



Northern Great Plains Network

Inventory and Monitoring Monthly Report

March 2004



Field Inventories: It's getting to be that time again where the investigators will soon be out in the field. All parks that had bird work in 2002-03 can expect to see Arvind Panjabi and his staff one more time. Bat inventories will be conducted by Dr. Cheryl Schmidt at Mount Rushmore NMEM, Wind Cave NP, Agate Fossil Beds NM, and Scotts Bluff NM. Either Cheryl or a co-investigator will visit the Missouri NRR where a complete mammal inventory is needed. Herp inventories will be conducted at the Missouri NRR as well as the Niobrara NSR. Plant work will continue at Fort Union Trading Post and Fort Laramie NHS. Marcia has been busy updating the status of the park research permits for all these projects. Dr. Amy Symstad will be conducting vegetation work at Mount Rushmore NMEM. Last, Dr. Nels Troelstrup will be conducting an aquatic bioassessment at all parks (see below).

Web Page: Erin Handberg is getting more content up on the web page. You can now find our agreements, the investigator reports, monthly newsletters, and much more at <http://www1.nature.nps.gov/im/units/ngpn/index.htm>.

Wildlife Observations: Many of the parks have their own wildlife observation database, and I encourage those parks to keep using them. However, another option is to use NPSpecies directly. You can either download a local version of the database (running in MS Access) or use the online version (which requires a ID and password). Or, you can simply email your noteworthy wildlife observations to Marcia Wilson and she can enter them into NPSpecies. Whatever method you use, it's important to keep tracking the observations.

Aquatic Monitoring: Nels Troelstrup and staff have already had scoping meetings with most parks, and will be visiting Knife River Indian Villages NHS, Fort Union Trading Post NHS, and Theodore Roosevelt NP in mid-April. He and his staff will be returning later in the spring/summer to all parks to conduct a rapid bioassessment of aquatic resources. The assessment includes the collection of macro-invertebrates for later identification and analysis in the lab. After consulting with the Technical Committee it was decided that all specimens collected by Nels will be kept at South Dakota State University under a "permanent loan." (You may recall we already have a voucher agreement with the Bell Museum at the U. of Minnesota; however, that is only for vertebrates.) The I&M Program will make sure that the parks get the necessary data for ANCS+ and other purposes. As part of this effort, Nels has applied for park research permits; please process them as soon as possible.

NPSpecies Certification: Marcia is starting the certification process required by WASO. Essentially, this consists of an expert signing off on the species list for each park. The investigators for the mammal, bird, and herpetofauna inventories will be doing the certification for those taxa. Marcia and Dr. Brian Smith have already made great

progress on the herp list. We have tentatively come to agreement with Hollis Marriott to certify the plants in the Black Hills parks and Steve Rolfsmeier to certify plants in the Nebraska parks. If you have a recommendation for the other taxa/parks please let us know.

Summer STEP hire: As agreed to in the last Technical Committee conference call, I will be hiring at least one summer biological technician. The primary duties of one of the positions is to help Marcia Wilson with her workload. I'm happy to announce that Amber Entriken will EOD on May 16, contingent on meeting the STEP requirements. Amber is just completing her undergraduate studies at South Dakota State University and will be returning in the fall for a teaching certificate. In addition to this position, I will soon be receiving a cert for the bio tech position we recently advertised. This latter position was designed to be a shared position with Amy's program. I hope to select someone from this cert as well.