

Placeholder for Figure 2.35
Pawnee National Grassland Geographic Area

PAWNEE NATIONAL GRASSLAND

Setting

The Pawnee National Grassland (PNG) is located in northeastern Colorado 35 miles northeast of Greeley, in Weld County. The federally-owned tracts are intermingled with privately-owned farms and ranches. The Grassland is in the Great Plains Dry Steppe Province, more commonly referred to as the Central High Plains. Predominant vegetation is short- and mid-grass prairie. The area contains Blue grama/Buffalograss communities to shrub communities dominated by fourwing saltbush. Elevations range from 4,500 feet to 5,640 feet. Precipitation averages 9 to 17 inches annually, with 80 percent occurring during the growing season. Important habitat types support endemic species with narrow habitat requirements. The landscape is dotted with playas and intermittent stream-course potholes that temporarily fill with water following storms. Perennial riparian sites are limited to less than 30 acres across the Grassland.

Pawnee Buttes is a popular destination on the Grassland. The heaviest use occurs in late spring and early fall, but the area is accessible all year. Bird watching and sightseeing are the most popular dispersed recreational activities. The only developed recreational site is Crow Valley Recreation Area.

The current transportation system in and around the Grassland is a mixture of state, county and forest development roads. Since the late 1800s Weld county has proclaimed rights-of-way for roads on all section lines within the county, and now has an extensive network of two-lane graveled roads throughout the Grassland on many of these section lines. The majority of the Forest roads on the Grassland are unimproved. The roads have developed from many years of travel and are suited for high-clearance vehicles. Some of the more heavily traveled roads have been upgraded for low-clearance vehicles.

Goals and Desired Conditions

Manage vegetation for endemic wildlife and plant species and forage for domestic livestock. Provide for low vegetative structure on the majority of the Grassland. The wildland fire management strategy is perimeter control. Implement prescribed fire to manage vegetation and wildlife habitat.

Restrict human activity to protect wildlife-habitat effectiveness.

Continue grazing on all existing allotments.

Obliterate roads not needed for administration of the Grassland.

Improve the standard of the bird tour roads.

Maintain existing OHV opportunities.

In the vicinity of the Pawnee Buttes, provide for developed recreational opportunities, hiking trails, and interpretive facilities, maintain raptor habitat and other unique resources. Close and reclaim, as needed, existing facilities.

Provide interpretation of heritage resource management, and fossil resources on at least one site on the Grassland.

Designate dispersed campsites where needed.

Improve the Crow Valley Recreation Area by providing interpretive facilities, an accessible trail and birdwatching opportunities; apply measures to reduce conflicts between user groups.

Provide additional recreational and interpretive opportunities along the Pawnee Pioneer Trails Scenic and Historic Byway.

Provide information and interpretive facilities at the Little Owl Creek and Keota Research Natural Areas.

Increase interpretive opportunities at the Greeley office.

Continue development of mineral resources, primarily oil and gas.

Cooperate with other agencies to determine presence and status of threatened, endangered and sensitive (TES) species on the Grassland.

Consolidate landownership to contribute to more efficient resource and biodiversity management through exchange and acquisition. Pursue rights-of-way on state and private lands for the bird tour, and on private lands for trails in the Pawnee Buttes area.

Travel Management Strategy, Pawnee National Grassland

Management Area	Mode	Existing System	Convert Ways	New Rds/Trls	Extent of Additions	Extent of Obliterations
2.2	4WD	N	N	N	N	N
	MTR	N	N	N	N	N
	WMT	N	N	N	N	N
	WNM	N	N	N	N	N
	NMT	N	N	N	N	N
3.1 Owl	4WD	N	N	N	N	N
	MTR	N	N	N	N	N
	WMT	N	N	N	N	N
	WNM	Y	N	Y	L	N
	NMT	N	N	Y	L	N

Management Area	Mode	Existing System	Convert Ways	New Rds/Trls	Extent of Additions	Extent of Obliterations
3.1 W. Stoneham	4WD	N	N	N	N	N
	MTR	N	N	N	N	N
	WMT	N	N	N	N	N
	WNM	N	N	N	N	N
	NMT	N	N	Y	L	N
3.1 Keota	4WD	N	N	N	N	N
	MTR	N	N	N	N	N
	WMT	N	N	N	N	N
	WNM	Y	N	Y	L	N
	NMT	N	N	Y	L	N
3.1 Buttes	4WD	N	N	N	N	N
	MTR	N	N	N	N	N
	WMT	N	N	N	N	N
	WNM	Y	N	N	N	N
	NMT	Y	N	Y	L	N
3.61	4WD	N	N	N	N	N
	MTR	N	N	N	N	N
	WMT	N	N	N	N	N
	WNM	N	N	N	N	N
	NMT	N	N	N	N	N
4.2	4WD	N	N	N	N	N
	MTR	N	N	N	N	N
	WMT	N	N	N	N	N
	WNM	Y	N	N	N	N
	NMT	Y	N	N	N	N
4.3 Main	4WD	N	N	N	N	N
	MTR	Y	N	N	N	N
	WMT	Y	N	N	N	N
	WNM	Y	N	N	N	N
	NMT	N	N	N	N	N
4.3 Coal	4WD	N	N	N	N	N
	MTR	N	N	N	N	N
	WMT	N	N	N	N	N
	WNM	N	N	N	N	N
	NMT	N	N	N	N	N

Management Area	Mode	Existing System	Convert Ways	New Rds/Trls	Extent of Additions	Extent of Obliterations
6.4	4WD	N	N	N	N	N
	MTR	N	N	N	N	N
	WMT	Y	N	N	N	N
	WNM	Y	N	N	N	N
	NMT	N	N	N	N	N
6.6	4WD	N	N	N	N	N
	MTR	N	N	N	N	N
	WMT	N	N	N	N	N
	WNM	N	N	N	N	N
	NMT	N	N	N	N	N
8.21	4WD	N	N	N	N	N
	MTR	N	N	N	N	N
	WMT	N	N	N	N	N
	WNM	Y	N	N	N	N
	NMT	Y	N	N	N	N

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