# Annual Permits (Organics Act/ARPA)

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- Organics Act/ARPA permits will be issued for a three-year period
- Can be submitted 6 months prior to expiration of current permit
- Your annual permit allows for limited ground disturbance (shovel probes) to:
  - Explore possible IFs
  - Delineate or confirm resource boundaries
  - Investigate areas with high resource potential and low ground surface visibility (GSV)
    - This is professional judgement, and should be supported in subsequent reporting
    - If GSV appears to be below 30 percent, we will expect a detailed justification if shovel probes aren't excavated

# Pre-Field

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- Background Research
- Notifications
- Planning and the APE

# Background Research

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- Literature Review, Archival Research, Class I inventory, whatever you want to call the process, it's essential for a couple of reasons.
  - Identifying previously recorded resources, and starting the discussion about how they might need to be managed
    - It's not uncommon that we get questions about how to handle previously recorded resources at the end of the process, when folks are submitting reports
    - Remember to read the site forms. Spatial data (site locations) are digitized, and that results in human error (we'll come back to this in a bit)
  - Developing field methods and level of effort.
    - It's not just looking for known resources, it's about developing an understanding of resource potential
    - It's also about identifying possible constraints and providing adequate time to address them and provide routing/siting options
    - If you believe that a previous inventory is adequate to provide Section 106 compliance for the current undertaking, or some part of it, now is the time to talk about it

# Notification

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- Notify the District Archaeologist, Heritage Program Manager, or District Ranger prior to conducting fieldwork. If you don't know who this is, reach out to the Heritage Program Manager in the SO. You can initiate with a call or email. If calling in, we will ask for a follow up email with supporting information including:
  - General location so our folks know that it's you out there digging holes on FS managed lands
  - A description of the proposed undertaking, or intent of the survey. The description of the undertaking is crucial in developing the APE
  - Now is a good time to begin conversations about resources that might need to be managed, as identified in your Background Research
  - Timelines – We need to establish realistic timelines for all work



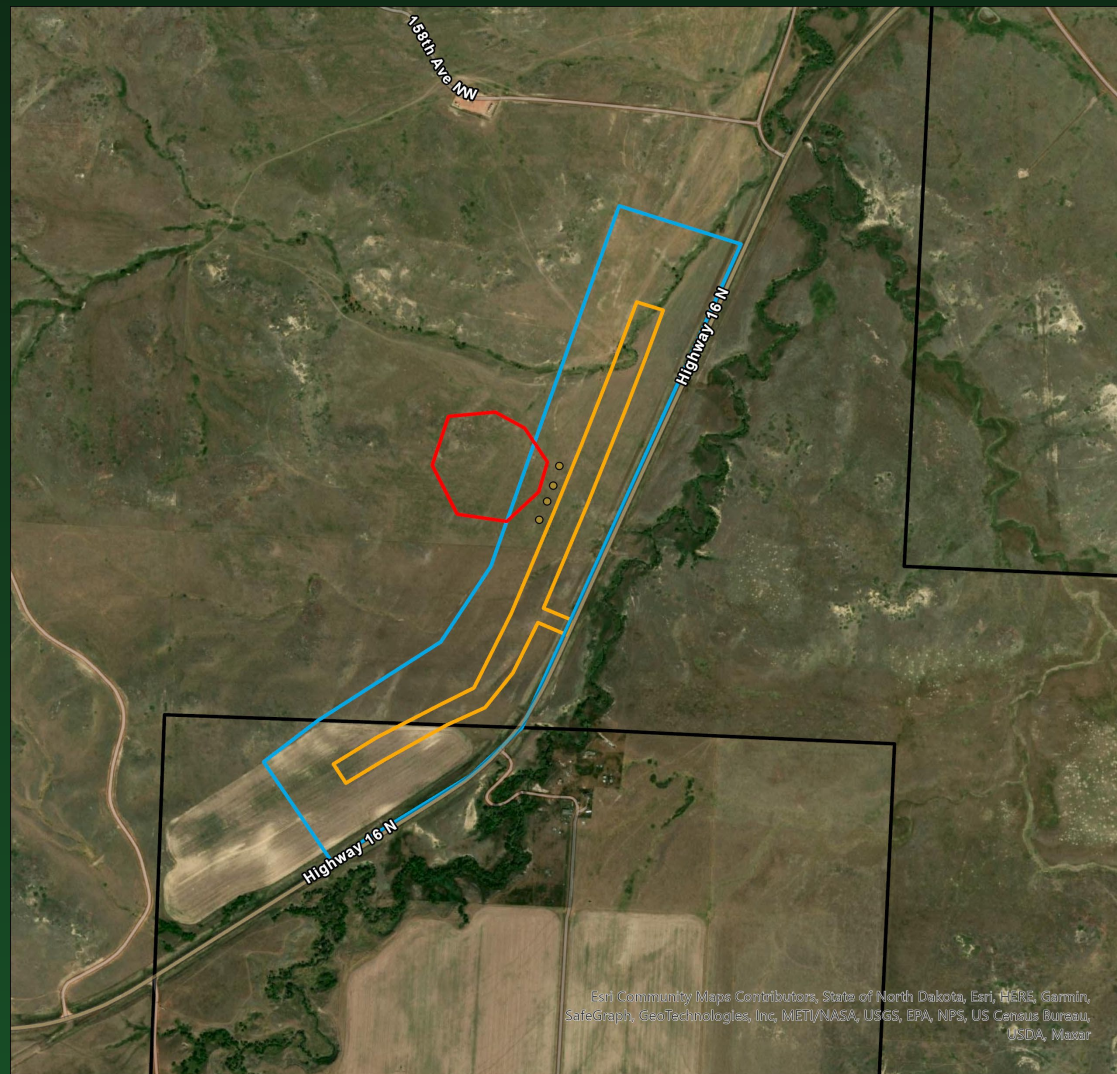
# Planning and the APE

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- To the extent possible, we would like to see some type of project design. In most situations, you should be working with one of our program folks to prepare an application.
- The proposed infrastructure and constructions methods are essential in defining the APE. You should be asking the proponents for this information at the beginning of the project.
  - It's ok if it changes over time.
- The APE is not the survey area. I know this has been touched on before, but we still often receive reports that don't properly distinguish, and lack one or the other all together.
- If you have questions, call.

In this case, if you were to identify the Survey Area (Blue) as the APE, it looks like we have an effect to a site.

Also note that there is an access route included in the APE (these are also important as they are an impact)



- Shovel Probe
- SiteBoundary
- Survey Area
- APE
- USFSLands05062014

For Community Maps Contributors, State of North Dakota, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA, Maxar

# Fieldwork

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- IFs and Shovel Probes
- Shovel Probes for Site Delineation
- Site Revisits



# IFs and Shovel Probes

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- IFs **may** need a shovel probe or two to explore the potential for buried components
  - If the soils/sediments indicate very low potential for buried components, make that case in your reporting by discussing the soils, current or previous land use, etc.
  - A surface artifact does not equal a positive shovel test, so radials aren't needed. If you excavate a shovel test and buried materials are found, then radials are needed to delineate the resource.

Do NOT excavate shovel probes in the vicinity of surface stone features without first discussing with FS Heritage Team to allow for appropriate consultation.

Having a Traditional Cultural Specialist or THPO present during survey does not allow for impacts to these resources.

# Shovel Probes and Delineation

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- Shovel probes may be required to confirm the horizontal and vertical extent of a resource, especially a resource with an apparent or known buried component. We to readily rely on the surface expression of sites to define them. In numerous situations this past year alone, our request for additional shovel probes along the previously mapped boundaries of resources has identified buried components that extend well beyond the surface expression.
- When conducting revisits, don't just assume that you can redraw the boundary of a resource based on surface expression without shovel probes to confirm the extent of buried materials. If you don't think shovel probes are needed, make a case. Be prepared to justify shovel probes, or the lack there of, in all subsequent reporting.

# Delineating Resources

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- When defining the resource boundaries, provide justification. It can be incredibly simple; “the northern boundary is defined by surface expression (surface artifacts), the eastern boundary by the extent of positive shovel tests, the southern by landform...
- Resources should be recorded in their entirety, to the extent possible. If a resource is extremely large, and it is unlikely that the extent of the resource can be adequately defined/delineated as part of the current effort; or the level of effort is disproportionate to the undertaking’s needs, contractors must contact the appropriate DPG Heritage personnel or District Ranger to coordinate the appropriate level of effort.

We need to explain how we've defined the site boundary.

It's not uncommon that the written description isn't consistent with the mapping



- PosShovelProbe
- Shovel Probe
- SiteBoundary
- Survey Area
- APE
- USFSLands05062014



- Resources should be recorded in their entirety, to the extent possible. If a resource is extremely large, or the level of effort is disproportionate to the undertaking's needs, contractors must contact the appropriate DPG Heritage personnel or District Ranger to coordinate the appropriate level of effort.
- If you have a large, previously recorded site, it should have been identified in your Background Research. If it looks like managing this resource is going to be important for the current undertaking, you should already be discussing it with the DPG.
- If you start to "chase" a resource, and have concerns about recording it, contact the DPG Heritage team or District Ranger to discuss. If you simply wait and mention it in the final report, it is going to slow the process down.
- Back to the background research!!! Not recording resources in their entirety has resulted in partial records. If you go by spatial data alone in these situations, you will completely misinterpret the site. Partial recordings are a nightmare to manage.
- We have received multiple requests to conduct evaluative testing on resource that have yet to be delineated. We've also been provided with eligibility recommendations for resources prior to folks delineating them. If we are going to be evaluating resources, or assessing effect, we will need to delineate the resources.

# Revisiting Resources

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- When revisiting resources on NFS lands, you need to attempt to relocate the resource.
  - Visiting the mapped location and not finding the previously recorded features, or surface artifacts, is not justification to recommend the resource not eligible.
- To the extent possible, resources should be revisited in their entirety to:
  - Ensure that we are appropriately locating and mapping, both for research purposes, as well as, project routing/siting
  - Ensure that we aren't misidentifying previously recorded sites
    - Multiple incidents of contractors inadvertently requesting new SITs for previously recorded sites because there was confusion about a mapped location
- Associated resource forms should be updated appropriately. This includes good description of the conditions and photos of features and current conditions. These conditions help us understand:
  - Why you did, or didn't, relocate a feature or site component
  - If/how the resource is being impacted

# Reporting

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Consistency is Key. Use consistent terms and definitions, and be sure to review your reports after making updates to make sure that changes/edits are appropriately carries throughout.

If you have questions about reporting, ask before you get started.

# Maps

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- **More isn't necessarily better**
- Frequently seeing everything crammed into one map, **Or** important interdependent information being provided in several, separate maps. Make the maps fit the need.
- Please remember to provide:
  - Background Research information
  - The **APE** and the **Survey Area (these are not the same thing)**
  - Provide the location of shovel probes and excavation units
  - If you recommend a change to a site boundary, include both the previous and new boundaries on all relevant mapping
- Resource sketch maps
  - Prefer these on an aerial background
  - Include feature locations and sketches, diagnostic artifact provenience, and shovel probes

# Figures

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- Please include overview photos of the APE to provide context when discussing the current land use and resource potential
- Please include photos of features
- Photos and/or profile drawings of shovel tests and excavation units
  - This is especially important when using stratigraphy to make a case for the vertical extent of a resource
  - Don't have to include every shovel test or unit, but should include representative samples.



# GIS

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- Provide shapefiles with report drafts to facilitate the review. Many are submitting shapefiles with a final, but not the initial draft.
- Please include some project or resource identifier in file names, especially if you are sending several loose shapefiles in an email. Twenty different shapefiles named “site boundary” in one email is a little confusing.
- Please avoid KML/KMZs to the extent possible.

# Submitting Reports

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- No hard copies for initial review
- Please provide a Word version of the document for review. You may send a pdf as well for your records.
- PDF and Word versions for final submittal