Dakota Prairie Grasslands

USDA Forest Service, Northern Region

Monitoring and Evaluation Report

Fiscal Year 2003

Caring for the Land and Serving People.

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Fiscal Year 2003 Monitoring and Evaluation Report

Introduction

This report summarizes Grasslands Plan monitoring and evaluation during fiscal year 2003, which ran from October 1, 2002, to September 30, 2003.

Each National Forest and Grassland unit manages resources under the guidance of a Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP), commonly referred to as a Forest Plan or Grasslands Plan. The National Forest Management Act requires National Forests and Grasslands to develop these management plans. It also requires them to monitor and evaluate the plans.

Figure 1: Northeast McKenzie County, McKenzie Ranger District.

Context

The Dakota Prairie Grasslands is comprised of four Ranger Districts.

The McKenzie Ranger District administers the northern half of the Little Missouri National Grassland.

The Medora Ranger District administers the southern half of the Little Missouri National Grassland.

The Sheyenne Ranger District administers the Sheyenne National Grassland.

The Grand River Ranger District administers the Grand River and Cedar River National Grasslands.

> *The Grand River National Grassland is located in South Dakota; the other National Grasslands that are part of the Dakota Prairie are located in North Dakota.*

2003 – Plan Implementation Begins on the Dakota Prairie Grasslands

The Little Missouri, Grand River, Cedar River, and Sheyenne National Grasslands were administered by the Custer National Forest until 1998, at which time they were assigned to the newly formed Dakota Prairie Grasslands. On July 31, 2002, the Regional Forester signed the Record of Decision to approve the Dakota Prairie Grasslands' LRMP, (i.e. the "Grasslands Plan"). Fiscal year 2003 was our first full year under the guidance of the new Grasslands Plan.

The Grasslands Plan consists of four Chapters. Chapters 1-3 provide the goals, objectives, standards, and guidelines that are to be used to manage the Dakota Prairie Grasslands' resources. Chapter 4 outlines the monitoring and evaluation strategy to be used to assess the Plan over time. Specifically, Chapter 4 lists the monitoring questions to be addressed and assigns these questions reporting timeframes. The "Monitoring Handbook" being developed by the Dakota

Prairie Grasslands details the methodologies that are used to collect and analyze the monitoring data.

> *The Dakota Prairie Grasslands Land and Resource Management Plan, or Grasslands Plan, will provide management guidance for the next 10 to 15 years.*

Delayed Implementation of Grazing Portions of the Grasslands Plan

Through the planning process the Forest Service estimated the effects of implementing the Grasslands Plan. With regard to livestock grazing, the Forest Service estimated that the selected alternative (Modified Alternative 3 Final) of the Grasslands Plan would result in a nine percent reduction in grazing levels. Other entities estimated this alternative would result in reductions of 43 to 69 percent. The difference in the estimated potential reductions fueled controversy over the degree of economic effects on local communities and a perceived uncertainty of effects to individuals.

Figure 2: Scientific Review Team, Forest Service employees and others review monitoring techniques.

To remedy the situation, the Regional Forester decided, in the Record of Decision for the Grasslands Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement, to "phase in" the Grasslands Plan with regard to livestock grazing. The first phase of the decision includes development of sample Allotment Management Plans (AMPs) that will be reviewed by a "Scientific Review Team." After consultation with the North Dakota Governor, the Grasslands Supervisor nominated the team's members, and the Regional Forester appointed the members. This team includes a variety of disciplines to review 64 sample AMPs.

Completion of the sample allotments is analogous to taking the new plan out for a "test drive." The intent of this "test drive" is to determine if the grazing portion of the plan can be implemented, and to verify that grazing levels are similar to those projected in the Revised Grasslands Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement. After completion of this "test drive," the Regional Forester will make a final decision either to adopt the grazing portion of the Grasslands Plan or to make any needed adjustments or changes. The "test drive" will be completed within two years of the signing of the Record of Decision.

It will not be possible to evaluate implementation of the grazing portions of the Grasslands Plan until the 64 sample AMPs are complete and the grazing portion of the Grasslands Plan has either been accepted or changed. In the meantime, monitoring questions that pertain to grazing will be answered with the most current information.

Monitoring - Who, When, Why, What

Purposes of Monitoring and Evaluation

Effective land and resource management plan monitoring and evaluation fosters adaptive management and more informed 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 land and resource management plan is being implemented, whether plan implementation is achieving desired outcomes, and whether assumptions made in the planning process are valid.

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.

Figure 3: Larry Igl, Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center, surveying birds.

Monitoring and evaluation are separate, sequential activities required by National Forest Management Act 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 management plans, change how the plans are implemented, and form a basis for adaptively managing the national grasslands. Monitoring and evaluation keep the Grasslands Plan up-to-date and responsive to changing issues by verifying the effectiveness of management plan standards and guidelines, anticipating program and project effects on resources, and providing information for amendments to the management plan.

Monitoring provides the information necessary to determine whether the Grasslands Plan is sufficient to guide management of the national grasslands for subsequent years or whether modification of the plan is needed.

The purposes of Land and Resource Management Plan monitoring and evaluation are to:

- Determine whether the plan is working as anticipated to accomplish its identified goals and objectives.
- Determine whether changes need to be made to the plan.
- Determine whether assumptions made in the planning process are valid.
- Allow Forest Service managers to make better decisions within the guidance of the plan.

There are three types of monitoring:

1. Implementation Monitoring: evaluates whether the anticipated inputs, anticipated outputs, and actions prescribed in the Grasslands Plan are occurring as planned.
2. Effectiveness Monitoring: evaluates how effective the Grasslands Plan actions are at achieving the desired outcomes.
3. Validation Monitoring: verifies the assumptions and models used in the Grasslands Plan.

Monitoring Team

The Dakota Prairie Grasslands Monitoring Team is an interdisciplinary group of people that oversees Grasslands Plan monitoring. Functions of the team include developing monitoring protocols, overseeing monitoring data collection and storage, evaluating monitoring results, budgeting, and making recommendations to the Grasslands leadership in regards to monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring team members are listed on page 24.

Figure 4: Western prairie fringed orchid monitoring on the Sheyenne National Grasslands.

Monitoring Handbook

A Monitoring Handbook is being developed by the Dakota Prairie Grasslands Monitoring Team to provide more refined guidance in monitoring and evaluation than the monitoring strategy outlined in the Grasslands Plan. The target audience for this Monitoring Handbook is Dakota Prairie Grassland employees. Its objectives are:

1. To focus our monitoring efforts,
2. To schedule monitoring data collection,
3. To budget monitoring funds, and
4. To specify monitoring protocols.

The Monitoring Handbook is in a draft stage. Despite being in draft form, the Handbook has a great deal of useful information in it as far as monitoring methods, reporting language, and scheduling that was helpful in developing this monitoring report. The Monitoring Handbook is scheduled for completion at the end of calendar year 2004.

Questions for Fiscal Year 2003

The Grasslands Plan contains 48 monitoring questions in Chapter 4. These questions need to be answered over the life of the plan, but each question will not be monitored or evaluated every year. Development of the Dakota Prairie Grasslands Monitoring Handbook will include creation of a monitoring schedule based on question prioritization, time needed for data collection, and projected budgets. However, even with the best-laid plans, circumstances will change that may affect the monitoring schedule; therefore, the Grasslands leadership will assist in prioritizing what will be monitored in any given year.

Which questions were addressed for fiscal year 2003 was based on several factors including the "frequency of reporting" stated in Chapter 4 of the Grasslands Plan for each question, availability of information to answer the question, and initial attempts by the Monitoring Team to prioritize questions.

Monitoring Questions

Management Indicator Species

MIS3. What are the population trends for the western prairie fringed orchid and associated species? How have management activities affected this trend and the species' overall recovery?

Frequency of Reporting: Annually
Monitoring Type: Effectiveness

The Sheyenne National Grasslands supports one of the world's largest populations of the western prairie fringed orchid (orchid). Moisture availability and habitat management affect population trends. Major management activities that may affect orchid populations include prescribed fire, grazing, mowing, and herbicide spraying. Orchids have been monitored to determine the effects of management on orchid survival and fruit production. Seed production is important to the long-term survival of the orchid.

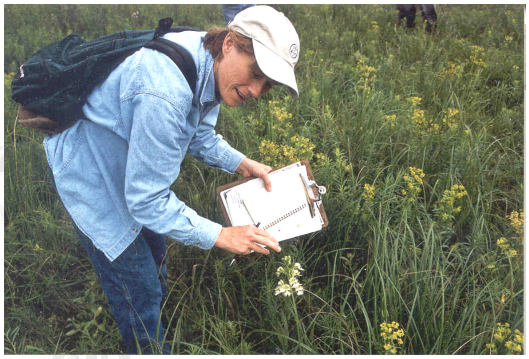

Figure 5: Dakota Prairie Grassland Botanist Darla Lenz surveying orchids.

The majority of orchids on the Sheyenne are in grazed allotments. In 2003, ungrazed orchids had higher number of flowering plants survive and produce seed pods. Monitoring results showed that ungrazed orchids had an average of 40% of the marked plants survive to seed dispersal compared to 22.9% in the grazed areas. Differences were not significant.

Orchids that received a burn treatment were also monitored. Of those orchids that were burned, 34.8% survived with fertile seed pods while 21% of unburned orchids survived to set seed. More monitoring is needed to determine what the long-term implications of these results are.

Potential herbicide damage was monitored in 2003. Herbicide damage was documented in two allotments: Venlo and Penberthy. Damage in Venlo was from a Tordon and 2, 4-D mix and was limited to a small percentage (<5%) of flowering orchids. Damage to orchids in Penberthy was due to Plateau and a significant portion of sampled orchids were damaged (85%). No other herbicide damage was documented in other allotments in 2003.

Threatened and Endangered Species

TE2. To what extent is the Dakota Prairie Grasslands and its management contributing to the recovery and viability of bald eagles?

Frequency of Reporting: Annually
Monitoring Type: Effectiveness

Bald eagles do not nest on the DPG, nor does regular wintering occur. Incidental use is made of the grasslands by migrating bald eagles, and occasionally by wintering ones. Because of these facts, the Dakota Prairie Grasslands plays little role in this species' recovery and viability.

TE3. To what extent is the Dakota Prairie Grasslands and its management contributing to the recovery and viability of whooping cranes?

Frequency of Reporting: Annually
Monitoring Type: Effectiveness

The Dakota Prairie Grasslands might occasionally be used by migrant whooping cranes, but no nesting or wintering habitat is available. In 2001, no whooping cranes were sighted on the Dakota Prairie Grasslands. Because of these facts, the Dakota Prairie Grasslands plays little role in this species' recovery and viability.

TE4. Are actions identified in national recovery plans for threatened and endangered species being implemented where opportunities exist on national grasslands?

Frequency of Reporting: Annually
Monitoring Type: Implementation

Western Prairie Fringed Orchid – Threatened

Important actions identified in the western prairie fringed orchid recovery plan include the maintenance of protective management on public lands, development of appropriate burning, grazing and mowing regimes, and development of appropriate noxious weed control practices.

Figure 6: Close-up of the western prairie fringed orchid.

In order to address these important actions, the US Forest Service developed an orchid recovery strategy as part of the 2002 Grasslands Plan revision. The US Fish and Wildlife Service has approved this strategy. It outlines appropriate management activities and provides approved mitigation.

In 2003, management activities related to burning, mowing, grazing, and noxious weed control in orchid habitat were consistent with the orchid recovery strategy. Note that some damage was attributed to herbicide application (see MIS3 on page 5). Implementation of grazing deferment was also implemented in the following core orchid allotments: A Annex, Penberthy, Milton Jr., Wall, and North S Allotments.

Other Threatened and Endangered Species

As noted above in questions TE2 and TE3, the only threatened or endangered wildlife species that makes use of the Dakota Prairie Grasslands on a regular basis is the bald eagle, which is a regular migrant and occasional winterer. Because the actions identified in the Bald Eagle National Recovery Plan focuses on nesting and major wintering habitats, the Dakota Prairie Grasslands has little opportunity to implement the recovery plan.

Viability

VIA2. To what extent is the Dakota Prairie Grasslands contributing to the viability of sensitive plant, animal, and fish species?

Frequency of Reporting: Five Years
Monitoring Type: Effectiveness

The Dakota Prairie Grasslands provides habitat for 18 sensitive wildlife and fish species, and 46 plant species. Each year in this monitoring report, we address the Dakota Prairie Grasslands' contribution to a few of these taxa. This year we will focus on Little Missouri National Grassland sensitive plant species and bighorn sheep.

Bighorn Sheep.

The Dakota Prairie Grasslands provides the core habitat necessary to maintain North Dakota's population of bighorn sheep. This species is actively managed by the North Dakota Game and Fish Department. Management efforts include regulation of hunting, monitoring of disease outbreaks, transplanting of animals throughout the North Dakota badlands, and periodic introduction of new animals from out-of-state populations.

Figure 7: Bighorn sheep.

Efforts in 2003 included translocating 26 bighorn sheep from north-central Oregon to Buckhorn Creek and Kendley Plateau. Based on the annual survey data collected by the North Dakota Game and Fish Department, the state's bighorn sheep population contained at least 201animals in 2003, compared to a minimum population estimate of 177 in 2002.

The Dakota Prairie Grasslands' efforts focus on habitat management, particularly mitigating the potential impact of recreationists and energy development.

Little Missouri National Grassland Sensitive Plant Monitoring.

A baseline inventory was conducted for seven different sensitive plant species on the Medora Ranger District of the Little Missouri National Grassland. Results of the survey are found in Table 1. The project resulted in the rediscovery of fifteen known populations and sixty-two new populations. Little is known about the impacts of land management on this species. Future monitoring will include repeated population censuses of these populations.

Table 1: Little Missouri National Grasslands Sensitive Plant Monitoring

Sensitive Plant Name	Common Name	Historic Populations Rediscovered	New Populations
Townsendia hookeri	Hooker's townsendia	4	31
Collinsia parviflora	Blue lips	2	0
Eriogonum cernuum	Nodding buckwheat	2	1
Phlox alyssifolia	Alyssum-leaved phlox	7	30
Leucocrinum montanum	Starlily	0	0

VIA3. To what extent has the 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?

Frequency of Reporting: Five Years
Monitoring Type: Effectiveness

Black-tailed prairie dogs are among the most controversial animals in the Northern Great Plains. There is widespread concern over this species' viability, as well as the viability of associated animals such as the burrowing owl. There is also extensive antipathy toward the prairie dog due to its actual or perceived threats to public health, public infrastructure, vegetative condition, livestock health, and livestock forage.

The Grasslands Plan calls for increasing prairie dogs over the next 10-15 years on the Dakota Prairie Grassland. Past experience has shown that this will result in more frequent instances of prairie dogs expanding from the public land onto neighboring private land. In order to address this, the Dakota Prairie Grasslands can use cooperative agreements or land adjustments (such as land exchange or purchase), or cooperative chemical control (i.e. poisoning). In 2003, no formal complaints were received of prairie dogs encroaching from public onto private land. No land exchanges, purchases, or disposals were completed on the Dakota Prairie Grasslands in fiscal year 2003. No cooperative agreements or chemical control efforts were undertaken in 2003.

Recreation

REC1. To what extent are trails managed to meet regional standards and to minimize conflicts among users?

Frequency of Reporting: Annually
Monitoring Type: Effectiveness

The Dakota Prairie Grasslands has constructed all trails to meet Regional standards since 1995. We have some old trails, like Summit and Long X, which have short portions that do not meet Regional standards. We are in the process of getting these to standard via the Capital Investment Program. We have no user conflicts on our system trails that we know of. All the trails are non-motorized and have foot, horse and bicycle traffic. The trails were designed to provide sight distance to alleviate potential user conflicts. We perform normal maintenance activities with temporary work crews.

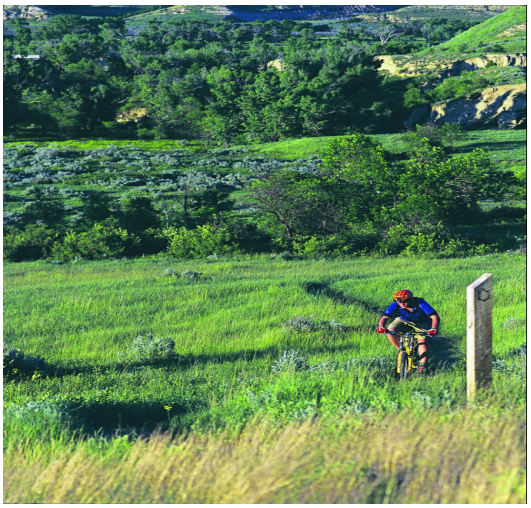

Figure 8: Mountain biker on the Maah Daah Hey Trail. Note the trail marker.

Since completion of the National Visitor Use Monitoring project in FY03, we are seeing an upward trend in recreation use within trail corridors. Likewise, we note an upward trend in day and overnight use of campgrounds.

The DPG trail coordinator conducts condition surveys on 20% of the National Forest System trails each year. The DPG will continue to work with partners like the Maah Daah Hey Trail Association, North Dakota Department of Parks and Recreation, National Park Service, and International Mountain Bicycling Association to minimize conflict among trail users and achieve volunteer maintenance projects. The DPG trails coordinator and recreation forester organize the

job of entering trail condition survey data into the Deferred Maintenance (DM), Real Property, and INFRA database. The DPG trails program strives to work with a growing number of user groups and partners to minimize conflict among trail users, further education of user groups regarding trail etiquette, and emphasize Tread Lightly principles.

Standard protocols for trail surveys are used as set forth in FSM 2350 and FSH 2309.18. The collected data is archived in the INFRA database for local use and annual reporting to Congress.

In an effort at public education, the DPG and Maah Daah Hey Trail Association publish and distribute a quarterly newsletter—Turtle Tracks that invites and provides perspectives of all trail user groups—primarily horse enthusiasts, mountain bikers, and hikers. The newsletter is a forum by which all users are involved in decision-making, maintenance projects, planning, and trails management issues.

The DPG recreation forester publishes and distributes recreation opportunity guides to all DPG offices and statewide visitor's bureaus. DPG trailhead and campground information kiosks now feature grassland maps, visitor information, and describe recreation regulations.

The DPG Recreation and Trails Plan, finalized in 2003, establishes a management priority to offer a variety of trails experiences for various ages, abilities, and interests. This management priority will translate to a high level of visitor satisfaction.

REC2. Where does the demand for recreation opportunities warrant development of additional opportunities such as trails or campgrounds?

Frequency of Reporting: Five Years
Monitoring Type: Effectiveness

In 2002 the DPG completed its baseline year of National Visitor Use Monitoring. Using the data from this study as a foundation, DPG Recreation and Trails managers will continue to track visitor numbers locally and follow national recreation studies that yield trends for our specific geographic area. In addition, we continue to gather information from a growing variety of special interest groups.

Figure 9: Fall photography on the Sheyenne National Grasslands.

Data gathered during the National Visitor Use Monitoring project and strategy sessions with all four ranger districts of the DPG helped us develop the first-ever DPG Recreation and Trails Plan in 2003. This plan provides direction to Recreation and Trails managers regarding whether to develop additional trails and campgrounds, and if so, where. Recreation personnel plan to install visitor registers at campgrounds. Trails personnel have installed traffic counters at locations along the Maah Daah Hey Trail.

This information will be used to refine and update the Recreation and Trails Plan as necessary. This data will also determine high use areas on which to schedule maintenance activities or the need for dispersing trail users to other areas.

Data gathered as part of the National Visitor Use Monitoring project was submitted by numerous forests and grasslands, including the DPG, to a central collection point. The survey data was

analyzed and published in 2003. The DPG report is posted at the following website: http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/nvum/

Before 2015, the DPG will perform the National Visitor Use Monitoring survey two more times, accumulating a useful bank of data and some unit wide recreation and trails trends. During the same time period, DPG Recreation and Trails managers will continue to follow national recreation studies that yield trends for our specific geographic area (see literature cited). We will use this information to plan for future recreation demand.

Community Relations

The Grasslands Plan includes three monitoring questions that address economic impacts of Plan implementation. The ultimate question is: "Are there economic effects from changes in grassland management, and what are they?"

CR1. What are the effects of National Grasslands management on adjacent communities?

Frequency of Reporting: Annually
Monitoring Type: Effectiveness

The Dakota Prairie Grasslands works in partnership with the North Dakota Forest Service to provide assistance to communities through Economic Action and Rural Development programs.

Economic Action programs help rural communities and businesses that are dependent on natural resources become sustainable and self-sufficient. The Rural Community Assistance (RCA) program is one program under Economic Action that helps rural communities build skills, network, and develop strategies to address social, environmental, and economic changes.

Figure 10: Soo-Line McLeod Train Depot before restoration.

In addition to the grants provided to local communities, Dakota Prairie Grassland staff often work with communities to develop strategic action plans to identify opportunities, establish goals and objectives, and prioritize projects. In 2003, Dakota Prairie Grasslands awarded $104,000 in RCA grants to seven rural communities and two non-profit organizations (Table 2).

Table 2: Grants awarded through DPG's Rural Community Assistance Program in fiscal year 2003.

Grant Applicant and Name of Project	Amount Awarded:	Purpose of Grant
Bowdon, North Dakota – Campground Project	**$20,000**	**Enhance the Bowdon City Campground with a restroom and shower facility.**
Dakota West RC&D, Rural Women in America Conference	**$1,000**	**Co-sponsor conference to provide training on estate planning, home-based business development, stress and grief management, family health, retirement planning, farm and livestock management, USDA programs opportunities, and other topics.**

Table 2 cont.

Grant Applicant and Name of Project	Amount Awarded:	Purpose of Grant
Dodge, North Dakota - City Park Improvement	$20,000	Build a restroom and shower facility, foot bridge, and improve city park landscape, lighting, and signage.
Jud, North Dakota - Planning Grant	$3,000	Develop a community action plan to address economic and infrastructure needs, develop local leadership capacity, and improve the general quality of life for the City of Jud and surrounding rural area.
McLeod Historical Preservation Society - McLeod Train Depot	$10,500	Move and restore the original Soo-line train depot to the Historical Society's museum grounds.
Mott, North Dakota - Planning Grant	$5,000	Develop a community action plan to address economic and infrastructure needs, develop local leadership capacity, and improve the general quality of life for the City of Mott and surrounding rural area.
Pekin, North Dakota - City Auditorium	$4,500	Replace leaking roof on the Pekin City Auditorium. The building is used for community events and annual Pekin arts program.
Tatanka RC&D - Harding County Truck Scale	$20,000	Build new truck scale to support intrastate commerce and retain trucking business industry in surrounding rural communities.
Watford City, North Dakota – Visitor Center	$20,000	The Long X Trading Post and Visitor Center will display a variety of information about McKenzie County history, culture, geology, geography, and natural resources. The visitor center houses a petrified Cypress tree stump donated by US Forest Service. The tree stump came from the Lone Butte Crocodile fossil bed, and is estimated to be 60 million years old and of the Paleocene Epoch.
TOTAL 2003 GRANTS:	$104,000	

Figure 11: McLeod Train Depot after restoration.

From left to right: Bryan Stotts, Sheyenne District Ranger, Joseph "Skip" Milton, Jr., President of McLeod Historical Preservation Society, Inc., Steve Kratville, Northern Region Partnership Coordinator.

In addition to awarding communities RCA grants, technical assistance is provided to help rural and Tribal communities access USDA Forest Service programs. In 2003, the Dakota Prairie Grasslands Partnership Coordinator conducted four outreach sessions – one in each District community – to provide information about the RCA program and grant application process. Approximately 49 people attended the sessions, and about 10 percent of the participants were Native American. USDA Forest Service program outreach and information dissemination is also provided through a variety of annual conferences and programs. Two of the larger ones are Marketplace of Ideas and the American Indian Economic Conference. Marketplace has an annual attendance of over 6000 from the states of North Dakota, South Dakota, eastern Minnesota, western Montana, and Canada; and the American Indian Economic Conference is open to Tribal nations throughout North and South Dakota.

CR3. What are the effects of National Grasslands management on economic conditions of local residents?

Frequency of Reporting: Annually
Monitoring Type: Effectiveness

We are reporting economic effects of three resource programs: livestock grazing, oil and gas production, and recreation. These three are the most quantifiable programs with regard to economics on the Dakota Prairie Grasslands.

Figure 12: Grazing allotment.

Livestock Grazing

Livestock grazing is reported as HMs (Head Months) authorized to graze on Forest Service land. One AUM (Animal Unit Month) is the amount of forage required by a 1,000-pound cow and her calf grazing for one month. However, billing is done by Head Months. A Head Month is counted as one grazing animal (or cow/calf pair) for one month for cattle. In most cases, this is virtually the same as an AUM, and is used as such for the calculations in Table 3.

The number of AUMs is multiplied by economic response coefficients to determine total jobs and income that can be associated with the AUMs. Economic response coefficients used in calculating jobs and income were taken from spreadsheets used to determine economic effects in the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Grasslands Plan. Information is reported for the Little Missouri National Grassland (McKenzie and Medora Ranger Districts), the Cedar River and Grand River National Grasslands, and the Sheyenne National Grassland because the response coefficients were different for each of the economic impact areas associated with these grasslands. Table 3 depicts the economic impacts from cattle grazing.

Drought conditions were not as severe in 2003 in western North and South Dakota. Some adjustments were made in livestock numbers and/or season of use to respond to residual effects of the 2002 drought and extremely warm weather beginning in July and continuing through September. The AUMs in Table 3 reflect grazing reductions due to drought.

Table 3: Economic impacts from cattle grazing on the Dakota Prairie Grasslands in 2003.

Unit	2003 AUMs*	Effects from National Forest System Lands Grazing	
		Total Jobs	Total Income
Grand River / Cedar River National Grasslands**	59,522	76	$1,113,150
Little Missouri National Grassland	315,936	575	$7,200,054
Sheyenne National Grassland	58,156	126	$1,416,286
Total Dakota Prairie Grasslands	433,614	777	$9,749,491

* AUMs on National Forest System lands, determined from the final billing to permittees; does not include sheep AUMs.

** Grand River also grazed 277 sheep head months but this was not included in the calculations as the economic response coefficients were developed for cattle, not sheep.

Due to delayed implementation of the grazing portion of the Grasslands Plan, as discussed on page 2, changes in livestock grazing and associated economics do not reflect the effects of the new Grasslands Plan. However, this data may help define the range of variability in the cattle industry that can occur due to natural effects, such as drought, independent of effects from Grasslands Plan direction.

Oil and Gas

Oil and gas production occurs only on the Little Missouri National Grassland.

Oil and gas production numbers for the Dakota Prairie Grasslands are kept in collaboration with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The BLM keeps the "down hole" records and manages below surface resources. This data is stored with the Minerals Management Service. Due to an on-going lawsuit, and changes in accounting and computer systems, agency specific information for 2003 has not yet become available. The numbers used for this estimate are from 2002.

Figure 13: Oil well pad on the Little Missouri National Grassland.

In 2002, an average of about 550 oil and gas wells were operating (this number varies throughout the year). Estimated production was 4,522,301 barrels of oil and 805,698 oil equivalent barrels of natural gas, totaling 5,327,999 oil equivalent barrels of oil and gas. Similarly to the livestock grazing analysis, the number of barrels is multiplied by economic response coefficients to determine total jobs and income that can be associated with the oil production. Once again, the economic response coefficients used to calculate jobs and income came from spreadsheets used to calculate economic effects in the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Grasslands Plan. Table 4 shows the economic impacts from oil production in 2002.

Table 4: Economic impacts from oil production on the Dakota Prairie Grasslands in 2002.

Unit	2002 Oil Equivalent Barrels of Oil and Gas	Effects from National Forest System Lands Oil and Gas Production*	
		Total Jobs	Total Labor Income
Little Missouri National Grassland	**5,327,999**	**698**	**$23,443,196**

*These figures do not include the economic impacts associated with drilling.

Recreation

The Grasslands provide North Dakota's most extensive recreational trail systems; core habitat for greater prairie chicken, western prairie fringed orchid and bighorn sheep; key areas for mule deer, wild turkey, and sharp-tailed grouse hunting; and the largest expanse of public land in the state. These resources attract thousands of visitors each year.

The Forest Service National Forest Visitor Use Monitoring program collects information on National Forests and Grasslands about visitor satisfaction and use. Results of this effort show that recreation use on the Dakota Prairie Grasslands for fiscal year 2002 was 739,157 national forest (or grassland) visits. A national forest (or grassland) visit is defined as the entry of one person upon a national forest or grassland to participate in recreation activities for an unspecified period of time. This 2002 survey data is the most up-to-date information available, as no estimates or surveys were done for 2003.

The economic effects calculations in the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Grasslands Plan used Recreation Visitor Days. A Recreation Visitor Day (RVD) can be understood to mean one person visiting the National Grasslands (or National Forest) for a period of 12 hours. One RVD could be one person camping overnight or 12 people hiking for an hour.

Table 5 lists solely a potential averaged estimate of the recreation economic impact to the DPG. This is based on an estimated average visit of 3 hours in 2002. Coefficients used in the plan were broken out by National Grassland. The survey data was not readily available by unit, and so an averaging was used to produce the rough estimate of jobs and income listed below. This would correspond to between a 5 and 10 percent increase based on the estimates from the plan. With the increase in recreation facilities, and growing use on the various trail systems, this seems to be consistent with the economic analysis in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

Table 5: Estimated economic impacts from recreation on the Dakota Prairie Grasslands in 2002.

Unit	2002 Recreation visits	2002 Estimated RVDs*	Estimated Effects from National Forest System Lands Recreation**	
			Total Jobs	Total Labor Income
Little Missouri National Grassland	**739,157**	**184,789**	**459**	**$6,009,615**

*Estimated by dividing Recreation Visits by four (estimating each visitor spent an average of 3 hours on the National Grasslands during their recreation visit). Realize some people probably spent days on their trip, while others may have only spent an hour or less.

** Coefficients for jobs and income were different for the Grand/Cedar River National Grasslands, Sheyenne National Grassland, and Little Missouri National Grassland. The recreation visits were not broken out by National Grassland. To get this estimate, all the RVDs were attributed entirely to each unit with a coefficient, and then the totals were averaged.

CR4. To what extent are noxious weeds, invasive species, and animal damage spreading from the National Grasslands to other ownerships or from lands managed by other government agencies to the National Grasslands?

Frequency of Reporting: Annually
Monitoring Type: Effectiveness

Noxious weeds

Noxious weeds such as leafy spurge are present on all districts. Aggressive control practices are being implemented on ranger districts. These practices include herbicide spraying, biological control, mechanical treatment and grazing.

Although emphasis is placed on treatment of new areas, yearly inventories continue to reveal new infestations. In reference to leafy spurge and salt cedar, transport of seeds along waterways continues to start new infestations across all land ownership boundaries.

In 2003, the Dakota Prairie Grasslands provided grant money to county weed boards, some grazing associations, and the North Dakota Department of Agriculture as part of a larger effort to help control noxious weeds on state and private lands within the administrative boundaries of the Dakota Prairie Grasslands.

Figure 14: Collecting leafy spurge flea beetles to move to

Figure 15: Leafy Spurge.

Black-tailed Prairie Dog

The black-tailed prairie dog is one of the most controversial animals in the Northern Great Plains. The Grasslands Plan calls for increasing prairie dog numbers over the next 10-15 years. This has concerned some neighboring landowners who do not want the prairie dogs increasing to the point where they expand onto their private land. One of several factors influencing the likelihood of such expansion is the size and density of the Grassland's prairie dog colonies.

As explained in last year's Monitoring Report, we determined the size of each prairie dog colony in 2002 using Global Positioning Satellite mapping technology. In 2003, we estimated prairie dog density on the Grassland in cooperation with the University of North Dakota. Results showed that within occupied colonies, there were approximately 24 prairie dogs per acre on the McKenzie Ranger District, and 12 prairie dogs per acre on the Medora Ranger District. These densities are fairly typical for the Northern Great Plains.

Administration

ADM1. Are the action plans identified in the objectives being completed on schedule?

Frequency of Reporting: Annually
Monitoring Type: Implementation

This question refers to the many different strategies and plans that the Dakota Prairie Grasslands is to develop over the life of the Plan to help attain goals. Table 6 outlines these plans and identifies our progress.

Table 6: Action plans identified in the Grasslands Plan and completion progress.

#	Action Plan Commitment	Plan Page	Time Given (Years)	Year Due	Progress and Comments
1	Develop conservation and recovery strategies for federally threatened or endangered species with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other agencies.	1-2	As information becomes available	NA	A recovery strategy for the threatened western prairie fringed orchid was completed in 2002. Implementation of this strategy began in FY2003. No similar wildlife work was done in 2003. Note that the black-footed ferret, bald eagle, gray wolf, and whooping crane already have strategies. The piping plover and interior least tern do not occur on the DPG. No other T/E wildlife species is noted as "known or suspected to occur" on the DPG by the Regional Forester.
2	Develop and implement conservation strategies for Forest Service sensitive species.	1-3	As technical information becomes available	NA	A conservation strategy was initiated for the sensitive plant, Dakota buckwheat in FY02. No conservation strategies were completed in FY03. No work for wildlife was completed in 2003.
3	Develop management strategies to conserve rare plant and wildlife communities.	1-3	As such communities are identified	NA	An assessment of rare plant communities on the Sheyenne Ranger District is underway and will be completed in FY 05. This will assist with development of management strategies. Similar work is planned for the black-tailed prairie dog on the Grand River and Cedar River National Grasslands in 2004.
4	Establish scientifically credible monitoring programs that contribute to our ability to determine viability of threatened and endangered species, species at risk, and MIS.	1-3	Over life of Plan	NA	The DPG monitoring handbook, which will be completed in FY05, provides a plan for scientifically credible inventory and monitoring methods.
5	Complete conservation strategies for globally rare plant species and other high priority species in cooperation with other conservation organizations and agencies.	1-3	Over life of Plan	NA	A conservation strategy was initiated for the sensitive plant, Dakota buckwheat in FY02. This will be completed in FY05. No such work for wildlife was completed in 2002.
6	Assess potential impacts of the construction of impoundments in upper watersheds on hydrologic flows and patterns on downstream habitat on the sturgeon chub and other sensitive native fish species.	1-3	Over life of Plan	NA	The sturgeon chub was evidently extirpated from the Little Missouri River by the drought in the late 1980's. Attempts to reintroduce the species there have been made, but the success of those efforts is unknown. No other sensitive native fish species occurs on the DPG.

#	Action Plan Commitment	Plan Page	Time Given (Years)	Year Due	Progress and Comments
7	Develop and maintain cooperative noxious weeds and invasive species management plans in consultation with appropriate partners and agencies.	1-3	5 years	2007	Cooperation is ongoing with grazing associations, county weed boards and the state of North Dakota. Formal plans have not been worked on but grants have been given to many agency partners in 2003 to help control weeds on a larger scale.
8	Develop and implement a certified noxious weed-free forage program in consultation with appropriate state agencies	1-3	3 years	2005	Implemented in 2001as a large multi-agency effort of state and federal partners.
9	Implement an integrated prevention and pest control management program for noxious weeds and invasive plant species	1-4	10 years	2012	This is an ongoing process on all ranger districts.
10	Complete site and recreation plans, including rehabilitation and re-vegetation strategies.	1-4	10 years	2012	Completed December 2002.
11	Implement a science and marketing-based interpretive program strategy that uses a variety of communication media	1-4	5 years	2007	Interpretive Plan programmed for 2005.
12	Develop and implement a heritage inventory strategy to survey and evaluate sites, in support of management actions and activities as agreed upon with State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO).	1-5	5 years	2007	Student Cooperative Education Program (SCEP) Archaeologist Masters Thesis project due for completion May 2004.
13	Assess identified sites eligible for the National Register of Historic Places in conjunction with SHPO and THPO and provide interpretation for National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) sites where appropriate and consistent with developed preservation plans.	1-5	5 years	2007	On going, Initial Rock is planned to be completed in 2004.
14	Identify and protect traditional cultural properties in consultation with federally recognized American Indian tribes	1-5	3 years	2005	On going, Major Ethnographic Overview effort completed in 1995.
15	Update prehistoric, ethnographic, and historic overviews	1-5	10 years	2012	Gathering reference material.

#	Action Plan Commitment	Plan Page	Time Given (Years)	Year Due	Progress and Comments
16	Develop and implement a management and monitoring plan for each RNA. (The time for accomplishing this starts at designation.)	1-5	5 years		Formal designation of RNAs is planned for FY05. Management plans will be completed after designation.
17	Revise allotment management plans (AMPs) to meet desired condition described in Geographic Area direction.	1-5	As needed	NA	The DPG has a schedule for updating all allotment management plans by 2010. Due to delayed implementation of the grazing portion of the Grasslands Plan, allotment planning continues, but no decisions will be made until the Sample AMP process is completed.
18	Develop and implement conservation plans for significant geological and paleontological sites as information becomes available	1-6	15 years	2017	Initiated GPS surveys of known geological and paleontological sites in 2003. The data will be transferred to a GIS layer for inventory purposes. Data will be added as it becomes available.
19	Identify, develop, manage, and interpret important watchable wildlife and plant viewing sites	1-6	10 years	2012	In 2003 we developed three products to assist the public in understanding and enjoying the Dakota Prairie Grasslands' watchable wildlife. These products included: a 70-page book titled "Bird Status & Distribution on the Sheyenne National Grassland", a field checklist to the Sheyenne's avifauna, and the multi-agency book titled "Birding North Dakota".
20	Establish and implement credible inventory and monitor systems, develop survey methods, and initiate baseline and trend surveys to provide scientific information and decision support across all land ownerships.	1-7	Over life of Plan	NA	The DPG monitoring handbook, which will be completed in FY05, provides a plan for scientifically credible inventory and monitoring methods. In 2003, we cooperated with Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center and Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory to survey grasslands birds on the DPG. These data will be used to supplement the USGS's Breeding Bird Surveys, which occur across all land ownerships. The DPG also conducted two Breeding Bird Surveys, for the USGS. Trend data was also collected on the Grasslands' amphibian, butterfly, small mammal, waterfowl, raptor and grouse populations. We also monitored the availability of residual vegetation after the grazing season.

#	Action Plan Commitment	Plan Page	Time Given (Years)	Year Due	Progress and Comments
21	Assess potential habitat capability at the local level for management indicator species by identifying existing or establishing new reference areas and implementing long-term monitoring.	1-7	Over life of Plan	NA	The DPG monitoring handbook provides the inventory and monitoring schedule for management indicator species. For the western prairie fringed orchid, population surveys and monitoring occur on an annual basis. Our annual, long-term monitoring of sharp-tailed grouse, greater sage-grouse, and greater prairie-chicken continued in 2003.
22	Identify travel opportunities and restrictions; including designating motorized travelways and areas, to meet land management objectives	1-7	5 years	2007	Non-motorized areas were marked on the ground in 2003 and special orders were written to enforce it. Site specific travel management planning will be initiated on the Sheyenne in 2004 and other priority areas will be identified in 2005.
23	Provide site-specific maps and information showing closures, restrictions, and opportunities for motorized and nonmotorized use.	1-7	Over life of Plan	NA	Maps of nonmotorized areas were prepared in 2003.
24	Identify the minimum Forest service road system for administration, utilization, and protection of national grasslands resources using a science-based roads analysis process.	1-7	Over life of Plan	NA	Completed as part of the LRMP revision. Updates ongoing as inventory of level 2 roads continue.
25	Develop and implement an approved land ownership adjustment plan in response to resource management and public needs. Coordinate, review and update every 3 years	1-8	3 years	2005	The land adjustment plan was started in 2003. When completed, this will still continue to be a dynamic document.
26	Develop and implement a 5-year Rights-of-Way Acquisition program in response to resource management programs and access needs. Coordinate, review and update annually.	1-8	3 years	2005	Development of the 5-year ROW acquisition plan was started in FY 03. Current plans are to finish the report in FY06.
27	Develop 64 sample AMPs to be reviewed by a Scientific Review Team to determine if the grazing portion of the Grasslands Plan can be implemented and to verify that grazing levels are similar to those projected in the Revised Grasslands Plan FEIS.	ROD	2 years	2004	Preparations for this process were made in 2002, and the process began in 2003.

Also considered in administration are things such as new inventory and monitoring systems established, establishing baseline and trend surveys and technology transfers.

Some highlights from FY 03 follow:

- GIS data exchanged/shared with other agencies or organizations include:
  - USFS – Nebraska National Forest
  - USGS – North Dakota Gap Project
  - USGS – Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center
  - USDA – Natural Resource Conservation Service
  - US Fish and Wildlife Service
  - US Army Corps of Engineers
  - National Park Service
  - ND Heritage Center
  - ND Game and Fish
  - NDSU Extension Service
  - University of North Dakota
  - Ransom County
  - Billings County
  - Kadrmas, Lee and Jackson Engineering
  - Bear Paw Energy
  - Peterson Environmental Service
- The Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center began a two-year monitoring effort of the Little Missouri and Grand River National Grasslands' wetlands and waterfowl community.
- The University of North Dakota continued its multi-year inventory of golden eagle nests on the Little Missouri National Grassland.
- Residual vegetation transects were again sampled across the Dakota Prairie Grasslands to quantify the amount of residual vegetation remaining after the growing season.
- Sharp-tailed grouse surveys were conducted on all four National Grasslands administered by the Dakota Prairie Grasslands. In addition, greater prairie-chicken trend surveys were completed on the Sheyenne National Grassland.
- The University of North Dakota censused black-tailed prairie dogs on portions of the Little Missouri National Grassland to estimate population density.
- Small mammal surveys were performed on the Sheyenne National Grassland under a cooperative agreement with the University of North Dakota.
- Amphibian population surveys were again conducted on the Sheyenne National Grassland through a cooperative project with the University of North Dakota.
- Grassland bird surveys were conducted for a second year across the Dakota Prairie Grasslands through cooperative efforts with Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center and Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory.

- St. Cloud State University continued its multi-year investigation of burrowing owl populations on the Little Missouri National Grassland.

- Baseline surveys of the Sheyenne and Little Missouri National Grasslands' butterfly populations were again conducted by qualified lepidopterists.

Figure 16: Young burrowing owl ready to be banded.

- Nine presentations on a variety of topics, including bird-related research, future plans for our fishery program, and grassland ecology were given. We also led 20 nature walks focusing on everything from ethnobotany to proper canoeing techniques to grouse dancing to wildflower identification. Our writing efforts resulted in seven newspaper articles highlighting North Dakota's avifauna, as well as a 70 page book: "Bird status and Distribution on the Sheyenne National Grassland". The Dakota Prairie Grasslands, along with several other agencies, was instrumental in the development of the book "Birding North Dakota". Other outreach efforts included development of a wildflower display in Watford City, creation of 750 packets of native seed, and a segment on the local television news regarding night-blooming flowers.

Implementation

IMP1. Have site-specific decisions implemented the Land and Resource Management Plan direction?

Frequency of Reporting: Annually
Monitoring Type: Implementation

This question is basically asking whether the Standards and Guidelines in the Grasslands Plan have been implemented for on-the-ground projects.

Standards are actions that must be followed or are required limits to activities in order to achieve Grassland objectives. Site-specific deviations from Standards must be analyzed and documented in amendments to the Grasslands Plan.

Guidelines are advisable actions that should be followed to achieve Grassland goals and objectives. Deviation from guidelines must be analyzed during project-level analysis and documented in a project decision document, but do not require an amendment to the Grasslands Plan.

Because of the "phased" decision on livestock grazing described on page 2, standards and guidelines related to grazing may not be implemented until a final decision is made in 2005.

District planning coordinators were consulted to determine whether Standards and Guidelines not related to grazing were implemented on projects that occurred in 2003. Project decisions included appropriate Standards and Guidelines.

All projects followed appropriate Standards. Only minor deviations from Guidelines, mostly relating to deciding to mow some vegetation instead of burn or treat with other methods, were found in the analysis.

Outputs

OUT1. Are the projected annual outputs and services being met annually and at anticipated costs?

Frequency of Reporting: Annually
Monitoring Type: Implementation

Figure 17: Cattle on the Dakota Prairie Grasslands.

The outputs tracked for this monitoring report include forage provided to domestic livestock and the number of oil and gas wells, as these are the two primary outputs of the Dakota Prairie Grasslands.

Livestock

In 2003 the Dakota Prairie Grasslands provided forage for 433,891 Head Months. The grazing information for 2003 really does not reflect implementation of the Grasslands Plan. As indicated in the Introduction under the heading "Delayed Implementation of Grazing Portions of the Grasslands Plan", implementation of the grazing portion of the Grasslands Plan is being delayed pending the development and review of 64 sample Allotment Management Plans. Therefore, it will probably be FY 05 until changes in grazing due to the Grasslands Plan are initiated, and it may be several years after that until effects of the changes can be determined through monitoring.

Oil and Gas

In 2003, the Dakota Prairie Grasslands had output and budget targets associated with geological/paleontology reports, energy operations processed and energy operations administered to standard. In regard to reports, four were completed at a cost of $33,000. This was 100% of targeted outputs.

Energy operations processed were 70, which is slightly greater than the 68 targeted. These outputs include applications for permit to drill or re-enter a well (APD), sundry notices, geophysical permits, operations on outstanding/reserved mineral leases and mineral related special use permits. Cost of processing Energy related operations was $441,000.

Figure 18: Tank batteries.

Energy operations administered to standard were 1,009, which is slightly greater than the targeted output of 998. These operations include oil/gas wells under APD/surface use plan of operations (SUPO), wells on outstanding/reserved minerals, existing geophysical permits and mineral related special use permits. Cost of administering these operations was $502,000, making the total expenditures $976,000 for all operations and reports. These costs were less than the allocated budget of $1,101,000.

Appeals and Litigation

Grasslands Plan Level Appeals

The Grasslands Plan itself was appealed by several entities. Appeals are at the Forest Service Washington Office and no decisions were made in FY 03.

Project Level Appeals

Two appeals were filed on project level decisions in FY 2003.

Several entities appealed the Upton 2-23/1-23H Oil and Gas Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact on the Medora Ranger District. Appeal issues mostly centered on the project taking place in an Inventoried Roadless Area and the perceived need to do an Environmental Impact Statement in such cases. Other concerns were related to the impact on the roadless characteristics of the area. This decision was upheld by the Appeal Deciding Officer.

The Blacktail Trail and Trailhead Construction and Reconstruction of National Forest System Road (NFSR) 5740 on the Grand River Ranger District was also appealed. Concerns were raised over the kind of surfacing to be used on the trail. This decision was also upheld by the Appeal Deciding Officer.

Litigation Involving the Grasslands Plan

In 2003, there was no litigation involving the Grasslands Plan.

Grasslands Plan Amendments (or Implemented Changes)

One non-significant amendment (Amendment 1) was signed on March 31, 2003. This corrected an error in the boundaries between two management areas (Management area 1.2a and 3.51). This change was analyzed as part of the Upton 2-23/1-23H Oil and Gas Environmental Assessment.

Contacts and Information

Following is a list of Grasslands personnel who can be contacted for more information about this monitoring and evaluation report.

Table 7: Names and telephone numbers of people who contributed to the monitoring and evaluation report for fiscal year 2002 and/or are members of the Dakota Prairie Grasslands Monitoring Team.

Name	Telephone Number	Resource Area(s) Addressed
Brenda Quale*	**(701) 250-4443**	**Implementation, Amendments, Appeals, Litigation**
Curt Glasoe*	**(701) 225-5151**	**Engineering, Trails**
Darla Lenz*	**(701) 250-4443**	**Botany**
Sheila McNee*	**(701) 250-4443**	**Range, Noxious Weeds**
Kurt Hansen	**(605) 374-3592**	**Range, Noxious Weeds**
Bernadette Braun	**(701) 683-4342**	**Range, Noxious Weeds**
Gary Petik	**(701) 842-3008**	**Range**
Brian Kempenich	**(701) 225-5151**	**Range**
Larry Melvin*	**(701) 250-4443**	**Oil and Gas, Paleontology**
Phil Sjursen*	**(701) 250-4443**	**Geographic Information Systems (GIS)**
Dan Svingen*	**(701) 250-4443**	**Wildlife, Fisheries**
Tom Turck*	**(701) 250-4443**	**Archeology, Recreation**
Jennifer Berger	**(701) 225-5151**	**Recreation**
Debbie Johnson*	**(701) 250-4443**	**Lands**

* Indicates the person is a member of the Dakota Prairie Grasslands Monitoring Team.

Copies of the Grasslands Plan, the associated Final Environmental Impact Statement, and its Record of Decision can be found on the Web at http://www.fs.fed.us/ngp/docs.html. They can also be obtained from the Dakota Prairie Grasslands offices listed below:

Table 8: Dakota Prairie Grasslands offices with contact names and addresses.

Office	Line Officer	Address	Telephone Number
Dakota Prairie Grasslands	**Dave Pieper, Grasslands Supervisor**	**240 Century Avenue Bismarck, ND 58503**	**(701) 250-4443**
Grand River Ranger District	**Jack Isaacs, District Ranger**	**1005 5th Avenue West PO Box 390 Lemmon, SD 57638**	**(605) 374-3592**
McKenzie Ranger District	**Frank Guzman, District Ranger**	**1901 South Main Street Watford City, ND 58854**	**(701) 842-2393**
Medora Ranger District	**Ron Jablonski, District Ranger**	**161 21st Street West Dickinson, ND 58601**	**(701) 225-5151**
Sheyenne Ranger District	**Bryan Stotts, District Ranger**	**701 Main Street PO Box 946 Lisbon, ND 58054**	**(701) 683-4342**

The Dakota Prairie Grasslands website, http:/www.fs.fed.us/r1/dakotaprairie, contains information and documents related to monitoring, evaluation and other aspects of Grasslands management.

Grasslands Supervisor Approval

I have reviewed this annual Grasslands Plan Monitoring and Evaluation Report for fiscal year 2003. This report meets the intent of the Grasslands Plan, Chapter 4, and 36 CRF 219.

This report is approved.

/s/ David M. Pieper *September 28, 2004*

DAVID M. PIEPER Date