

NEBRASKA NATIONAL FOREST & ASSOCIATED UNITS: MONITORING AND EVALUATION REPORT
FISCAL YEAR 2005

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APPROVAL AND CERTIFICATION

I certify that the Nebraska National Forest and Associated Units Land and Resource Management Plan 2001 Revision (LRMP), is adequate to guide management of the Nebraska National Forest and Associated Units for 2006.

s/ Janet Krivacek

for Donald J. Bright, Forest Supervisor

INTRODUCTION

Background

The Nebraska National Forest and Associated Units consists of 1,065,000 acres divided into six administrative units in western Nebraska and western South Dakota, known collectively as the “Nebraska National Forest.” The Forest includes two proclaimed national forests--the Nebraska, composed of the Pine Ridge and Bessey Ranger Districts, and the Samuel R. McKelvie, which is managed as part of the Bessey Ranger District. Three national grasslands make up the bulk of the land base. The Oglala National Grassland in northwest Nebraska is managed as part of the Pine Ridge Ranger District. The Buffalo Gap National Grassland is managed as two ranger districts, with the Fall River RD office in Hot Springs, SD and the Wall RD office co-located with the National Grasslands Visitor Center in Wall, SD. The Fort Pierre National Grassland office is located in Fort Pierre, SD. The final unit is the Charles E. Bessey Nursery, the country’s first federal tree nursery. The nursery headquarters is co-located with the Bessey RD headquarters in central Nebraska, near Halsey.

On July 31, 2002 Rocky Mountain Regional Forester, Rick Cables, signed the Record of Decision to implement a revised management plan for the Nebraska National Forest Units. USDA Deputy Under Secretary David Tenny rendered the final administrative appeal decision upholding the Record of Decision, on May 5, 2003. This monitoring report is the third report to be completed under the new plan. For that reason and the fact that many of the monitoring items have a reporting frequency of five to ten years, evaluation of the monitored items will be somewhat limited. The current emphasis is placed upon collecting baseline and supporting data for future use in helping to determine trend information toward or away from achieving desired conditions. Baseline timeframe for key monitoring items is assumed to be the date the Record of Decision was signed, and will be used in the FY 2005 monitoring Report.

Monitoring Purpose

Effective Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) monitoring and evaluation fosters improved management and more informed planning decisions. It helps identify the need to adjust desired conditions, goals, objectives, standards and guidelines as conditions change. Monitoring and evaluation helps forests, grasslands, the Agency and the public determine how a LRMP is being implemented, whether plan implementation is achieving desired outcomes, and whether assumptions made in the planning process are valid.

Monitoring and evaluation are learning tools that form the backbone of adaptive management. With these tools, information is collected and compiled to serve as reference points for the future; new scientific understanding and technology, changes in law and policy and resource conditions, growing concerns, trends and changing societal values are incorporated into forest/grassland planning; and the scientific validity and appropriateness of assumptions used in the development of forest and grassland plans is evaluated. In short, they breathe life into a static document—the LRMP—to make it dynamic, relevant and useful.

Several kinds of activities can be referred to as “monitoring.” **Programmatic monitoring** tracks and evaluates trends of ecological, social, or economic outcomes. **Project implementation monitoring** monitors compliance with LRMP standards and guidelines. **Effectiveness monitoring** evaluates how effective our management actions are at achieving desired outcomes. **Validation monitoring** verifies assumptions and models used in LRMP implementation. Monitoring may also address issues for large geographic areas of which a forest or grassland is a part. These types of monitoring are addressed in LRMPs.

Monitoring and evaluation are conducted at several scales and for many purposes, each of which has different objectives and requirements. Monitoring requirements and tasks are developed to be responsive to the objectives and scale of the plan, program, or project to be monitored.

Monitoring and evaluation are separate, sequential activities required by NFMA regulations to determine how well objectives have been met and how closely management standards and guidelines have been applied. Monitoring generally includes the collection of data and information, either by observation or measurement. Evaluation is the analysis of the data and information collected during the monitoring phase. The evaluation results are used to answer the monitoring questions, determine the need to revise or amend management plans or how they are implemented, and form a basis for adaptively managing the national grasslands and forests.

Monitoring provides the Forest Supervisor with the information necessary to determine whether the Revised Management Plan is sufficient to guide management of the National Grasslands and Forests for the subsequent year or whether modification of the plan is needed.

Reasons for Monitoring (Monitoring Drivers)

The National Forest Management Act (NFMA) requires national forests and grasslands to do specific monitoring tasks. The level and intensity of any additional monitoring is dependent on available staffing, funding and forest or grassland priorities.

Following is a list of reasons (monitoring drivers) why certain items are included in a LRMP:

- Legal and regulatory requirements
- Forest Service Manual direction
- Tracking forest/grassland desired conditions, goals and objectives
- Validation of models/assumptions
- Tracking agency expectations
- Tracking public expectations/issues
- Tracking LRMP standards and guidelines
- Contributions to broad-scale monitoring
- Court rulings

Monitoring Priorities

After monitoring questions are developed, a screening process sorts the more significant questions from the less significant to ensure efficient use of limited resources—time, money and personnel. The priority of a question may affect the intensity or extent of associated monitoring activities. Following is a list of questions used in the screening process with a brief explanation or example:

1. **Is there a high degree of uncertainty associated with management assumptions?** *Examples:* (1) a new way of doing something where there is limited experience with the new technique; (2) actions taken in response to an unprecedented situation; (3) a lack of data for a particular resource response to a management action.
2. **Is there a high degree of disparity between existing and desired conditions?** *Examples:* (1) a particular habitat component is at a much lower level than desired; (2) the amount of use of a particular resource or use at a particular location is much higher than desired.
3. **Are proposed management activities likely to affect resources of concern?** There may be other forces affecting a resource much more significantly than anything the Forest Service does. Also, there may be portions of the landscape where no management activities are planned. An efficient monitoring strategy will focus on those circumstances where management activities are expected to have a discernable outcome.
4. **What are the consequences of not knowing resource conditions?** *Examples:* (1) if a species is at risk, consequences could be high, whether or not management activities are likely to affect it; (2) if a relationship with cooperators or local government is at risk due to a management activity, consequences could be high (in this case, a *human* resource).
5. **Will monitoring respond to a key issue?** Key issues identified through scoping may warrant monitoring *even if* they are (1) well understood, (2) the existing condition is good and (3) management activities will have little impact. Monitoring may be necessary for educational and/or accountability purposes.
6. **In addition to the above, can the question be cost effectively answered?** If the cost of answering the question is especially high in regard to benefits, or if an adequate monitoring method cannot be developed, the resource in question may be more appropriately studied by another entity, such as Forest Service research or private educational institutions.

Evaluation Process

The Forest/Grassland ID Team evaluates the data and information collected through monitoring. Successful adaptive management depends on collectively evaluating the effectiveness of management activities in moving the Forest or Grassland toward desired conditions. The “desired condition” (or other driver) that prompted the development of a monitoring question is typically associated with one or more monitoring items. Whereas the desired condition may be conceptual or visionary in nature, the monitoring items are generally a measurable aspect of the desired condition.

Evaluation is the process of transforming data into information—a value-added process. It is a process of synthesis that brings together value, judgment and reason with monitoring information to answer the question, “So what?” and perhaps, “Why?”

As noted earlier, the fact that FY 2005 is only the third year of implementation following the final administrative appeal resolution means that the forest will collect baseline monitoring data, but for many of the items with a five to ten year reporting frequency there is currently too little data to attempt any significant evaluation. There are exceptions; such as effects on adjacent communities of National Forest System management, which is a monitoring item with an annual reporting frequency. Other items with annual reporting frequencies include several Threatened and Endangered Species (T&E) items.

The following Monitoring Strategy outlines in tabular form the type of monitoring (Effectiveness, Implementation, or Validation), the reasons for the particular monitoring (monitoring drivers), monitoring questions, reporting frequency, and monitoring data collected. Please refer to the LRMP, Chapter 4 (Monitoring and Evaluation) for a more complete description of the monitoring strategy and its components. If a district or unit is not listed under a monitoring question the monitoring question was not applicable for that unit.

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EFFECTIVENESS MONITORING

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
LRMP Goal 1.a Objective 2, 3	Riparian 1: To what extent are perennial streams in proper functioning condition and riparian areas and wooded draws regenerating?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five Years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five Years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Fall River RD	Five Years	Formal monitoring completed on 42 separate wooded draws in the West Geographical Area in preparation for allotment management planning.	Data has yet to be summarized to determine effectiveness of existing management.
		Pine Ridge RD	Five Years	Inspections were made on West Ash, East Ash, Trunk Butte, Deadhorse, and Big Bordeaux Creeks. Properly functioning condition monitoring was not done.	Recently revised and implemented range allotment plans across the entire Pine Ridge portion of the district will undoubtedly result in continued improvement in watershed conditions and water quality.
		Oglala NG		Riparian and Woody Draw Assessments were conducted on Long Branch, Sand, Indian, Antelope, Hat, and Whitehead Creeks on the ONG with multi-agency personnel and permittees. Photo points were retaken, GPS'ed, and evaluations made using the "Great Plains-Riverine" scorecard.	
Wall RD	Five Years	No formal monitoring completed.			

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
LRMP Goal 1.a Objective 1	Soil 1: To what extent have soils eroded or disturbed by Forest Service management or permitted activities been restored?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five Years	Permittees plant annual rye at windmills. No formal monitoring completed.	
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five Years	Two projects on the district resulted in soil disturbance in 2005: Highway 83 construction and County Line Road Culvert Replacement. Both were inspected after the projects were completed.	The disturbed areas were seeded with native species and mulched. Good vegetation cover was already seen on the highway 83 project. The County Line Road Culvert project was completed too late in the year to notice any vegetation growth.
		Fall River RD	Five Years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five Years	No formal monitoring completed however, soil erosion is occurring along many of the riparian areas and some uplands due to off road travel and/or non-maintained roads.	Areas of soil erosion and associated resources concern will be addressed in the Travel Management NEPA document.
		Wall RD	Five Years	No formal monitoring completed.	

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
LRMP Goal 1.a Objective 1	Watershed 1: To what extent has water quality condition on watersheds containing National Forest System lands been restored, maintained or improved?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Fall River RD	Five Years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	The State of Nebraska Water Resources Division continues to monitor water quality conditions and beneficial use attainment in the White River-Hat Creek River Basin in preparation of the Section 303(d) list of impaired waters. The Pine Ridge Geographic Area is within this Basin area. The State of Nebraska has stated that the implementation of the Rangeland Allotment Management Decision does provide a balance where utilization of the land is allowed but sideboards are established that protect the aquatic resource both in and along the management area as well as downstream in the White River-Hat Creek River Basin.	
		Wall RD	Five years	No formal monitoring completed by the Forest Service. The USDA, Natural Resource Conservation Service and South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources continued their long-term study of the Upper Bad River Watershed Project.	

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
LRMP Goal 1.a Objective 1	Watershed 2: To what extent have water bodies on National Forest System lands that have been degraded by Forest Service permitted or management actions been restored?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five Years	No formal monitoring completed .	
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Fall River RD	Five Years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five Years	No formal monitoring completed .	
		Wall RD	Five Years	No formal monitoring completed.	
LRMP Goal 1.a Objective 4	Watershed 3: To what extent have in stream flows been assured to provide adequate water for fisheries and other riverine flora and fauna in streams and rivers with high resource values?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Fall River RD	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five Years	No formal monitoring completed .	
		Wall RD	Five Years	No formal monitoring completed.	

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
LRMP Goal 1.a Objective 5	Watershed 4: To what extent have surface water, sub-surface flows, and aquifers been protected from contamination from abandoned wells?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Annually	No new abandoned wells were found or inventoried into the NRIS WUTS database.	One abandoned well was capped by a licensed well driller to Nebraska standards.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Annually	No new abandoned wells were found or inventoried into the NRIS WUTS database.	
		Fall River RD	Annually	One nonfunctional well, was acquired in the Cole Draw Land Exchange that will need to be capped to SD state standards. Location is T2S, R 12 E, Sec 17 SE1/4 NE1/4 on north side of Cole Draw.	Well location will need to be entered in the NRIS WUTS database.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Annually	No new abandoned wells were found or inventoried into the NRIS WUTS database.	One abandoned well was capped by a licensed well driller to Nebraska standards.
		Wall RD	Annually	No new abandoned wells were found or inventoried into the NRIS WUTS database.	

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
Legal: 36 CFR 219.19(a)(6); 36 CFR 219.20; 36 CFR 219.27(5 and 6); LRMP Goal 1.b Objectives 2 & 6	MIS 1: What is the potential habitat capability for each management indicator species?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Ten years	Visual obstruction readings in association with plains sharp-tailed grouse surveys were completed on the Samuel R. McKelvie. Display ground surveys for both plains sharp-tailed grouse and greater prairie chicken were completed on the Samuel R. McKelvie.	Thirty transects in the uplands for the plains sharp-tailed grouse covered 8,016 acres of habitat. Results and documentation are maintained in official project files located in the Supervisor's Office.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Ten years	The management indicator species sharp-tailed grouse and greater prairie chicken rely on residual vegetative ground cover for initial nesting attempts, which is thought to be an essential life requisite for these species. Grassland rested for two or more years is thought to be the best potential nesting cover. The 2004 growing and grazing seasons provided residual nesting cover for spring 2005. Monitoring during fall 2004 showed that the mean visual obstruction reading in two-year rest pastures was about 5.16", which is about 1 inch lower than the long-term average. The lower potential was due to dry conditions.	Long-term data will be evaluated at the end of 10 years.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
Legal: 36 CFR 219.19(a)(6); 36 CFR 219.20; 36 CFR 219.27(5 and 6); LRMP Goal 1.b Objectives 2 & 6	MIS 1: What is the potential habitat capability for each management indicator species? (continued)	Fall River RD	Ten years	Plains sharp-tailed grouse and black-tailed prairie dog was completed several years ago The Greater Sage Grouse habitat map was completed in 2005.	Results and documentation maintained in official project files in Supervisor's Office Sage grouse report was completed and is on file at the district office and at the Supervisors Office.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Ten years	Visual obstruction readings in association with plains sharp-tailed grouse surveys were completed in the spring of 2005.	VISUAL OBSTRUCTION READINGS were taken at 58 random transects across the District. Habitat suitability evaluations for this area were documented in the Northern Great Plains EIS (Table 3-132) and in the official project files at the District Office.
		Wall RD	Ten years	No formal monitoring was completed.	

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
Legal: 36 CFR 219.19(a)(6); 36 CFR 219.20; 36 CFR 219.27(5 and 6); LRMP Goal 1.b Objectives 2 & 6	MIS 2: What is the current habitat suitability for each management indicator species?	Bessey/ Samuel R. McKelvie	Ten years	Visual obstruction readings in association with plains sharp-tailed grouse surveys were completed on the Samuel R. McKelvie. Display ground surveys for both plains sharp-tailed grouse and greater prairie chicken were completed on the Samuel R. McKelvie.	Thirty transects in the uplands for the plains sharp-tailed grouse covered 8,016 acres of habitat. Results and documentation are maintained in official project files located in the Supervisor's Office.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	A 10 percent random sample of residual nesting cover was completed across entire Ft. Pierre National Grassland. The annual habitat suitability index for Plains sharp-tailed grouse and greater prairie chickens was approximately .35 based on mostly fall residual cover from 2003 across the grassland. This was compared to potential cover that could have been available without any cattle grazing.	

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>MIS 2: What is the current habitat suitability for each management indicator species? (Continued)</p>	Fall River RD	Five years	<p>Habitat suitability evaluations for plains sharp-tailed grouse were conducted across the Southeast and Northeast Geographic Areas and documented.</p> <p>Plain's Sharp-tailed Grouse monitoring (grassland structure) was completed across the Southeast and Northeast Geographic Areas.</p> <p>Black-tailed Prairie Dog towns were not inventoried in 2005.</p> <p>A Greater Sage Grouse study was completed.</p>	<p>100 % of the visual obstruction reading transects have been completed. In the Southeast Geographic Area moisture was average to above average. Preliminary results indicate although the visual observation readings were above those recorded in 2004 the majority are still below 4 inches.</p> <p>Monitoring evaluations are documented in the official project files at the District Office, for the SE (Pioneer) geographic area and in the Northern Great Plains EIS & Errata (Table 3-129).</p> <p>Approximately 3,400 acres of prairie dogs were controlled in the boundary management area. Although undocumented it is believed that plague is in the colonies near Smithwick.</p> <p>The Greater Sage Grouse report was completed and is on file at the District Office and at the Supervisors office.</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>MIS 2: What is the current habitat suitability for each management indicator species? (Continued)</p>	Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	<p>Habitat suitability evaluations for plains sharp-tailed grouse across the entire district were completed and documented.</p> <p>Plains Sharp-tailed Grouse monitoring consisted of 29,629 acres being surveyed on the entire district.</p> <p>Visual Obstruction Readings were recorded for the entire District in 2005 for the Oglala and Pine Ridge Geographic Areas to support MIS sharp-tailed grouse monitoring.</p> <p>No formal monitoring on Pygmy Nuthatch habitat on the Pine Ridge was completed.</p> <p>No formal monitoring on Black-tailed Prairie Dog habitat on the Oglala National Grassland was completed</p>	<p>Nine active display ground sites were identified.</p> <p>Visual observation readings were taken at 58 random transects across the District. Past habitat suitability evaluations for this area are documented in the Northern Great Plains EIS (Table 3-132) and in the official project files at the District Office.</p> <p>Additional years of monitoring are needed to establish current habitat suitability levels for plains sharp-tailed grouse.</p> <p>The 2004 monitoring effort showed the pygmy nuthatch was well distributed across the Pine Ridge Geographic Area and forested portions of the Oglala National Grasslands. Past habitat suitability evaluations for this area are documented in the Northern Great Plains EIS (Table 3-129)</p> <p>As a result of a NEPA decision in August 2005, management activities consisted of rodenticide use along boundaries with private lands. A total of 965 acres of prairie dog colonies were treated in 2005.</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	MIS 2: (Continued)	Wall RD	Five years	Black-tailed Prairie Dog monitoring on the size and distribution of colonies was completed on the district.	There are 33,264 acres of black-tailed prairie dog towns on the Wall Ranger District.
Legal: 36 CFR 219.19(a)(6); 36 CFR 219.20; 36 CFR 219.27(5 and 6); LRMP Goal 1.b Objectives 2 & 6	MIS 3: What are the long-term population trends for each management indicator species and the relationships between long-term population trends and the effects of management activities on habitats on NFS lands?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	Greater prairie chicken males were counted on the leks at Samuel R. McKelvie.	There were 68 males counted on nine active leks. This covered all 29,000 acres of potential nesting habitat. Results and documentation are maintained in official project files located in the Supervisor's Office.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	<p>On a Ft. Pierre National Grassland 18,000-acre monitoring unit, male prairie chickens were up 109 percent in spring 2005. Male sharp-tailed grouse were up 104 percent. The number of males had increased at about half this rate from 2003 to 2004. The long-term population trend has generally been upward. Grouse wings collected from hunters showed that these species both had a successful nesting/brooding-rearing season in 2005, with a combined juvenile to adult ratio of 2.34.</p> <p>Black-tailed prairie dog colonies covered about 700 acres on the Ft. Pierre National Grassland in 1999. Recent surveys have showed about 1,340 acres of prairie dog acres. The acreage between 2004 and 2005 seems to have stayed the about the same.</p>	Data will be evaluated at the end of a 10-year monitoring period.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>MIS 3: What are the long-term population trends for each management indicator species and the relationships between long-term population trends and the effects of management activities on habitats on NFS lands? (continued)</p>	Fall River RD	Five years	<p>Two monitoring units were established to monitor long term population trends of plains sharp-tailed grouse. One 9,000 acre unit in the Southeast Geographic Area and a 10,000 acre unit in the Northeast Geographic Area. The areas were surveyed and all grouse leks recorded.</p> <p>No formal monitoring on Black-tailed Prairie Dog habitat was completed.</p> <p>Monitoring of the Greater Sage Grouse display grounds was completed.</p>	<p>The monitoring dataset is currently insufficient to detect long-term population trends in response to management activities. Due to the drought conditions of the last few years, the preliminary indication are that numbers are decreasing.</p> <p>Approximately 3,400 acres of prairie dogs were controlled in the boundary management areas of the district. Although undocumented it is believed that plague is in the colonies near Smithwick and prairie dog densities appear to be lower.</p> <p>One sage grouse was seen in the 3.64 Special Plant and Wildlife Habitat: Sage Grouse Management Area. This remains a downward trend.</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>MIS 3: What are the long-term population trends for each management indicator species and the relationships between long-term population trends and the effects of management activities on habitats on NFS lands?</p> <p>(Continued)</p>	Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	<p>Display ground surveys for sharp-tailed grouse were conducted across the entire district.</p> <p>No formal monitoring on Pygmy Nuthatch habitat on the Pine Ridge was completed.</p> <p>No formal monitoring on Black-tailed Prairie Dog habitat on the Oglala National Grassland was completed</p>	<p>The monitoring dataset is currently insufficient to detect long-term population trends for the sharp-tailed grouse and pygmy nuthatch in response to management activities.</p> <p>Population trends for the black-tailed prairie dogs through 2004 show an upward trend. Management along private/public land boundaries in 2005 has reduced overall populations. 965 acres had rodenticide use. The ONG currently has 2,200 acres total.</p>
		Wall RD	Five years	<p>No grouse lek surveys were conducted in 2005.</p> <p>Black-tailed prairie dog monitoring of the size and distribution of colonies was completed across the district.</p>	<p>Systematic grouse lek surveys occurred from 2000 to 2004 across the district. Collectively, 156,436 acres have been surveyed on the district, wherein 28 leks have been identified. Over 100,000 acres have yet to be surveyed. Five-year summary report of grouse lek surveys available on district. Data set insufficient for evaluation of long-term population trend.</p> <p>Approximately 33,264 acres of prairie dog colonies exist across the district. Prairie dog acreage within the Conata Basin was estimated to be approximately 29,718 acres with a mean density of 12.6 prairie dogs per acre.</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
USDA Departmental Regulation 9500-4; 36 CFR 219.19 and 219.27(6); LRMP Goal 1.b Objectives 1, 2, 4 & 7	T&E 1: To what extent are NFS lands and their management contributing to the recovery and viability of black-footed ferrets?	Fall River RD	Annually	No formal monitoring completed.	Black-footed ferrets have not been reintroduced in the District's 3.63 Management Area in Smithwick. Although undocumented it is believed that plague is in the colonies near Smithwick and prairie dog densities appear to be lower.
		Wall RD	Annually	Systematic monitoring, live-trapping and micro-chipping of the black-footed ferret in the Conata Basin 3.63 Management Area was completed.	Currently, black-footed ferret populations have been established on three prairie dog complexes scattered across Conata Basin with a wild, free-roaming population of over 200 ferrets. A total of 157 ferret kits were trapped and micro-chipped in the fall of 2005 indicating that the ferret population remains strong despite drought conditions over the last several years. This ferret population has contributed greatly to the species recovery and is considered the only viable population in the wild. The Conata Basin also continues to serve as a donor site to other ferret reintroduction sites in the nation.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
USDA Departmental Regulation 9500-4; 36 CFR 219.19 and 219.27(5); LRMP Goal 1.b Objectives 1, 2, 4, 7, & 9	T&E 2: To what extent are NFS lands and their management contributing to the recovery and viability of blowout penstemon?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Annually	All of the plantings were monitored according to the recovery plan.	Part of the populations were in good shape and some have been identified needing additional plantings. The monitoring dataset is currently insufficient to detect long-term population trends in response to management activities.
Migratory Bird Treaty Act; Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act; USDA Departmental Regulation 9500-4; 36 CFR 219.19 and 219.27(6); LRMP Goal 1.b Objectives 1, 2, 4 & 7	T&E 3: To what extent are NFS lands and their management contributing to the recovery and viability of bald eagle?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Annually	No formal monitoring completed.	No observations or incidental sightings were recorded during field visits to these habitats.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Annually	No formal monitoring completed.	No observations or incidental sightings were recorded during field visits to Ft. Pierre National Grassland.
		Fall River RD	Annually	Systematic monitoring completed along Cheyenne River	No known nesting attempts. 9 mature and 2 immature bald eagles were observed
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Annually	No formal monitoring completed.	No observations or incidental sightings were recorded during field visits to these habitats.
		Wall RD	Annually	No formal monitoring completed.	No observations or incidental sightings were recorded during field visits to these habitats.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
USDA Departmental Regulation 9500-4; 36 CFR 219.19 and 219.27(6); LRMP Goal 1.b Objectives 1, 2, 4 & 7	T&E 4: To what extent are NFS lands and their management contributing to the recovery and viability of the American burying beetle?	Bessey/ Samuel R. McKelvie	Annually	Surveys were completed before ground disturbing activities occurred and beetle populations were monitored and addressed.	There were 5 beetles caught and released during June and August at Bessey. There were 20 beetles caught and released during June and August at Samuel R. McKelvie. The monitoring dataset is currently insufficient to detect long-term population trends in response to management activities.
Migratory Bird Treaty Act; USDA Departmental Regulation 9500-4; 36 CFR 219.19 and 219.27(6); LRMP Goal 1.b Objectives 1, 2, 4 and 7	T&E 5: To what extent are NFS lands and their management contributing to the recovery and viability of whooping crane?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Annually	No formal monitoring completed.	No observations or incidental sightings were recorded during field visits to these habitats.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Annually	No formal monitoring completed.	No observations or incidental sightings were recorded during field visits to Ft. Pierre National Grassland.
		Fall River RD	Annually	No formal monitoring completed.	No observations or incidental sighting were recorded during field visits to these habitats.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Annually	No formal monitoring completed.	No observations or incidental sightings were recorded during field visits to these habitats.
		Wall RD	Annually	No formal monitoring completed.	No observations or incidental sightings were recorded during field visits to these habitats.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
Migratory Bird Treaty Act; USDA Departmental Regulation 9500-4; 36 CFR 219.19 and 219.27(6); LRMP Goal 1.b Objectives 1, 2, 4 & 7	T&E 6: To What Extent are NFS Lands and Their Management Contributing to the Recovery and Viability of Mountain Plover?	Fall River RD	Annually	No formal monitoring completed.	No observations or incidental sighting were recorded during field visits to these habitats.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Annually	No formal monitoring completed.	No observations or incidental sightings were recorded during field visits to these habitats.
		Wall RD	Annually	No formal monitoring completed.	One observation was reported to the South Dakota Game Fish and Parks. Sighting occurred on 7/14/04 in the Conata Basin.
USDA Departmental Regulation 9500-4; 36 CFR 219.19 and 219.27(5); LRMP Goal 1.b Objectives 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, & 9	T&E 7: Does Ute ladies' tresses or potential habitat for the species occur on the NFS lands within the planning area?	Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Annually	No formal monitoring completed.	No observations or incidental sightings were recorded during field visits to these habitats.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
Migratory Bird Treaty Act; USDA Departmental Regulation 9500-4; 36 CFR 219.19 and 219.27(5 & 6); LRMP Goal 1.b Objective 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 & 9	Viability 1: To what extent are National Forest System Lands and their management contributing to the viability of sensitive plant and animal species that are generally found in grassland and sagebrush habitats?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	Visual obstruction readings completed at McKelvie on the sands/sandy sites for 8,016 acres. Inventory of sharp-tailed grouse and greater prairie chicken leks were conducted. All male greater prairie chickens were counted on the leks.	Seventeen percent of the transects met the desired levels of vegetation structure. Fifty-eight percent of the greater prairie chickens on the leks were male. The data was insufficient to draw monitoring conclusions but will be used to help establish a baseline for future monitoring results.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	Ft. Pierre National Grassland has no habitats dominated or occurring by big sagebrush.
		Fall River RD	Five years	Six breeding bird survey routes were conducted on the district by a Forest Service wildlife biologist in 2005.	Data was insufficient to draw monitoring conclusions but will be used to help establish a baseline for future monitoring results. Dataset does provide some distribution information of sensitive grassland/shrub land bird species.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>Viability 1: To what extent are National Forest System Lands and their management contributing to the viability of sensitive plant and animal species that are generally found in grassland and sagebrush habitats? (continued)</p>	Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	<p>A breeding bird survey was conducted on PRRD by Forest Service wildlife biologist. Contracted services conducted a breeding bird survey on the ONG.</p> <p>A detailed general floristic inventory was conducted and is still in progress on the Oglala National grassland.</p>	<p>Data was insufficient to draw monitoring conclusions but will be used to help establish a baseline for future monitoring results. Dataset does provide some distribution information of sensitive grassland/shrub land bird species.</p> <p>A total of 48 floristic sites on the ONG were sampled during the 2005 season. Specimens are still being identified. A preliminary report can be found at the Pine Ridge Ranger District.</p>
		Wall RD	Five years	<p>No formal monitoring completed for animal species other than bat species. In cooperation with the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks, a private contractor was hired to conduct bat surveys in 2005 which included the attempt to survey for two Forest Service Sensitive species, namely, the Townsend's big-eared bat and the fringed myotis.</p> <p>A floristic survey over much of the district was conducted in 2005.</p>	<p>No observations or incidental sightings were recorded during field visits to these habitats for animal species other than bat species. A final report is forthcoming from the contractor.</p> <p>A final report for the floristic survey is pending and should be completed in 2006.</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
Migratory Bird Treaty Act; USDA Departmental Regulation 9500-4; 36 CFR 219.19 and 219.27(5 & 6); LRMP Goal 1.b Objective 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 & 9	Viability 2: To what extent are National Forest System Lands and their management contributing to the viability of sensitive plant and animal species that are generally found in riparian and wetland habitats?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	No formal monitoring completed	No observations or incidental sightings were recorded during field visits to these habitats.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	No formal monitoring was completed. American bitterns and black terns are the sensitive species that might use these habitats.	No incidental sightings of these species was made on Ft. Pierre National Grassland.
		Fall River RD	Five years	Systematic monitoring was completed along Cheyenne River. No monitoring completed on wetlands.	Yellow-billed cuckoo, loggerhead shrikes, and a goshawk exhibiting territorial behavior were observed. These sightings were insufficient to draw monitoring conclusions but will be used to help establish a baseline for future monitoring results.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	No formal monitoring completed	No observations or incidental sightings were recorded during field visits to these habitats.
		Wall RD	Five years	No formal monitoring completed for animal species other than bat species. In cooperation with the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks, a private contractor was hired to conduct bat surveys in 2005 which included the attempt to survey for two Forest Service Sensitive species, namely, the Townsend's big-eared bat and the fringed myotis. A floristic survey over much of the district was conducted in 2005.	No observations or incidental sightings were recorded during field visits to these habitats for animal species other than bat species. A final report is forthcoming from the contractor. A final report for the floristic survey is pending and should be completed in 2006.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
USDA Departmental Regulation 9500-4; 36 CFR 219.19 and 219.27(5 & 6); LRMP Goal 1.b Objectives 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 & 9	Viability 3: To what extent are National Forest System Lands and their management contributing to the viability of sensitive plant and animal species that are found in aquatic habitats?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	No formal monitoring completed	No observations or incidental sightings were recorded during field visits to these habitats.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	The sensitive northern leopard frog lives and reproduces in most of the wetlands on Ft. Pierre National Grassland that hold year-long water.	No observations or incidental sighting were recorded during field visits to these habitats.
		Fall River RD	Five years	No formal monitoring completed	No observations or incidental sightings were recorded during field visits to these habitats.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	No formal monitoring completed	No observations or incidental sightings were recorded during field visits to these habitats.
		Wall RD	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	No observations or incidental sightings were recorded during field visits to these habitats.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
Migratory Bird Treaty Act; USDA Departmental Regulation 9500-4; 36 CFR 219.19 and 219.27(5 & 6); LRMP Goal 1.b Objective 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 & 9	Viability 4: To what extent are National Forest System Lands and their management contributing to the viability of sensitive plant and animal species that are generally found in forested habitats?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	No formal monitoring completed	No observations or incidental sightings were recorded during field visits to these habitats.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	No observations or incidental sighting were recorded during field visits to these habitats.
		Fall River RD	Five years	Systematic monitoring was completed along Cheyenne River. No monitoring completed on wetlands.	Yellow-billed cuckoo, loggerhead shrikes, and a goshawk exhibiting territorial behavior were observed. These sightings were insufficient to draw monitoring conclusions but will be used to help establish a baseline for future monitoring results.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	No formal monitoring completed	Occasional observations or incidental sightings of sensitive species have been recorded during field visits to these habitats in 2005. These sightings were insufficient to draw monitoring conclusions but will be used to help establish a baseline for future monitoring results.
		Wall RD	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	No observations or incidental sightings were recorded during field visits to these habitats.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
Migratory Bird Treaty Act; USDA Departmental Regulation 9500-4; 36 CFR 219.19 and 219.27(6); LRMP Goal 1.b Objective 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 & 9	Viability 5: To what extent are National Forest System Lands and their management contributing to the viability of sensitive animal species that are heavily dependent on prairie dog colony habitat?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	The grassland supports 1,340 acres of occupied black-tailed prairie dog habitat, spread over more than 35 colonies. Even the small towns provide nesting and feeding areas for western burrowing owls. Ferruginous hawks search for food on these prey-rich sites. No formal surveys were completed.	Many incidental observations of each of these species were made on this grassland in 2005. These sightings were insufficient to draw monitoring conclusions but will be used to help establish a baseline for future monitoring results.
		Fall River RD	Five years	No monitoring was completed on prairie dog colonies in 2005.	Approximately 3,400 acres of prairie dogs were controlled in the boundary management areas of the FRRD. Although undocumented it is believed that plague is in the colonies near Smithwick and prairie dog densities appear to be lower.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	Management direction for 2005 focused on treatments along private/public land boundaries. Occasional observations or incidental sightings of sensitive species have been recorded during field visits to these habitats in 2005. These sightings were insufficient to draw monitoring conclusions but will be used to help establish a baseline for future monitoring results.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>Viability 5: To what extent are National Forest System Lands and their management contributing to the viability of sensitive animal species that are heavily dependent on prairie dog colony habitat? (continued)</p>	Wall RD	Five years	Monitoring of the size and distribution of black-tailed prairie dog colonies across the district was completed.	<p>Prairie dog acreages are on an upward trend. Current status of prairie dog acres in Conata Basin is approximately 29,718 acres in 2005 compared to 9,700 acres in 1999. Mean density of 12.6 prairie dogs per acre was estimated in Conata Basin. Approximately 33,264 acres of prairie dog colonies exist across the district. The prairie dog acreages on the WRD, especially in Conata Basin, have contributed to the viability of the burrowing owl and swift fox.</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
Migratory Bird Treaty Act; USDA Departmental Regulation 9500-4; 36 CFR 219.19 and 219.27(5 & 6); LRMP Goal 1.b Objective 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 & 9	Viability 6: To what extent are National Forest System Lands and their management contributing to the viability of sensitive plant and animal species that are generally found in special habitats like caves, cliffs, buttes, blowouts, and barren habitats?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	The planted blowout penstemon was monitored according to the recovery plan.	The data was insufficient to draw monitoring conclusions but will be used to help establish a baseline for future population surveys.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	No formal monitoring was completed.	No observations or incidental sighting were recorded during field visits to these habitats on the grassland.
		Fall River RD	Five years	No formal monitoring was completed.	
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	Surveys across the Oglala National Grassland were conducted in 2005 for sensitive species associated with low vegetative structure.	A total of 25,293 acres were surveyed based on low VISUAL OBSTRUCTION READINGS taken earlier in the year. Two sensitive species (chest-nut collared and McCown's longspurs) associated with these special habitats were observed and recorded. Results can be found at the District Office.
		Wall RD	Five years	No formal monitoring was completed.	

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
36 CFR 219.19 and 219.27(6); LRMP Goal 1.b	Viability 7: To what extent have cooperative agreements and the landownership adjustment program been effective in reducing private land conflicts involving prairie dogs and enhancing long-term opportunities for development of prairie dog colony complexes in the priority National Grassland areas.	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	No land exchange activities involving prairie dog management objectives have been completed.	
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	District and Forest personnel are working on a land exchange that will block up federal land in northeastern Ft. Pierre National Grassland. This will favor long-term prairie dog management by producing less fragmented habitat.	
		Fall River RD	Five years	No land exchange activities have been completed involving prairie dog management objectives.	
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	No land exchange activities have been completed involving prairie dog management objectives.	
		Wall RD	Five years	No land exchange activities have been completed involving prairie dog management objectives.	

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
36 CFR 219.20; LRMP Management Areas 3.58 & 3.51	Wildlife 1: Is habitat effectiveness on designated big game range being maintained or enhanced?	Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	Cooperative meetings and discussions with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission occurred in 2005 regarding general management of Management Area 3.51 and bighorn sheep management, elk, and pronghorn management.	
Legal 36 CFR 219.7(f); LRMP Goal 1.c Objective 5, LRMP Goal 4.b Public & Organizational Relations Objective 2	Community Relations 1: To what extent are noxious weeds, invasive species, and animal damage spreading from National Forest System lands to other ownerships or from lands managed by other government agencies to National Forest System lands?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	<p>1) Two .25 acre plots in ponderosa pine plantations were read and provided data for two year post thinning conditions, including the presence of non-native/invasive species.</p> <p>2) Data was obtained from two .25 acre plots in Eastern Red Cedar plantation. One newly installed plot will provide baseline data for future treatments. One was installed last year and one year post-treatment data collected includes the presence of non-native species.</p> <p>3) West SS. One .25 plot was read to provide second growing season post treatment data on an area of grassland that had cedar encroachment and was burned in March of 2005. Some photo points were retaken to track additional mortality and re-establishment.</p>	<p>1) Most of the annual species which showed up are native annuals, including sunflowers and Chenopods. There is more annual brome and Cannabis sativa present than last year, but not enough to be a concern at this time.</p> <p>2) The one year post treatment plot had a very low frequency of annual brome and no other non-native species. No non-natives were documented on the newly installed plot.</p> <p>3) Invasive/noxious weed species do not appear to be increasing in the area/s being monitored. Additional cedars have died since the fire was conducted.</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>Community Relations 1: To what extent are noxious weeds, invasive species, and animal damage spreading from National Forest System lands to other ownerships or from lands managed by other government agencies to National Forest System lands? (continued)</p>	Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	The district is working to monitor prairie dog colonies adjacent to private lands. This was achieved by working with South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks through a complaint process. Complaints were filed with SDGF&P by adjacent landowners, which were then turned over to the district for evaluation.	It was determined that 210 acres of prairie dogs were contributing to the spread of the rodents to private land from National Forest System Lands. These prairie dog towns were treated with rodenticide.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>Community Relations 1: To what extent are noxious weeds, invasive species, and animal damage spreading from National Forest System lands to other ownerships or from lands managed by other government agencies to National Forest System lands? (continued)</p>	Fall River RD	Five Years	<p>South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks conducted limited predator control on the national grasslands where predation was occurring on adjoining lands.</p> <p>Eight plots were read on the Hardpan allotment. Five provide two year post-burn data as required in the burn plan. Three provide pre-burn data for a planned broadcast burn.</p> <p>1) Three plots are in the Cheyenne River valley, five are on upland areas dominated by Western Wheat grass.</p> <p>2) Of these five, one was fenced out from grazing immediately after the burn; one is in an area that was not burned but continued to be grazed, and three were both burned and grazed.</p>	<p>Forest Service personnel coordinated with the state to help ensure appropriate and effective responses to livestock producer complaints regarding predator damage.</p> <p>1) These three plots are showing an overall decrease in desired species (primarily Switch grass, Prairie Sandreed and Western Wheat grass) and an increase in annual bromes (primarily Japanese Brome).</p> <p>2) Prairie dogs have moved into two of the plots in the upland area. The plot that was fenced after the burn has a significantly higher sedge component than the others. Additional analysis of the data collected has not yet been completed.</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>Community Relations 1: To what extent are noxious weeds, invasive species, and animal damage spreading from National Forest System lands to other ownerships or from lands managed by other government agencies to National Forest System lands? (continued)</p>	Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	<p>Eight .25 acre plots were read in ponderosa pine on the Pine Ridge in various areas to provide pre and post treatment data for thinning and prescribed fire treatments.</p> <p>Noxious weeds continue to encroach to and from private and state owned land from and to NFS lands primarily along wildlife/livestock travel routes, streams, and by wind blown seeds. Total actual acres of noxious weed spread from and to other ownerships have not been determined.</p> <p>Dawes County and Sioux Counties both received grant funding (total \$42,800) through the Nebraska State and Private Forestry and Forest Service to control noxious weeds on private lands adjacent to federal lands.</p> <p>Prairie dog colony expansion on the Oglala National Grassland was monitored in 2005 and indicates that the acres of prairie dog colonies was 1,276 acres in 2002 and grew to 2,271 acres. Prairie dog colony expansion from NFS lands to adjacent private lands is occurring on some of the colonies.</p>	<p>Data has been collected, but not yet been evaluated or analyzed.</p> <p>Noxious weed infestations are mapped on 1:24000 scale maps annually as well all herbicide treatment data. A total of 823 acres were treated on the Pine Ridge District. All records are on file at the District Office</p> <p>Annual reports are provided to the Nebraska State Forester and Forest Service Regional Office. Reports are also on file at the Pine Ridge Ranger District.</p> <p>A report can be found at the Pine Ridge Ranger District.</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>Community Relations 1: To what extent are noxious weeds, invasive species, and animal damage spreading from National Forest System lands to other ownerships or from lands managed by other government agencies to National Forest System lands? (continued)</p>	Wall RD	Five Years	<p>South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks conducted limited predator control on the national grasslands where predation was occurring on adjoining lands.</p> <p>Noxious weeds, especially Canada thistle, have been spreading from the Badlands National Park to the National Grasslands and adjoining private lands. Both the BNP and FS have initiated monitoring on the spread of Canada thistle. Adjacent private land is also contributing to an increase in the spread of noxious weeds on the National Grassland.</p> <p>Prairie dog acreages have increased in 2005 due to drought. Wall Ranger District is working to monitor prairie dog colonies adjacent to private lands. In addition, approximately 2880 acres of prairie dog colonies on the WRD were controlled in the Conata Basin and 2300 acres were controlled over the rest of the district to reduce conflicts with adjacent private landowners. Approximately 33,264 acres of prairie dog colonies exist across the district. Prairie dog acreage within the Conata Basin was estimated to be approximately 29,718 acres with a mean density of 12.6 prairie dogs per acre.</p>	<p>Forest Service personnel coordinated with the state to help ensure appropriate and effective responses to livestock producer complaints regarding predator damage.</p> <p>Forest Service personnel continue to work in controlling the presence of noxious weeds on the National Grassland adjacent to other federal and private lands. The treatment of these noxious and invasive weeds is estimated to be approximately 90% effective. Additional areas will need to be treated due to an increase of these weeds on the district due to a wet spring in 2005.</p> <p>Prairie dog populations were reduced over an area of approximately 5,180 acres across the entire district through the use of rodenticide on prairie dog colonies along public and private land boundaries to reduce conflicts with adjacent private landowners.</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
Legal 36 CFR 219.12(k)5(iv); LRMP Goal 1c Objective 5	Damage Control 1: To what extent are destructive insect and disease outbreaks prevented following management activities? (See also Community 1)	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	Aerial detection surveys completed by Forest Health Protection indicated moderate to high levels of <i>Ips</i> beetle activity on the Bessey District. Though no jack pine budworm activity was detected, past infestations have likely weakened trees, increasing the success of <i>Ips</i> attacks. Additional contributing factors may have included drought, hail injury and Diplodia tip blight caused by the May 2005 storm. Insect and disease activity appeared stable on the S.R. McKelvie National Forest.	Indicates less mortality due to <i>Ips</i> beetle attacks in 2005.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	No formal monitoring completed	No destructive insect or disease outbreaks were observed during field visits.
		Fall River RD	Five years	No formal monitoring completed	No destructive insect or disease outbreaks were observed during field visits.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>Damage Control 1: To what extent are destructive insect and disease outbreaks prevented following management activities? (See also Community 1) (continued)</p>	Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	<p>Forest Health Protection completed aerial detection surveys in September 2005. West of Highway 385, activity centers of about 25 trees each were detected in the Soldier Creek Wilderness and near east Ash Creek. East of Highway 385, the Kings Canyon area showed indications of pine engraver beetles and Diplodia tip blight due to a 2004 hailstorm.</p> <p>Observations of pine engraver beetle activity in slash piles generated by mechanized tree thinning activities indicated high populations in the vicinity of Chadron State Park (CSP). Material piled in the fall of 2005 was rapidly infested.</p>	<p>Fewer beetle-killed pines were mapped in fewer acres compared to 2003 and 2004. Kings Canyon area will need continued monitoring to determine if trees stressed by Diplodia tip blight will result in increased activity by pine engraver beetles.</p> <p>Beetle populations built up in slash piles in CSP created in the winter of 2004/2005. As those started to dry the beetles flew into the fresh piles. During thinning activities, active management of slash piles will be required to minimize the build up of pine engraver beetle populations.</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>Damage Control 1: To what extent are destructive insect and disease outbreaks prevented following management activities? (See also Community 1) (continued)</p>	Wall RD	Five years	<p>Limited monitoring was conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service within prairie dog colonies in the Conata Basin 3.63 ferret habitat area. Monitoring was done to establish routes of vehicle travel through prairie dog colonies to monitor the presence of sylvatic plague. Sylvatic plague is known to be lethal to the prairie dog and the black-footed ferret. Coyotes were also sampled within the Conata Basin area and tested for plague titers.</p>	<p>No destructive insect or disease outbreaks were observed during field visits.</p> <p>The presence of sylvatic plague was not detected within the Conata Basin 3.63 ferret habitat area. As a preventative/protective measure, APHIS acted as the lead agency in the application of a flea-killing insecticide to burrow entrances to inhibit the spread of sylvatic plague should this disease occur within the 3.63 ferret habitat area in the future. Collectively, insecticide was applied to prairie dog burrow entrances on 7,013 acres of prairie dog colonies. Sylvatic plague is known to occur on prairie dog colonies approximately 30 miles south of Conata Basin. On 1/13/06, a coyote sample tested positive for plague titers on private land ½ mile south of Interior, South Dakota.</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
LRMP Goal 1.c Objective 5, LRMP Goal 4.b Public & Organizational Relations Objectives 2	Damage Control 2: To what extent are noxious weeds, invasive species, and animal damage expanding or being reduced?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	Leafy spurge and Canada thistle were sprayed on both Bessey and McKelvie for a total of 50 acres. 200 acres of eastern red cedar encroachment were cut.	
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	<p>A 1910-acre area of high-density sickleweed (an invasive species) was prescribed burned in late summer of 2005. One objective of the burn was to catch the plants before they tumbled as this is the main way of seed dispersal. Plots and photo points were read and taken prior to the burn. In addition to the burn, we treated 31 acres of Canada Thistle and 274 acres of sickleweed with herbicides.</p> <p>1910 acres infested with Sickleweed (<i>Falcaria vulgaris</i>) were burned in late August of 2005. Data was taken from six transects and 12 photo points for three years before the burn, and immediately following the burn. Additional plots were put in following the burn to document the effects of different levels of pesticide application to Sickleweed in the burned areas.</p> <p>Additionally, the extent of Sickleweed on the FPNG was GPSed and determined to be 8,425 acres. This included areas of moderate and heavy infestation</p>	<p>Some of the plants had tumbled before we got the burn completed, but we were also able to catch some of the plants.</p> <p>The plots and photo points will be taken and evaluated again in the spring of 2006 after the vegetation has had a chance to grow to see if there is a reduction in the amount of sickleweed present.</p> <p>The extent of sickleweed infestation is continuing to expand. Getting the current extent GPSed will be invaluable for more accurately monitoring its spread. Sickleweed is considered a increasingly serious problem as it continues to spread and efforts to curtail it have, thus far, been only moderately effective.</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>Damage Control 2: To what extent are noxious weeds, invasive species, and animal damage expanding or being reduced? (Continued)</p>	Fall River RD	Five years	Monitoring and inventory of 1959 acres of sprayed areas was completed in 2005.	Comparison summaries of past and recent inventories have not been completed. 2005 windshield surveys of continually sprayed infestations of Canada thistle indicate patches are either being eradicated or experiencing significant reductions in density.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	<p>Noxious weed mapping and treatment in 2005 resulted in 542 acres of noxious weeds treated on the Oglala Geographic Area and 280 acres treated on the Pine Ridge Geographic Area.</p> <p>The District Noxious Weed Management Coordinator worked with Dawes and Sioux County Weed Superintendents who combined, received \$42,800 in State and Private Forestry Grants.</p> <p>Prairie dog colony expansion on the Oglala National Grassland was monitored in 2005 and indicates that of the 968 acres treated in December was 70% effective</p>	<p>A report can be found at the District Office.</p> <p>Prairie dog colony expansion from NFS lands to adjacent private lands is occurring on some of the colonies. A report can be found at the District Office</p>
		Wall RD	Five years	Noxious and invasive weed mapping and treatment in 2005 included approximately 450 acres of Canada thistle, 35 acres of hoary cress, 20 acres of Russian Knapweed and 5 acres of salt cedar.	The treatment of these noxious and invasive weeds is estimated to be approximately 90% effective. Additional areas will need to be treated due to an increase of these weeds on the district due to a wet spring in 2005.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
LRMP Goal 1.c Objective 1; LRMP Goal 2.c Wildlife, Fish, & Plant Use Objective 2	Vegetation 1: To what extent are rangeland vegetation structure objectives being met?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	Broad scale visual ob readings were completed in the uplands at Samuel R. McKelvie.	Seventeen percent of the transects met the desired levels of vegetation structure. The data is insufficient to draw monitoring conclusions but will be used to help establish a baseline for future monitoring results.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	<p>1) A 1910-acre area of high-density sickleweed (an invasive species) was prescribed burned in late summer of 2005. Plots and photo points were read and taken prior to the burn.</p> <p>2) Plots on Cookstove NW and Nels Middle are being monitored to determine species shifts following a spring burn in 2004.</p> <p>3) Three plots were read in Richland in anticipation of burning in 2006.</p>	<p>1) The plots and photo points will be taken and evaluated again in the spring of 2006 after the vegetation has had a chance to grow to see if there is a reduction in the amount of sickleweed present and to determine vigor of native species.</p> <p>2) The exotic/invasive species present on the 'go back' field on Cookstove NW continue to thrive in the burned area (Canada Thistle, Bindweed, Yellow Sweetclover, Japanese Brome). This is probably due to conditions at the time of the burn (moist soil, moist, fine litter provided a receptive seedbed for annual brome seeds and prevented damage to other undesirable species).</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	Vegetation 1: To what extent are rangeland vegetation structure objectives being met? (Continued)	Fall River RD	Five years	194 Visual Obstruction transects were completed district wide. Numerous range readiness studies and utilization studies were completed district wide to assist w/ management decision during the drought. Drought guidelines were developed allotment by allotment, district wide. Actual use by pasture was collected from the permittees and stored in the I-Web database for future analysis.	Visual obstruction reading summaries have not been completed at this time. All of the Fall River District was still recovering from a severe drought in 2004.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	Drought management practices were again in place (livestock went on June 1 or later, less livestock numbers, modified rotations, no-use). Utilization levels and drought monitoring was done on 90% of the allotments.	The rangeland vegetation responded very favorably to management. However, both the Oglala National Grassland and the Pine Ridge received very timely and effective precipitation. The data was insufficient to draw monitoring conclusions but will be used to help establish a baseline for future monitoring results.
		Wall RD	Five years	The district has established a random stratified sampling of vegetation structure across the three geographic areas. This sampling protocol monitors vegetation structure on nearly 30,000 acres.	2004 is the second year of data for the analysis of how the district is meeting the desired levels of vegetation structure.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
LRMP Goal 1.c Objective 1; LRMP Goal 2.c Wildlife, Fish, & Plant Use Objective 2	Vegetation 2: To what extent are rangeland vegetation composition objectives being met?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Fall River RD	Five years	<p>22 Range analysis transects completed in the West Geographical area in preparation for allotment management planning.</p> <p>Numerous range readiness studies and utilization studies were completed district wide to assist w/ management decision during the drought. Drought guidelines were developed allotment by allotment, district wide. Actual use by pasture was collected from the permittees and stored in the I-Web database for future analysis.</p> <p>Three transects have been established and read each year since 2002 to monitor switch grass and exotics in the riparian area of the Cheyenne River (Hardpan Unit).</p>	<p>Summaries of rangeland vegetation composition are completed during the allotment management planning process. The West Geographical area planning process is expected to occur in 2006-2007.</p> <p>Over the last three years, switch grass appears to be slowly declining as annual bromes and other native and non-native annuals are expanding. The current data is not sufficient to be statistically sound, but the transects will be read for another year or two to clarify the trend.</p>
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Wall RD	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	Vegetation 3: To what extent are desired vegetation conditions in forested areas being met?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Fall River RD	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	No formal designated forested areas, wooded draws excluded, exist on the Fall River Ranger District.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Wall RD	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	
LRMP Goal 1.c Objective 1; LRMP Goal 2.c Wildlife, Fish, & Plant Use Objective 2	Vegetation 4: To what extent are desired vegetation conditions in wetlands being met?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Fall River RD	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Wall RD	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
LRMP Goal 2.a Objective 1, 7	Recreation 1: To what extent are trails managed to meet regional standards and to minimize conflicts among users.	Bessey/ Samuel R. McKelvie	Annually	Travel Management was started in 2004 and continued into 2005 with numerous public meetings to obtain recreation user input. Approximately 1/3 of the district's trail miles were walked and evaluated for needed maintenance. Discussions with individual users were held throughout the summer. Visitor satisfaction and questions on maintenance were asked.	Recreation needs were determined and will be considered when preparing the future Travel Management document. Where trails didn't meet standards trails were prioritized for maintenance. When recommendations were presented the feasibility and it's appropriateness in meeting the district's goals and objective were evaluated. When applicable the recommendation was implemented.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Annually	Travel Management was started in 2004 and continued into 2005 with numerous public meetings to obtain recreation user input. Approximately 1/3 of the district's trail miles were walked and evaluated for needed maintenance. Discussions with individual users were held throughout the summer. Visitor satisfaction and questions on maintenance were asked.	Recreation needs were determined and will be considered when preparing the future Travel Management document. Where trails didn't meet standards trails were prioritized for maintenance. When recommendations were presented the feasibility and it's appropriateness in meeting the district's goals and objective were evaluated. When applicable the recommendation was implemented.
		Wall RD	Annually	The Prairie Bike Trail had missing and damaged trail signs that were replaced. This was completed the end of September.	No conflicts reported.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
LRMP Goal 2.a Objective 4 & 6	Recreation 2: Where does the demand for recreation opportunities warrant development of additional opportunities such as trails or campgrounds?	Bessey/ Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	Travel Management was started in 2004 and continued into 2005 with numerous public meetings to obtain recreation user input. A recreation master plan was initiated for the Bessey Complex. Draft plans were presented at several public meetings.	There is demand for motorized trails that will be addressed in the travel management plan.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	
		Fall River RD	Five years	Trails were mapped at Railroad Buttes to evaluate the extent of use at this site. By mapping this area, we now have a baseline to begin travel management in the area over the next several years.	By mapping the existing trails, a baseline has been established to monitor the effects of future resource damage and control.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	Travel Management was started in 2004 and continued into 2005 with numerous public meetings to obtain recreation user input. No formal monitoring for campground opportunities was completed.	There is demand for motorized trails that will be addressed in the travel management plan. Presently the services at our campgrounds are being reduced with the possibility of one campground being closed.
		Wall RD	Five years	Informal data collection form is used in the National Grasslands Visitor Center. Phone inquiries are also tallied on the form.	The data is insufficient to draw monitoring conclusions but will be used to help establish a baseline for future opportunities.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
<p>Legal - National Historic Preservation Act; LRMP Goal 2.a Objectives 2, 3, & 4, LRMP Goal 2b Heritage Objectives 2 & 5, LRMP Goal 2c Geologic and Paleontologic Resources Objective 3 & Wildlife, Fish & Plant Use Objective 1, LRMP Goal 4a Objective 2</p>	<p>Recreation 3: To what extent are Grassland and Forest visitors informed of the recreation opportunities available to them; are they adequately guided to those recreation opportunities; and do they receive adequate interpretive information on National Register of Historic Places and other heritage sites, geologic, paleontologic, wildlife, plant, and recreation resources or opportunities?</p>	<p>Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie</p>	<p>Five years</p>	<p>No formal monitoring was completed.</p>	<p>Visitor maps and brochures of the district are available. The visitor map contains recreation opportunity information. The brochure explains historic significance and recreation facilities.</p> <p>The district is listed in the state of Nebraska's Travel Guide.</p> <p>Recreation Special Use Permits and Special Use Permits for short stop tours are authorized as applied for, reviewed and approved.</p>
		<p>Ft. Pierre NG</p>	<p>Five years</p>	<p>No formal monitoring was completed.</p>	<p>The district has visitor maps of the district available and The Nebraska National Forest website is a good source of information.</p> <p>FPNG is a popular hunting area for prairie grouse. The grassland is mentioned in many hunting and bird dog magazines along with being mentioned several times on Tony Dean's website. South Dakota Dept of Tourism and SD Game, Fish and Parks also help to steer visitors to the grassland. District personnel also spend a considerable amount of time answering questions on prairie dog shooting, upland game hunting, fishing and general recreational questions.</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>Recreation 3: To what extent are Grassland and Forest visitors informed of the recreation opportunities available to them; are they adequately guided to those recreation opportunities; and do they receive adequate interpretive information on National Register of Historic Places and other heritage sites, geologic, paleontologic, wildlife, plant, and recreation resources or opportunities? (Continued)</p>	Fall River RD	Five years	No formal monitoring was completed.	<p>The district has visitor maps of the district available.</p> <p>The Nebraska National Forest website is a good source of information, as well as the kiosk signs we have located at the office and Pioneer Picnic Ground</p>
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	No formal monitoring was completed.	<p>The district has visitor maps of the district available.</p> <p>Outfitting and Guide Special Use Permit was authorized for commercial tours of the Oglala National Grassland.</p> <p>Hudson Meng Bison Bonebed facility was operated 4 days a week by Forest Service employees. Public tours were available.</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>Recreation 3: To what extent are Grassland and Forest visitors informed of the recreation opportunities available to them; are they adequately guided to those recreation opportunities; and do they receive adequate interpretive information on National Register of Historic Places and other heritage sites, geologic, paleontologic, wildlife, plant, and recreation resources or opportunities? (Continued)</p>	Wall RD	Five years	No formal monitoring was completed.	<p>The Nebraska National Forest website informs visitors of recreation opportunities. Form letters are sent to people who request recreation information along with any supplemental information available such as flora and fauna checklists. Temporary exhibits in the National Grasslands Visitor Center are designed to respond to Forest Service issues and topics such as weeds or black-footed ferrets. Paleontological staff created an excellent handout that addresses paleontologic recreation opportunities. The Wall Chamber of Commerce inserts the National Grasslands Visitor Center rack card into every information request they receive.</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
36 CFR 219.21 (g) 36 CFR 295.2 &.5 LRMP Goal 2.a & 4.a	Travel and Access 1: What are the effects of vehicle use off roads?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Two years	No formal monitoring completed	Travel Management was started in 2004 and continued into 2005 with numerous public meetings to obtain recreation user input. Public information meetings will be reinitiated in 2006.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Two years	No formal monitoring completed.	Public information meetings will be initiated in 2006.
		Fall River RD	Two years	Formal monitoring has been done at Railroad Buttes by mapping every trail to evaluate the extent of the trail system.	By mapping the existing trails, a baseline has been established to monitor the effects of future expansion of the trail system and resource damage and control.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Two years	No formal monitoring completed.	Travel Management was started in 2004 and continued into 2005 with numerous public meetings to obtain recreation user input. Public information meetings will be reinitiated in 2006.
		Wall RD	Two years	No formal monitoring was implemented.	All Terrain Vehicle and Off Highway Vehicle use requests for trail information are about 200 per year.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
Legal - National Historic Preservation Act; LRMP Goal 2.b Heritage Objectives 2 & 5	Heritage 1: To what extent are National Register sites and districts being protected and preserved?	Bessey/ Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	Historic Bessey Nursery (TM00-1/25TM11) was visited numerous times during FY 2005. The site is being fully protected and preserved. No incidents of vandalism were reported or observed. Considerations for sites in the authorization of Special Use permits is made to reduce visual and physical conflict.	Nursery tours are available to the public and interpretive panels are in place. An interpretation plan is being prepared for the Bessey Ranger District. One component of this plan will focus on interpretation of the Historic Nursery.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	Hudson-Meng Bison Kill Site (25SX115) was visited numerous times during FY 2005. Three special use permits were issued on site and in the vicinity. The site is being fully protected and preserved. No incidents of vandalism were reported or observed. Hudson-Meng is open to the public and tours are available.	Numerous sites on the Forest are evaluated as eligible to the NRHP. No eligible sites were monitored during FY 2005. All eligible sites were avoided during FY 2005 project activities. The Nebraska and South Dakota SHPOs were consulted prior to project implementation.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
LRMP Goal 2.b Heritage Objective 3	Heritage 2: To what extent are traditional cultural properties being protected?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	No known traditional cultural properties.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	No known traditional cultural properties.
		Fall River RD	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	No known traditional cultural properties.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	No known traditional cultural properties.
		Wall RD	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	No known traditional cultural properties.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
LRMP Goal 2.b	Special Interest Areas: To what extent have the special features found Special Interest Areas been conserved or enhanced?	Fall River RD	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.	The special orders have not been written and approved, to commence monitoring activities regarding fossil collection in these areas.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	<p>Toadstool Park SIA: During 1999-2005, Florida Museum of Natural History (FMNH) has been collecting fossils for educational and research purposes through a FMNH program called Pony Express. As of 2002, FMNH has collected and catalogued 818 fossil specimens collected from ONG. In 2003-2004, Dr. MacFadden did not collect any fossils from Toadstool. The fossils collected from the ONG are part of research to compare and contrast the equivalent time units exposed in Florida. In 2005, Dr. MacFadden is working with geochemical analysis of vertebrates and fossil hackberry seeds. One dozen samples were taken in 2005.</p> <p>A CCS with Temple University is focusing on the hypothesis that vertebrate fossil stratigraphic and geographic locations can be accurately determined using geochemical analysis of trace elements. The results would be very useful for fossil theft cases, among other areas.</p>	<p>The Special Orders which would reflect the changes in the Forest Plan have not been developed. The NEPA for those decisions will soon be invalid to do the Special Orders.</p> <p>Fossil theft investigations are on-going, one is in progress.</p> <p>(ONG = Oglala National Grassland)</p> <p>(CCS= challenge cost share agreement)</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>Special Interest Areas: To what extent have the special features found Special Interest Areas been conserved or enhanced? (continued)</p>	<p>Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG (continued)</p>		<p>Dr. Richard Franz, FMNH, is now conducting research on the tortoises found in the White River Group on the ONG. In 2005, Dr. Franz collected 12 tortoises. He is trying to unravel the systematic problems within the paleontological nomenclature for Tertiary age tortoises.</p> <p>His work is complementing the tortoise research conducted by Dr. Mike Leite Chadron State College, who also has a permit to collect fossils on the ONG. Dr. Mike Leite, Dr. Joe Corsini, and students have recorded over 800 tortoise sites. Few specimens will be collected. Theft is continually reported. The final report has some very interesting finding, such as tortoise sizes decreased in around 31 Ma then increased a few million years later. These size changes reflect warming and cooling trends.</p>	<p>(ONG = Oglala National Grassland)</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>Special Interest Areas: To what extent have the special features found Special Interest Areas been conserved or enhanced? (continued)</p>	<p>Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG (continued)</p>		<p>Dr. Al Sanders, The Charleston Museum, has been permitted to collect since 2002. He and his volunteers have collected over 500 specimens as of 2004. In 2004 field season, 200 specimens were collected. In 2005, 100 specimens were collected. Dr. Sanders's research focuses on the comparison of the equivalent geologic units exposed in South Carolina, by utilizing microfaunal species.</p> <p>Warbonnet / Yellowhand SIA: No activities have occurred at this SIA</p>	

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
LRMP Goal 2.b	Research Natural Areas: To what extent have the unique research features of Research Natural Areas been conserved or enhanced?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	No formal monitoring was completed.	
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	Grazing has begun in the 1,030-acre Mallard South RNA. The area was not grazed between June 20 and September 30 in 2005 to keep cattle from congregating in the hardwood draw during the hot part of the summer. Canada thistle, a noxious weed, is annually controlled.	No evaluation has yet been completed.
		Fall River RD	Five years	No formal monitoring was completed.	
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	No formal monitoring was completed.	
		Wall RD	Five years	No formal monitoring was completed.	

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
LRMP Goal 2.b	Wilderness: To what extent are the Soldier Creek Wilderness special features and communities of special concern conserved or enhanced?	Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	No formal monitoring was completed.	
LRMP Goal 2.b	Recommended for Wilderness: To what extent are the Red Shirt and Indian Creek Recommended for Wilderness special features and communities of special concern conserved or enhanced?	Fall River RD	Five years	No formal monitoring was completed.	
		Wall RD	Five years	No formal monitoring was completed.	

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
<p>Legal 36 CFR 219.7(f); LRMP Goal 2.c</p>	<p>Community Relations 2: What are the effects of National Forest System Management on adjacent communities?</p>	<p>Forest-wide</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>Public Notification</p> <p>Twenty-seven news releases were generated on a variety of topics and distributed to local area media markets.</p> <p>The Schedule of Proposed Actions, which provides public notice of upcoming forest and grassland projects, became available on the internet in 2005. It is available at www.fs.fed.us/sopa for those wishing to stay informed about upcoming Forest Service projects locally and across the country.</p> <p>Technical assistance</p> <p>The Forest Fire Management officer conducted basic fire fighter training to college students allowing them to qualify for wild land fire fighter positions.</p> <p>The public affairs specialist provided and supported presentations to several groups and organizations regarding forest programs and activities.</p>	

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>Community Relations 2: What are the effects of National Forest System Management on adjacent communities? (continued)</p>	Forest-wide	Annually	<p>The zone paleontologist provided presentations to several school groups and organizations regarding the paleontological program and fossil protection. She also provided paleontological technical assistance to support several interagency and tribal projects and training experiences. Her participation in a fossil theft case garnered national media attention.</p> <p>Forest and grassland staff serve on local Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development Boards, Tourism committees, and many other community organizations, providing expertise and energy.</p> <p>Grants and Agreements In FY2005 the Forest participated in approximately 51 new agreements valued at over \$786,000</p>	

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>Community Relations 2: What are the effects of National Forest System Management on adjacent communities? (continued)</p>	Bessey/ Samuel R. McKelvie	Annually	<p>Bessey Nursery and Bessey Ranger District, including Samuel R. McKelvie National Forest, have a combined workforce of 13 permanent and 30 temporary employees for a combined payroll of \$508,000.</p> <p>Local area contractors received over \$63,914 for road maintenance on the forest road system. Additional maintenance was performed by a crew from the Black Hills National Forest who stayed in local motels and ate in local establishments.</p> <p>Infra structure improvements on the forest that provide indirect benefits to the local area include Phase II of a new wastewater treatment facility on the forest for \$432,000, and construction of a new office facility for the Ranger District and Nursery that will be completed in 2006.</p> <p>Payments to counties from receipts generated on national forests (primarily livestock grazing) included: Blaine County\$2,677.17, Cherry County--\$19,703.95, and Thomas County—\$19,918.13.</p> <p>Grazing fees for 2005 were \$1.79 per animal unit month on national forests. Counties receive 25% of the gross receipts.</p>	<p>In addition to the direct benefits to the local area economy from the jobs provided and salaries generated, in 2005 the Bessey District was the focus for significant contract funding for new and improved facilities. Because of its isolated location, many contractors used local facilities for lodging and meals, which contributed to the local economy.</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>Community Relations 2: What are the effects of National Forest System Management on adjacent communities? (continued)</p>	Ft. Pierre NG	Annually	<p>Fort Pierre National Grassland has a combined staff of six permanent and four temporary employees for a combined payroll of \$222,000.</p> <p>The FS cooperated with Jones County to place \$7000 worth of aggregate on the county road to the popular Richland Wildlife Area on the national grassland. This will continue in future years.</p> <p>The Grassland has been recognized repeatedly in local, regional, and national publications for its progressive management which provides a healthy population of greater prairie chicken. The publicity brings wildlife viewers and hunters from across the country to the Pierre/Ft. Pierre area.</p> <p>Payments to counties from receipts generated on national grasslands (primarily livestock grazing) included: Jones County--\$1734.33, Lyman County—\$5278.89, and Stanley County--\$3105.40.</p> <p>Grazing fees for 2005 were \$1.90 per animal unit month on national grasslands. Counties receive 25% of the net receipts generated on National grasslands.</p>	<p>The Fort Pierre National Grassland's reputation as an area where wildlife viewers and hunters can pursue greater prairie chicken on public land provides direct economic benefits to local service industries.</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>Community Relations 2: What are the effects of National Forest System Management on adjacent communities? (continued)</p>	Fall River RD	Annually	<p>Fall River Ranger District has a combined staff of 11 permanent and 11 temporary employees for a combined payroll of \$498,000 benefiting the southwest South Dakota economy.</p> <p>Payments to counties from receipts generated on national grasslands (primarily livestock grazing) included: Fall River County \$9160.80, and Custer County--\$2165.66. <i>Pennington county figures-see Wall RD total.</i> Grazing fees for 2005 were \$1.90 per animal unit month on national grasslands. Counties receive 25% of the net receipts generated on national grasslands.</p>	Salaries generated by Fall River Ranger District are a significant contributor to the local area economy of the Hot Springs, SD area.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>Community Relations 2: What are the effects of National Forest System Management on adjacent communities? (continued)</p>	Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Annually	<p>Between the Forest Supervisor's Office and the Pine Ridge RD, there are 41 permanent and 20 seasonal employees with a combined payroll of \$1.93 million going into the Chadron/Crawford, NE area economy.</p> <p>Fourteen hazardous fuels treatment projects totaling 783 acres were completed on private lands adjacent or nearby the national forest using FS funding through the Stevens grant program in the amount of over \$149,000.</p> <p>Contracts for road maintenance and other projects included over \$122,643.</p> <p>Payments to Dawes County from receipts generated on national forests and grasslands (primarily livestock grazing) was \$10,280.32 from national forest receipts and \$775.90 from national grassland receipts. Sioux County received \$2,462.99 from receipts generated on national forest lands and \$2970.60 from national grasslands.</p> <p>Grazing fees for 2005 were \$1.79 per animal unit month on national forests, and \$1.90 per animal unit month on national grasslands. Counties receive 25% of the gross receipts generated on national forests and 25% of net receipts generated on national grasslands.</p>	The Forest Service contributes significantly to the local area economy of northwest Nebraska in a variety of ways. Contributions include direct funding assistance through payments for receipts generated, and indirectly through salaries, contracts for road maintenance, construction projects, as well as purchases of supplies and services.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
	<p>Community Relations 2: What are the effects of National Forest System Management on adjacent communities? (continued)</p>	Wall RD	Annually	<p>Wall Ranger District has a combined staff of eight permanent and eight temporary employees, for an annual payroll of over \$293,000.</p> <p>The National Grasslands Visitor Center provides a high quality educational attraction that encourages travelers to lengthen their stay in Wall and to visit other area attractions.</p> <p>Payments to counties from receipts generated on national grasslands (primarily livestock grazing) included: Jackson County-\$4176.97 and Pennington County--\$7883.85.</p> <p>Grazing fees for 2004 were \$1.90 per animal unit month on national grasslands. Counties receive 25% of the net receipts generated on national grasslands.</p>	<p>Salaries generated by the Wall Ranger District are a significant contributor to the Wall, SD area economy.</p> <p>The National Grasslands Visitor Center is a key component in the travel and tourism market of the Wall, SD community.</p>

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
LRMP Goal 2.c Miscellaneous Products Objective 1	Miscellaneous Products 1: To what extent is the demand for miscellaneous products being met?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	No miscellaneous forest products issued this year.	No requests from the public were made for these types of permits.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	No miscellaneous forest products issued this year.	No requests from the public were made for these types of permits.
		Fall River RD	Five years	No miscellaneous forest products issued this year.	No requests from the public were made for these types of permits.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	No miscellaneous forest products issued this year.	No requests from the public were made for these types of permits.
		Wall RD	Five years	No miscellaneous forest products issued this year.	No requests from the public were made for these types of permits.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005	Evaluation
LRMP Goal 2.c Scenery Objective 1	Scenery 1: To what extent have scenery management objectives been met?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	No formal monitoring was completed.	
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	No formal monitoring was completed.	
		Fall River RD	Five years	No formal monitoring completed. Installation of overhead utility line by Black Hills Power on the east side of Highway 40 versus burying this distribution line was made in the authorization of this use of national grassland.	
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	No formal monitoring was completed.	
		Wall RD	Five years	No formal monitoring was completed.	

IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005
Endangered Species Act; LRMP Goal 4b Public and Organizational Relations Objective 2	T&E: Are actions identified in national recovery plans for threatened and endangered species being implemented where opportunities exist on national grasslands and forests?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Annually	The blowout penstemon recovery plan for the Forest Service to plant and monitor plants was followed. Monitoring of blowout penstemon transplants continued.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Annually	A land exchange is in progress in northeast FPNG that will consolidate landownership. This will help create a prairie dog complex, which may eventually provide support to a black-footed ferret nursery habitat area.
		Wall RD	Annually	Black-footed Ferret Recovery Plan. The Wall Ranger District is actively working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Badlands National Park, and other federal, state, tribal and private entities in the recovery of the endangered black-footed ferret.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005
Agency Expectations; Public Expectations & Issues. LRMP Goal 3 Objectives 1, 2, & 3	Administration: Are the action plans identified in the objectives being completed on schedule?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Annually	Monitoring of blowout penstemon was completed at both Bessey and Samuel R. McKelvie.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Annually	No action plans identified in the objectives needed to be completed in 2005.
		Fall River RD	Annually	No action plans identified in the objectives needed to be completed in 2005.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Annually	No action plans identified in the objectives needed to be completed in 2005.
		Wall RD	Annually	No action plans identified in the objectives needed to be completed in 2005.
Legal: 36 CFR 219.12 (k)	Implementation Monitoring: Have site-specific decisions been made to implement the Land & Resource Management Plan direction?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Annually	All current site-specific decisions implement the Land & Resource Management Plan direction.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Annually	All current site-specific decisions implement the Land & Resource Management Plan direction.
		Fall River RD	Annually	All current site-specific decisions implement the Land & Resource Management Plan direction.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Annually	All current site-specific decisions implement the Land & Resource Management Plan direction.
		Wall RD	Annually	All current site-specific decisions implement the Land & Resource Management Plan direction.
Legal: 36 CFR 219.12 (k)1 & 3	Outputs: Are the projected annual outputs and services being met annually and at anticipated costs?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Annually	See annual performance and accountability report Reporting System.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Annually	See annual performance and accountability report Reporting System.
		Fall River RD	Annually	See annual performance and accountability report Reporting System.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Annually	See annual performance and accountability report Reporting System.
		Wall RD	Annually	See annual performance and accountability report Reporting System.

VALIDATION MONITORING

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005
Endangered Species Act; USDA Departmental Regulation 9500-4; 36 CFR 219.19 and 219.20 Key Issue; Legal: 36 CFR 219.19(a)(6); 36 CFR 219.20; 36 CFR 219.27(5 and 6); LRMP Goal 1.b Objectives 2, 4, & 6	Suggested Stocking Rates: Are the suggested stocking rate guidelines LRMP (Appendix I) providing the desired levels of vegetation structure and habitat for management indicator species and species at risk?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	No formal monitoring completed at the pasture level
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	No formal monitoring completed
		Fall River RD	Five years	Guidelines were implemented in the 2004 Southeast Geographical area EIS, but it is too premature to evaluate their effectiveness. In addition, numerous range readiness studies and utilization studies were completed district wide to assist w/ management decisions during the drought and help with future stocking guideline evaluations. Drought guidelines were developed allotment by allotment, district wide. Actual use by pasture was collected from the permittees and stored in the I-Web database for future analysis.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	No formal monitoring completed.
		Wall RD	Five years	The Wall Ranger District has established a random stratified sampling of vegetation structure across the three geographic areas. This sampling protocol monitors vegetation structure through visual obstruction readings on nearly 30,000 acres. Additional data will need to be collected to complete a formal evaluation.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005
Endangered Species Act; Migratory Bird Treaty Act; 36 CFR 219.19; LRMP Goal 1.b. Objectives 2 & 4	Wildlife: Are oil and gas stipulations effective, inadequate, or excessive in protecting and conserving raptors, prairie grouse, mountain plover, black-footed ferrets, bighorn sheep, and other wildlife species and their habitats?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	Currently not applicable.
		Fall River RD	Five years	Surveys of existing oil and gas permits indicates stipulations were adequate
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	Currently not applicable.
		Wall RD	Five years	Currently not applicable.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005
36 CFR 219.19 and 219.20	Wildlife: How do residual cover levels measured in the fall relate to nesting cover levels the following spring?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	No need – all grassland structure monitoring is occurring in the spring.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	No investigations were done during this fiscal year.
		Fall River RD	Five years	No fall to spring monitoring completed.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	No need – all grassland structure monitoring is occurring in the spring.
		Wall RD	Five years	No fall to spring monitoring completed.

Monitoring Driver	Monitoring Question	NNF Unit	Reporting Frequency	Monitoring Completed in 2005
Legal 36 CFR 219.11 (d); LRMP Goal 1.b	MIS: Are the selected management indicator species and their response to management activities in habitats on local National Forest System lands adequately representing the management effects on other species in the associated response guilds and is the species membership identified for each response guild reasonably accurate and complete?	Bessey/Samuel R. McKelvie	Five years	No comprehensive evaluations completed at this time.
		Ft. Pierre NG	Five years	Visual obstruction of grassland that is potential sharp-tailed grouse and prairie chicken nesting habitat can be monitored with a modified Robel pole. Grouse population parameters are being monitored by counting the number of displaying males and by noting the ratio of young to adults grouse wings collected from hunters. Prairie colony acres have been measured with a geographic positioning system. Surveys of associated wildlife species being completed are recordings of incidental sightings.
		Fall River RD	Five years	No comprehensive evaluations completed.
		Pine Ridge RD/Oglala NG	Five years	The monitoring dataset is currently insufficient to detect long-term population trends in response to management activities on the Pine Ridge Ranger District for the Plains sharp-tailed grouse. The pygmy nuthatch is a new MIS and the dataset is currently insufficient to detect long-term population trends in response to management activities. Monitoring of the black-tailed prairie dog through 2004 indicates that population trends were in an upward trend (acres) compared to past years data. Management direction in 2005 called for treatment of some colonies along borders between private/public lands, and resulted in a reduction in occupied acres. It is believed that these MIS adequately represent management effects on other species in the associated response guilds.
		Wall RD	Five years	No comprehensive evaluations completed at this time.

Evaluation

A priority for early 2006 will be to establish a Monitoring Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) as outlined in the introduction section of the LRMP Chapter 4. Responsibilities of the IDT will include establishing a work plan and budget to accomplish the monitoring expectations and requirements. The team will also be responsible for managing the collection and storage of data as well as working with cooperators to aid in data collection. A key responsibility will be to work with cooperators to evaluate the data and determine if, and to what degree, the monitoring questions are being answered. Finally, the team will produce and distribute the annual monitoring report.

Project level decisions to implement the LRMP are now being initiated across all the units that comprise the Nebraska National Forest. Although the five year mid-point review of the plan will be FY 2007, the FY 2006 monitoring report, should be able to start the evaluation of the collected data in earnest.