

Northern Great Plains Network

Inventory and Monitoring Monthly Report

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What's New:

Park Visits

October has been a month for visiting parks in the Northern Great Plains Network. I was able to visit the 9 parks in South Dakota, Nebraska and Wyoming during the last three weeks. I will be making day trips up to Fort Union Trading Post N.H.S. and Knife River Indian Villages N.H.S. in the next couple of weeks.

The visits went very well and I want to say a huge THANK YOU to everyone who was able to take the time to show me around your park or talk with me about various aspects of the I&M program. I definitely have a clearer picture of where we are in the inventory process and what still needs to be done. Another big THANK YOU to everyone for compiling existing information for the scoping meeting held last April, preparing and/or entering information for NPSpecies and collecting information on voucher specimens. In general, I am very optimistic that we will be able to meet our data management and inventory goals for the upcoming year.

Study Plan

During the week of October 16th, the Washington office and a group of reviewers evaluated our study plan for the upcoming inventories. Funds for this year were approved, contingent on some further details/revisions. Both Steve Cinnamon and Phyllis Adams (the regional I&M Coordinator) were present at the review session and will work with me to make those changes. The importance of data management throughout the I&M process was apparently emphasized during the review session.

Once the study plan has been finalized and approved I will send everyone an electronic copy or make it available on the Park Service's ftp site. If you would like to or need to see a copy before then, let me know.

Inventories

We were able to work out a task order agreement to complete fish inventories during FY2001 (using funds obligated from FY2000). Researchers from the Montana State University will be completing the inventories during late summer/early fall of next year at Scotts Bluff N.M., Fort Laramie N.H.S., Wind Cave N.P., Devils Tower N.M. and Mount Rushmore N.M.

Researchers for the plant inventories at Fort Union Trading Post N.H.S., Fort Laramie N.H.S. and the Elkhorn Unit of Theodore Roosevelt N.P. will be determined during the upcoming months. We have several avenues to solicit researchers including inter-agency

agreements, the new Cooperative Ecological Services Unit based at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln and contracts.

What's Coming Up:

The primary objective for November will be to revise the study plan for final funding approval. I also will be developing a position description for the data management biotechnician so that we can start the hiring process as soon as funds are available. In addition, I will explore other options for additional help in populating NPSpecies and voucher searches/verification.

Ongoing work will include:

- developing protocols and budget estimates for the remaining inventories
- doing the paperwork and necessary preparation for the FY2001 fish and plant inventories
- compiling species lists and voucher information
- continue populating NPSpecies and Dataset Catalog databases