

MINUTES

NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS INVENTORY & MONITORING NETWORK TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Conference Call

9:00-10:00am MT, August 23, 2004

Members Participating

Dan Licht (lead) – Network I&M Coordinator
Ruthann Knudson – Agate Fossil Beds NM
Brian Kenner – Badlands NP
Jim Cheatham – Devils Tower NM
Andy Banta – Fort Union Trading Post NHS
John Moeykens - Knife River Indian Villages NHS
Wayne Werkmeister – Missouri NRR
Bob Manasek – Scotts Bluff NM
Penny Knuckles – Theodore Roosevelt NP
Dan Roddy – Wind Cave NP

Members Absent

Phyllis Adams – Regional I&M Coordinator
Ted Benson – Fort Laramie NHS
Todd Sues – Jewel Cave NM
Eric Nelson – Mt. Rushmore NMEM
Carmen Thomsen – Niobrara NSR

Also in Attendance

Joel Brumm – Network I&M Data Manager
Marcia Wilson – Network I&M Technician

Call Purpose and Background

The purpose of the call was to update the I&M Technical Committee on developments in the I&M Program. Emails were sent out in regards to the call on 8/10, 8/17, and 8/23. Thomsen had notified Licht that she could not make the call due to schedule conflicts.

Call Minutes

Wilson gave an update on NPSpecies data entry and certification. She stated that Brian Smith is in the process of reviewing the reptile and amphibian lists for all parks except Niobrara NSR and Missouri NRR. Herps are being inventoried at those parks this summer by a subcontractor so Brian will certify those lists after the final report has been

submitted. Wilson stated that after the reviewers have submitted their reviews of the park species lists she will send the lists to each park for final review. Robert Bramblett from the Montana Cooperative Fishery Research Unit will be conducting all the fish reviews for the Network. He has received the evidence materials for all of the parks except Niobrara NSR and the Missouri NRR. Laura Van Riper is reviewing the vascular plant list for Badlands NP and should complete the task in the next few months. This fall Hollis Marriott will review the vascular plants for the four Black Hills parks and Steve Rolfsmeier will review the plants for the Nebraska parks. Bonnie Heidel will probably certify the plant list for Fort Laramie NHS. We still need a reviewer for plants of the North Dakota parks. Arvind Panjabi and Cheryl Schmidt will be conducting reviews of the bird and mammal lists, respectively, for all parks by 12/31/2004.

Brumm stated that data compilation efforts continue for all parks in the Network. The I&M Program has obtained all GIS data available for download from the NPS GIS Clearinghouse as well as vegetation mapping layers for all completed park units. The I&M Program recently obtained the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) data in digital format as well as GAP data from the four states in the Network. The I&M Program has acquired digital aerial photography as well as digitized USGS topo maps (digital raster graphs) for parks in the Network. Brumm outlined the ongoing process of obtaining historical aerial photography for the Network, both from the USDA's Aerial Photography Field Office in Salt Lake City and the National Archives in D.C. These efforts should encompass all governmentally sponsored data from the 1930's to the present. Brumm stated that collection of the Quickbird satellite imagery for Mt. Rushmore NMEM, Jewel Cave NM, Fort Laramie NHS, Fort Union Trading Post NHS, Devils Tower NM, and Knife River Indian Villages NHS is now complete and the I&M Program has received most of the imagery with the remainder to follow shortly. Brumm stated that parks desiring copies of these images, or other imagery or data, should contact him via email. He that he would contact each park's GIS point-of-contact this fall and coordinate the sharing of data.

Licht gave an update on the field inventories. He stated that the fish inventory had been completed and the final report received about a year ago. He stated that the field work for the bird inventory is now complete for all parks and the final report is due by 12/31/2004. He stressed that he has requested that all the investigators include management recommendations as part of the final report. He stated that the herp field work was done for all parks except the Niobrara NSR and Missouri NRR. Werkmeister said he had recently been in touch with the investigator. Licht said the final herp report was due 12/31/2004. Licht said that the field work for the mammal inventories was essentially done, although the investigator may still visit a few parks as part of a bat diet study that the I&M Program contributed funds to. Werkmeister asked about the Missouri NRR mammal work and Licht said that to his knowledge that was proceeding under a subcontract with Dr. Phil Sudman and that he should have been in the field in July. Licht stated that the plant work was ongoing at Fort Union Trading Post NHS and Fort Laramie NHS. Banta said the investigator had been to Fort Union Trading Post NHS at least once in 2004. Licht said that the second year of the exotic plant study at Jewel Cave NM – which was being funded with NRPP dollars – had been deferred due to a funding problem back in the regional office. He said that they would re-evaluate the

completeness for that park later this year. He said that the Mt. Rushmore Old Growth study being conducted by Amy Symstad had added many new species to that park's plant list. Licht said that the butterfly studies were proceeding and that final reports were due by the end of the calendar year. Cheatham asked if the investigators would post reports on the IAR: Licht said they should and he would remind them to do so.

Licht stated that the third site visit of the water quality project was deferred until next summer, due primarily to equipment malfunctions. Manasek asked if this could compromise the statistical analyses of the data. Licht stated that it was his and Dr. Troelstrup's opinion that deferring the third visit until next summer actually has advantages in terms of interpreting the data. For example, it provides data from another year and it allows sampling from sites that may have been dry late in 2004. Licht stated that the preliminary water quality analyses had some interesting results, such as high fecal coliform numbers, and that Dr. Troelstrup would be sharing those in the near future.

Licht stated that it was his goal to submit Phase I of the monitoring plan this fall. He hoped to have drafts to parks in the next month or so and submit the document in October or November. He stated that the I&M Program had collected a lot of data on monitoring plots/stations in the parks and would soon be sharing that with the parks for their feedback. He said that he hoped to submit Phase II—the phase that includes the selection of Vital Signs—next fall, but WASO required network-wide meeting (with outside participation) prior to submission, and that such a meeting depended on FY05 funding.

Licht described the funding possibilities for FY05. He stated that the worst case scenario was getting only \$150k; however, the network was likely to get an additional \$81k through the Water Resources Division. Furthermore, there was talk of WASO coming up with another \$75k for those networks not yet fully funded.

Licht asked if there were any concerns or complaints with the field studies, or the I&M Program in general. Cheatham stated that the butterfly investigator came to the park during the week of the motorcycle rally which was not a good time for park staff. Knudson asked about the curation forms as part of the water quality permit. Licht stated that those had all been faxed out several weeks back, but many parks responded that they did not receive them or needed another copy. Licht said he would fax out the form.

Followup

Licht said he would fax the permit curation form signed by the SDSU curator for Dr. Troelstrup's water quality project.

Drafted by: Dan Licht

Drafted on: 8/24/2004

Finalized by: Dan Licht

Finalized on: 9/2/2004