

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

PROPOSED DESIGN TO ASSESS SITE ACCESS AND GUIDELINES
IN CONDUCTING LANDOWNER CONTACT FOR THE
1995 EMAP WETLANDS DEMONSTRATION STUDY IN NORTH DAKOTA

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The following pages include documentation for obtaining site access to prairie potholes selected for site visits in the 1995 EMAP Demonstration Study in North Dakota

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A. Study Design to Assess Site Access to Prairie Potholes in North Dakota Demonstration Study in 1995

DESIGN:

Funding and manpower is available to visit 125 prairie potholes for the 1995 Demonstration Study. Based on a preliminary pilot study conducted in North Dakota in 1992/93, access rate can be expected at 50%. Two hundred and sixty sites were selected to compensate for the expected rate of inaccessible sites. Names and phone numbers for owners of these sites will be obtained by NPSC.

METHODOLOGY:

In order to determine whether the method of contacting the landowners impacts site access, the sample of 260 landowners will be split into two groups. Ideally each group will consist of 130. The two groups differ in whether or not a personal visit by an interviewer was conducted. Due to the high cost of conducting a personal visit, this number can vary depending on time and resources. The following is a proposed process for contacting landowners in each of these groups.

Group 1: A letter summarizing the Demonstration Study and their selection as a prospective participant will be mailed to each of the members of this group. The letter will also explain that NPSC will phone them in the subsequent weeks to discuss any questions about the survey. With the landowner's approval, details of this survey and a consent form will then be mailed to their address.

- At a minimum, three phone calls will be attempted to each household before this participant will be denoted as unreachable. (If resources are available, six phone calls will be attempted to each household.) These phone calls should be attempted over a range of times if possible in order to reduce the number of not at homes due to work or other commitments: morning, afternoon, evening, weekday, evenings.
- If the owner has agreed to review the documentation and consent form but has failed to return the signed form, up to three additional calls will be made to that owner

to determine why the form wasn't returned. Another mailing of the consent form will be sent to the owner followed by two more phone calls. If no form is signed, this owner will then be denoted as denying access.

Group 2. A letter summarizing the Demonstration Study and their selection as a prospective participant will be first mailed to the members in this group. The letter will explain that a representative from NPSC will visit with them over the next few months to discuss details about this study with the landowner. The representative will phone a few days before the visit to arrange an appropriate time with the landowner. During this personal visit, the NPSC representative will ask to obtain permission to access their property and ask the landowner to sign the consent form that is needed to permit NPSC to access their property. A copy of the written documentation summarizing this study will be left with the landowner.

- At a minimum, three phone calls will be attempted to each household before this participant will be denoted as unreachable. (If resources are available, six phone calls will be attempted to each household.)

i. Pre-letter sent to landowners contacted by telephone only.

January 30, 1995

Dear Sir or Madam,

The Northern Prairie Science Center located in Jamestown, North Dakota is interested in assessing condition of the wetlands across the Prairie Pothole Region of North Dakota. The purpose of this research is to characterize and estimate the extent of wetland resources in the U.S., and to determine factors that contribute to wetland wildlife habitat value. Results of this study will assist in identifying areas that might benefit from a wetland enhancement program modelled after the current Crop Reserve Program (CRP)

You are one of a random sample of people in the State of North Dakota who are being asked for permission to include one or more wetlands on your property in the study. A representative from the Northern Prairie Science Center will be calling you over the next few weeks to discuss the details of our study. He will discuss the purpose of our study, the measurements that we wish to make on your wetland, and any concerns you might wish to raise with regard to our research.

In order that the results of this work will be representative of the entire population of wetlands in North Dakota, it is important that you allow us to include your wetland in this study. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Chip Euliss

ii. Pre-letter sent to landowners contacted by personal visit.

January 30, 1995

Dear Sir or Madam,

The Northern Prairie Science Center located in Jamestown, North Dakota is interested in assessing condition of the wetlands across the Prairie Pothole Region of North Dakota. The purpose of this research is to characterize and estimate the extent of wetland resources in the U.S., and to determine factors that contribute to wetland wildlife habitat value. Results of this study will assist in identifying areas that might benefit from a wetland enhancement program modelled after the current Crop Reserve Program (CRP)

You are one of a random sample of people in the State of North Dakota who are being asked for permission to include one or more wetlands on your property in the study. A representative from the Northern Prairie Science Center will be calling you over the next few weeks to discuss the details of our study. He would like to set up an appointment with you to arrange a visit with you to discuss the purpose of our study, the measurements that we wish to make on your wetland, and any concerns you might wish to raise with regard to our research.

In order that the results of this work will be representative of the entire population of wetlands in North Dakota, it is important that you allow us to include your wetland in this study. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Chip Euliss

iii. Landowner-Tenant Information*

The Northern Prairie Science Center located in Jamestown, North Dakota is conducting research to assess condition of wetlands across the Prairie Pothole Region of North Dakota. Our studies will include aerial photography of land use across the state. In addition, a selected number of wetlands will be visited to describe wetland plant and animal communities, soil chemistry, sedimentation rates, hydrology, and water chemistry. We would like your permission to include one or more wetlands on your property in this study.

The study will require a visit to the wetland during the summer of 1995. We anticipate that the measurements will be recorded in a few hours by 2-3 of our researchers. These measurements will be taken in daylight hours only..

We only ask you for your permission to access your wetland. We do not ask you to change any farming practices or for your help in taking any measurements.

Our visit may require us to transport some field equipment to the edge of the wetland. If your wetland is located within a field, we would like your permission to drive a 4x4 pickup or a 6-wheel All Terrain Vehicle from the nearest road or trail to the wetland. We will compensate you for any damage or loss caused by driving on your land or by other activities associated with our study. Our compensation will not affect payments on programs of any other government agencies, such as the USDA. In most cases, compensation will involve a simple loss assessment, with payment in about 6 weeks.

We realize that working on your land is a privilege and we will respect your landowner rights at all times. We are prepared to honor any special conditions that you may impose upon us. We will be happy to share our finding with you if you are interested. If you have any concerns during the study please contact XXX at XXX. Call collect and tell the receptionist that you are a landowner involved in the EMAP program or write him directly at Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center, Rt. 1 Box 96C, Jamestown, ND 58401

Thank you again for you cooperation in this study. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

*Edited letter from 149.00 Landowner Contact and Damage Reimbursement Procedures, Procedure note no. 920512DF.002

C. Interviewer Guide

Most Commonly Asked Questions

1. Who is sponsoring and paying for this survey?
 - EPA's Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program(EMAP), EPA's Wetlands Research Program (WRP), and the National Biological Survey (NBS). NBS is involved in this study through the Northern Prairie Science Center (NPSC) located in Jamestown.
2. What is EMAP?
 - Environmental Monitoring Assessment Program.
 - The EMAP program was initiated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to address three objectives which are:
 - (1) Estimate current status, extent, changes, and trends in indicators of the condition of the nation's ecological resources on a regional basis with know confidence.
 - (2) Monitor indicators of pollutant exposure and habitat condition, and seek associations between human-induced stresses and ecological condition that identify possible causes of adverse effects.
 - (3) Publish annual statistical summaries and periodic interpretive reports on status and trends to the EPA Administrator and the public.
3. Why is the NPSC involved?
 - In 1993, most biological research functions within the U.S. Department of the Interior, including those conducted by NPSC, were consolidated into the newly-formed National Biological Survey (NBS).
 - NPSC is working jointly with EPA in this study.
4. What is the purpose of this survey?
 - Purpose is to characterize and estimate the extent of wetland resources in the U.S., and to determine factors that contribute to wetland habitat value, so that this information could be used to make recommendations on priority areas for restoration. This information would be made available to USDA programs such as the Wetlands Reserve Program.
5. Who is the person responsible for this survey? May I talk to him/her?
 - Lew Cowardin, Chip Euliss?

- Where do I write?
12. Will results from this survey affect classification of the prairie pothole or prevent wetland tillage on my property?
- The purpose of this study is not to reclassify wetlands.
 - Results from this survey will be made available to the Soil Conservation Service and other organizations involved in restoration. It is not known whether these organizations will reclassify wetlands based on these data.
13. Will results from this survey impact the type of pesticides I use on the fields in closest proximity to the prairie pothole?
- The purpose of this study is not to determine new restrictions on pesticide use.
 - However, by Federal law, data is available through the freedom of information act. Results from this survey will be made available to organizations involved in wetland restoration.

C. Interviewer Guide (Cont'd)

ii. Proposed response to refusals

REFUSAL IN CAPITALS. Proposed response follows.

1. TOO BUSY. I am sorry to have caught you at a bad time and would be happy to call back (or phone instead of another visit) again. I can mail you some information with regard to this survey and then call back next week. When would be a good time for me to call next week?

2. BAD HEALTH. I am sorry to hear that you are sick right now. I would be happy to call back in a few days. Would that be okay?

3. NOT INTERESTED. It's awfully important that we get information on these prairie potholes or the results will be hard to interpret.

4. ITS NO ONES BUSINESS ON WHAT GROWS IN MY PRAIRIE POTHOLE. Only a sample of prairie potholes located in North Dakota were selected in this survey. The data collected from each prairie pothole represents all prairie potholes that are located in the state and thus all prairie potholes that we sample are important.

5. OBJECTS TO SURVEYS. We think this survey is very important because this assessment allows us to determine the current status of the prairie potholes. We can answer questions such as:

- How many are out there?
- How waterfowl and wildlife would benefit from additional restoration?
- What areas would benefit most from wetland restoration?

6. I DON'T TRUST THE GOVERNMENT.

- Yes, many people feel this way. Still, we do need to find out the condition of this major resource because it is critical to waterfowl and other wildlife production throughout North America. More than 50% of all waterfowl production in North America depends on this resource.

D. Telephone Record Form

Northern Prairie Science Center - EMAP Study 1995

Hello, this is _____ and I'm calling for the Northern Prairie Science Center at Jamestown, North Dakota. I wrote to you a few weeks ago about a survey we are

conducting on the wetlands in North Dakota. Am I speaking to (_____). (If not), is (he) (she) is available now.

(IF "RESPONDENT" IS NOT AVAILABLE, ASK WHEN YOU MIGHT CALL BACK AND RECORD IN THE TABLE BELOW. WHEN YOU HAVE THE RESPONDENT ON THE PHONE SAY):

Hello, this is _____ and I'm calling for the Northern Prairie Science Center at Jamestown, North Dakota. I wrote to you a few weeks ago about a survey we are conducting on the wetlands in North Dakota. I would like to go over this survey with you to determine if we may have permission to access a wetland on your property for this study.

Interview:

- Go to document iii in this manual that summarizes this study and read this slowly to the landowner.
- Allow him/her to interrupt at any time if they have questions.
- Indicate that you will mail them a copy for their records.
- Within this packet you will include a consent form. Indicate to the owner that they are asked to please return whether or not they will give consent to site access. The consent form will have lines to indicate whether the landowner does or does not wish to give site access. This will prevent us from trying to contact them again if we have not heard back.
- Ask them if it would be ok with them if you telephoned them if you have not heard from them in a few weeks.

(INTERVIEWER: RECORD DATE, TIME AND RESULT OF EACH ATTEMPT TO CONTACT IN THE TABLE BELOW. NOTE APPOINTMENTS IN THE "TIME OF RECALL" COLUMN)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Interviewer</u>	<u>Results</u> (See Codes)	<u>Time of recall</u> Codes for results:
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NA = No answer
WR = Will return

AM = Ans. Machine
BSY = Busy signal
CB = Call back.
DISC = Disconnect
WN = Wrong number
REF = Refused
PIC = Part comp.
TERM = Terminate
COMP = Completed

Time phone call started: _____ Stopped: _____

Minutes: _____ Verified by: _____

