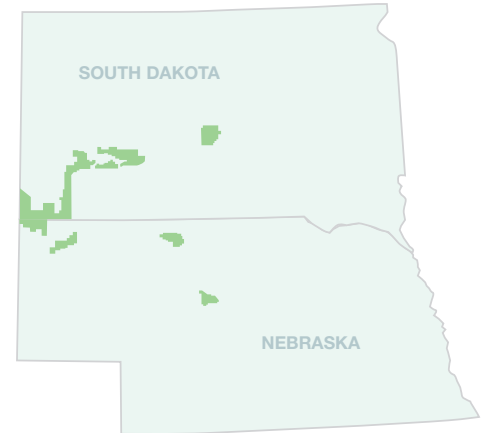


# Nebraska, Samuel R. McKelvie National Forests Buffalo Gap, Fort Pierre, and Oglala National Grasslands



*Sunrise on the Prairie*



## **Current Issues**

### **Forest and Grassland Plan Implementation**

The forest and grassland will be completing a five-year monitoring and evaluation report in 2009 and assessing the results to identify adaptations and future projects to continue moving toward the plan goals.

### **Recreation Strategy and Travel Management Implementation**

The forest and grassland has extensive deferred maintenance goals and limited funding available for its most heavily used recreation facilities, primarily on the Bessey Ranger District. Forest Service officials will be evaluating future plans for the swimming pool site and operations at Hudson-Meng this year. The forest and grassland will implement its travel management decision on the Ft. Pierre National Grassland this year and finalize decisions on the rest of the units by September 2009. These decisions implement the national travel management rule that directs motorized use on designated roads, trails, and areas only.

### **Wildlife Program Implementation, including Black-tailed Prairie Dog Management Conservation and Management Plan**

The forest and grassland has a diverse and expansive wildlife program that includes specific goals for big game and non-game species habitats across national forests and grasslands. Forest Service officials are developing a five-year action plan for this program in coordination with state and federal partners. The forest and grassland has specific prairie dog management objectives and will be initiating an expanded collaborative effort to work with interested stakeholders on future management objectives in Conata Basin black footed ferret emphasis areas as well as other prairie dog habitat across the national grasslands in Nebraska and southern South Dakota.

## **Headquarters**

Forest and Grassland Supervisor:  
Jane Darnell  
125 North Main Street  
Chadron, Nebraska 69337  
308-432-0300

## **Ranger Districts**

### **Bessey Ranger District**

District Ranger: Patti Barney  
Nursery Manager: Richard Gilbert  
PO Box 39  
State Spur 86B  
Halsey, Nebraska 69142  
308-533-2257

### **Fort Pierre National Grassland**

District Ranger: Ruben Leal  
1020 North Deadwood Street  
Fort Pierre, South Dakota 57532  
605-224-5517

### **Pine Ridge Ranger District**

District Ranger: Charlie Marsh  
125 North Main Street  
Chadron, Nebraska 69337  
308-432-0300

### **Wall Ranger District**

District Ranger: Kevin Atchley  
PO Box 425  
708 Main Street  
Wall, South Dakota 57790  
605-279-2125

**Vegetative Management and Ecosystem Health Improvement in Ponderosa Pine and Grassland Ecosystems**

The forest and grassland will continue to implement projects related to forest and grassland health,

including ongoing fuel and forest health treatments on our national forests, the finalization of the range allotment management plan (RAMP) for the McKelvie National Forest this year, and continued weed treatments.

Forest Size	Total land area is 1,247,495 acres within the following units: Buffalo Gap National Grassland – 679,725 acres (South Dakota) Fort Pierre National Grassland – 125,278 acres (South Dakota) Nebraska National Forest – 229,600 acres (Nebraska) Oglala National Grassland – 95,863 acres (Nebraska) Samuel R. McKelvie National Forest – 116,885 acres (Nebraska)
Number of Employees - Permanent	92
Number of Employees - Seasonal	54
Average Annual Budget	\$7,404,000
Elevations	Lowest - 1,550 feet above sea level Highest - 4,700 feet above sea level
Wilderness Areas	Soldier Creek
Wild and Scenic Rivers	None
National Scenic or Historic Trails	None
National Recreation Areas	Pine Ridge National Recreation Area
Scenic Byways	Bridges to Buttes Byway Gold Rush Byway Sandhills Journey
Outfitter Guides	1 outfitter guide
Grazing	350 active allotments on 1,116,972 acres 375 term grazing permits
Forest Management and Timber	Timber Volume Sold in fiscal year 2008 – 1,445 ccf Forest Vegetation Improved in fiscal year 2008 – 293 acres
Hazardous Fuels Reduction Treatments	3,783 acres in fiscal year 2008

### Unique Features or Highlights

- The Nebraska National Forest began in 1902 as an experiment to produce trees and plant them in what is now the largest human-made forest in the United States. The Ft. Pierre National Grassland gets the most rainfall of all the grasslands; eighteen inches per year on average. The Buffalo Gap National Grassland is home to over 300 black-footed ferrets, the most endangered mammal in North America.
- The Nebraska National Forest Pine Ridge Ranger District includes 51,084 acres of national forest intermingled with private- and state-administered lands in Dawes and Sioux counties. The Pine Ridge is recognized as a destination location for Merriam's wild turkey, and many hunters travel to the forest to pursue this prized game animal. The district also oversees the 95,863-acre Oglala National Grassland in northern Sioux and Dawes counties, a rolling mixed grass prairie with a variety of wildflowers and prairie wildlife that provide habitat for the largest herds of pronghorn antelope in Nebraska.
- Toadstool Geologic Park and Hudson-Meng Bison Kill Site are two internationally known prehistoric sites located on the Oglala National Grassland. Toadstool is a moonscape of eroded buttes and drainages with evidence of volcanic events and extinct animal species that occurred from 38 to 26 million years ago.
- Hudson-Meng Bison Kill Site on the Oglala National Grassland is a nearly 10,000-year old archaeological site containing the skeletal remains of over 600 specimens of an extinct bison species. The archaeological evidence indicates that humans killed several with stone pointed spears or darts.

Web Address

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/nebraska/>