

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

TODD GAME PRODUCTION AREA PROPERTY EXCHANGE

BENNETT COUNTY, SOUTH DAKOTA

Involving Lands Owned by
South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks - Wildlife Division
&
Martin J. Vanderploeg, Trustee of the
Martin J. Vanderploeg 2001 Revocable Living Trust

Decision Relating to
Federal Assistance Grant W-136-L-1

December 2008

Prepared by

South Dakota Department of Game, Fish & Parks
Division of Wildlife
Pierre, South Dakota

&

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Division of Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration
Region 6
Denver, Colorado

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Purpose and Need	2
Alternatives	2
Alternative A (Preferred Action)	2
Alternative B (No Action)	3
Other Alternatives Considered.....	3
Affected Environments	4
Physical Resources	4
Location and Management.....	4
Recreation	4
Wetland Resources.....	4
Prime and Unique Farmlands.....	4
Historic and Cultural Resources	5
Biological Resources	5
Vegetation Resources	5
Wildlife Resources.....	5
Fish and Other Aquatic Species.....	6
Special Status Species.....	6
Environmental Consequences	6
Alternative A (Preferred Alternative).....	6
Alternative B (No Action)	6
Cumulative Impacts	9
Public Review	9
List of Preparers.....	9
Appendices.....	10
Map of Exchange Properties	11
Exchange Agreement	12
Wetland Resources (NWI) Map of Exchange Properties	15
Soils Map of Exchange Properties.....	16
Rosebud Sioux Tribe THPO Letter	22
South Dakota SHPO Letter.....	23
Level III Cultural Resources Inventory Survey	25
South Dakota Natural Heritage Program Letter	36

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the proposed action is to exchange a 160 acre tract of the Todd Game Production Area (GPA) held by the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish & Parks - Wildlife Division (SDGFP) for a 157.5 acre tract of private in-holding property owned by Martin J. Vanderploeg, Trustee of the Martin J. Vanderploeg 2001 Revocable Living Trust (Vanderploeg). Additionally, the Federal interest in the SDGFP property proposed for exchange would be transferred to the acquired Vanderploeg property.

The 2,270 acre Todd GPA, acquired in December 1997 with Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act program funds, is managed by SDGFP for wildlife habitat and public hunting opportunities. The Vanderploeg property amounts to a private in-holding, sharing a common boundary on three sides with the Todd GPA. The SDGFP property, while being contiguous with the Todd GPA property, is a semi-isolated tract, separated from the main GPA complex by a well traveled county road. A map of the proposed exchange properties is attached as Appendix A.

The need for this action is that as an in-hold, the Vanderploeg property has presented law enforcement (trespass) and management (depredation and habitat fragmentation) challenges for SDGFP. Attempts to alleviate these problems with standard management practices have been mostly unsuccessful, and as such challenges persist. Additionally, the semi-isolated nature of the SDGFP property has presented management challenges (habitat fragmentation) as well. Being separated by a county road lends the SDGFP property to requiring management activities separate from the balance of the Todd GPA.

The exchange of SDGFP property and transfer of Federal interest therein constitutes a federal action pursuant to the National Environmental Protection Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA). This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to examine the impacts of the land exchange on the human environment.

Upon examining the effects of this proposed property exchange SDGFP has determined that the affected wildlife resources and public interests would benefit most through the proposed property exchange and transfer of Federal interest.

Alternatives

Alternative A (Preferred Action)

Exchange and transfer Federal interest in SDGFP property for Vanderploeg property.

The Preferred Action consists of exchanging the SDGFP property for the Vanderploeg property, and subsequently assigning the Federal interest in the exchanged SDGFP property to the received Vanderploeg property. The Preferred Action would allow SDGFP to address multiple management challenges associated with the Todd GPA in a single property exchange action.

The 2,270 acre Todd GPA was acquired in December 1997 with Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act program funds providing 75% Federal share through Federal Assistance Grant W-136-L-1. The current appraised value of the SDGFP property is \$88,000.00 as determined through the preparation and subsequent review of a complete appraisal report according to recognized appraisal principals and practices (Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practices) and Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions. The current appraised value of the Vanderploeg property is \$90,500.00 as determined through the preparation and subsequent review of a complete appraisal report according to recognized appraisal principals and practices (Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practices) and Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions.

An Exchange Agreement between SDGFP and Vanderploeg will be executed detailing specific provisions of the proposed property exchange. A draft copy of the exchange agreement is attached as Appendix B.

Alternative B (No Action)

If no action is taken, SDGFP will cancel the exchange proposal, and ownership of the Todd GPA and Vanderploeg property will remain as is. As such, management challenges associated with a semi-isolated tract and a private in-holding will continue to exist. SDGFP could pursue disposal of the semi-isolated Todd GPA tract via outright sale or other exchange options. Further SDGFP could pursue acquiring the Vanderploeg property through fee title acquisition. However none of these approaches are desired or acceptable.

Other Alternatives Considered

Purchase the Vanderploeg property

Acquiring adjacent property to existing GPAs is a priority for SDGFP. This is particularly true of in-holding situations such as the Vanderploeg property. An open offer by SDGFP to Mr. Vanderploeg to purchase his property has been in place for some time. However, Mr. Vanderploeg, being an active farmer, relies on his existing land base to maintain a profitable farming business. As such, Mr. Vanderploeg does not desire to sell his property without having suitable replacement property available for purchase or exchange. While purchasing the Vanderploeg property is an option for SDGFP, the property is not available for outright purchase and therefore this alternative is not viable for SDGFP.

Dispose of the SDGFP property

Disposing of GPAs that present significant management or access challenges is an option available to SDGFP. However, the Todd GPA is a relatively large GPA complex for southwest South Dakota. As such, the Todd GPA offers a unique management opportunity to provide large contiguous blocks of high quality wildlife habitat and public hunting opportunities. It is undesirable for SDGFP to dispose of any portion of the Todd GPA unless sufficient and adjoining replacement property is available. Therefore this alternative is not viable for SDGFP.

Affected Environments

Physical Resources

Location and Management:

The 160 acre SDGFP proposed exchange parcel is located approximately 5 miles south of Martin in Bennett County, South Dakota. It is described legally as the SE1/4 of Section 9, Township 36 North, Range 37 West of the 6th P.M. A majority of the property is currently in annual crop production (130 acres), with the balance in wetland, planted shelterbelt and road right-of-way.

The 157.5 acre Vanderploeg proposed exchange parcel is located approximately 5 miles south of Martin in Bennett County, South Dakota. It is described legally as the NE1/4 of Section 17, Township 36 North, Range 37 West of the 6th P.M., excepting there from the NW1/4NW1/4NW1/4NE1/4 of said Section 17. The Vanderploeg property is currently planted to a mixture of native grasses and forbs.

Recreation:

The SDGFP property, while open to public hunting and other wildlife related recreation, has offered limited opportunity for these activities due to a lack of financial and personnel resources needed to adequately develop the habitats to support these activities. By contrast, the Vanderploeg property is privately owned and open to hunting and related wildlife recreation by permission of the landowner. However, habitat has recently been developed on this property in the form of perennial native grassland species [big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*), switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*), green needlegrass (*Stipa viridula*), western wheatgrass (*Pascopyrum smithii*)], through enrollment in the Conservation Reserve Program. This habitat type provides opportunities for wildlife related recreation desired on Game Production Areas. This habitat development however has also exacerbated the perennial trespass situation on the Vanderploeg property.

Wetland Resources:

The SDGFP property contains 4 palustrine emergent wetland basins covering 25.7 acres, as identified by National Wetlands Inventory. A map showing the location and classification of these wetlands is attached as Appendix C. These wetland areas have traditionally been cultivated and farmed as environmental conditions allowed. This type of normal farming activity (plowing, planting and harvesting) is exempt from Section 404 permitting requirements. The Vanderploeg property does not contain wetland resources.

Prime and Unique Farmlands:

The 160 acre SDGFP proposed exchange parcel contains 41.8 acres of prime farmland and 19.8 acres of farmland of statewide importance (described in Appendix D). These areas are currently in agricultural use, and it is anticipated that these areas will remain in agricultural use under private ownership. The 157.5 acre Vanderploeg property does not contain prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance. No

conversion of agricultural lands to non-agricultural use is anticipated as a result of this proposed land exchange. A map showing the location and classification of soils on each tract is attached as Appendix D.

Historic and Cultural Resources:

A search of the South Dakota ARMS database indicated no cultural or historic properties on either the SDGFP property or the Vanderploeg property. Additionally, a Level III cultural resources inventory survey was completed on the SDGFP property. No historic properties were identified during the survey, and the South Dakota Office of the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with the determination of No Historic Properties Affected by the proposed undertaking. One Tribal Historic Preservation Office response was received, which was also a letter of concurrence for the proposed undertaking. Copies of the Level III survey and letters of concurrence from the both the SHPO and Rosebud Sioux Tribe Historic Preservation Office are attached as Appendix E.

Biological Resources

Vegetation Resources:

The SDGFP property consists almost entirely of annually tilled farmland, with very little representation of native plant communities. In 2002, SDGFP established a 4.9 acre woody cover plot as winter cover for wildlife. Species included in this woody cover plot are Rocky Mountain juniper (*Juniperus scopulorum*), Juneberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*), Nannyberry (*Viburnum lentago*), chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*), and wild plum (*Prunus americana*).

The Vanderploeg property, while annually tilled in the recent past, was seeded in 2007 to a mixture of native grasses and forbs under a Conservation Reserve Program contract. Species include big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*), switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*), green needlegrass (*Stipa viridula*), western wheatgrass (*Pascopyrum smithii*), and several native forb species.

Wildlife Resources:

Both the SDGFP property and Vanderploeg property host a variety of resident and migratory wildlife, both game and non-game species, with specific species composition being a reflection of habitat composition, habitat conditions and season of the year. Common game species located on and around the area include mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), Eastern cottontail (*Sylvilagus floridanus*), mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), gadwall (*Anas strepera*), American widgeon (*Anas americana*), blue-winged teal (*Anas discors*), Northern shoveler (*Anas clypeata*), Northern pintail (*Anas acuta*), green-winged teal (*Anas crecca*), gray partridge (*Perdix perdix*), ring-necked pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*) and sharp-tailed grouse (*Tympanuchus phasianellus*).

Non-game species commonly located on or in the vicinity of the area include thirteen-lined ground squirrel (*Spermophilus tridecemlineatus*), plains pocket gopher (*Geomys bursarius*), deer mouse (*Peromyscus maniculatus*), prairie vole (*Microtus*

ochrogaster), coyote (*Canis latrans*), red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), American badger (*Taxidea taxus*), common gartersnake (*Thamnolphis sirtalis*), prairie rattlesnake (*Crotalus viridis*), northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*), upland sandpiper (*Bartramia longicauda*), great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*), western kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*), eastern kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*), horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris*), Sprague's pipit (*Anthus spragueii*), vesper sparrow (*Pooecetes gramineus*), lark sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*), lark bunting (*Calamospiza melanocorys*), savannah sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*), grasshopper sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*), chestnut-collared longspur (*Calcarius ornatus*), dickcissel (*Spiza americana*), bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivous*), and western meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*).

Fish and Other Aquatic Species:

Neither the SDGFP property or Vanderploeg property support fish habitat or fish species. While the wetlands located on the SDGFP property likely provide seasonal habitat for several aquatic dependant species [e.g. tiger salamander (*Ambystoma tigrinum*), Northern leopard frog (*Lithobates pipiens*), and painted turtle (*Chrysemys picta*)], the temporary nature of these wetland resources do little to sustain viable populations of these species.

Special Status Species:

No federally listed, threatened or candidate species per the Endangered Species Act are known to occupy or occur on either the SDGFP or Vanderploeg properties. The proposed exchange will not affect or impact endangered, threatened, or candidate species or critical habitat in the area for these species, as stated in the attached letter (Appendix F) from the South Dakota Natural Heritage Program.

Environmental Consequences

Alternative A (Preferred Action)

After the exchange, SDGFP would no longer own a semi-isolated tract of the Todd Game Production Area. Further, an in-holding of private land that has caused law enforcement and management challenges to SDGFP would also be eliminated. SDGFP would be left with a more contiguous wildlife management area, facilitating more efficient and effective habitat management and public recreation opportunities.

Alternative B (No Action)

If the No Action alternative occurs, SDGFP would retain ownership and management of the Todd Game Production Area as it currently exists. SDGFP would still face challenges in managing its semi-isolated parcel and in dealing with the Vanderploeg in-holding. Further, as Mr. Vanderploeg is willing to assist SDGFP with this exchange endeavor, it is important to seize the opportunity. If the exchange is not completed and the Vanderploeg property is acquired by another private party, future opportunities to address the management and law enforcement

challenges associated with the Todd Game Production Area may be lost.

In summary, when assessing the impacts of SDGFP’s decision for proposing the exchange, it appears that the Preferred Action would cause the least adverse overall impacts to wildlife, wildlife habitat and public use of the Todd Game Production Area. A summary of potential impacts topics is provided below for both alternatives in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of Potential Impacts to Identified Impact Topics

IMPACT TOPIC	IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE	
	Preferred Action	No Action
RECREATION	Given current land use and habitat conditions on each property, a significant increase in public hunting and related wildlife recreation would result from the exchange.	Without additional habitat development on the SDGFP property, there would be a no affect on current hunting and related wildlife recreation.
WETLAND RESOURCES	The exchange will not negatively affect the integrity or value of the wetland resources as they presently exist on the SDGFP property. Further, it is anticipated that the wetlands, once under private ownership, will remain in normal agricultural use as environmental conditions allow. And as subjected to normal agricultural practices, the wetlands will continue to be exempt from Section 404 permitting requirements.	Without additional habitat development on the SDGFP property, including their discontinued agricultural use and vegetative restoration, there would be no affect on the wetland resources. And as subjected to normal agricultural practices, the wetlands will continue to be exempt from Section 404 permitting requirements.
PRIME AND UNIQUE FARMLAND	The SDGFP property, while containing some prime farmland and farmland of statewide importance, is currently in agricultural use, and it is anticipated that these areas will remain in agricultural use under private ownership. See Appendix D for location and descriptions of these soils. No conversion of any agricultural lands to non-agricultural use is anticipated and therefore no negative affect will occur.	As the only prime farmland and farmland of statewide importance is located on SDGFP property, this alternative will not affect continued use of the property for agricultural purposes.

<p style="text-align: center;">HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES</p>	<p>A Level III cultural resources inventory survey was completed for the SDGFP property, and a Level I records search was conducted for both SDGFP and Vanderploeg properties, in which no historic properties were identified. The South Dakota SHPO concurred with the determination of No Historic Properties Affected by the proposed undertaking. See Appendix E for copies of the survey and letter of concurrence from the SHPO.</p>	<p>The SDGFP property contains no known historic and cultural resources, and therefore No Historic Properties Affected by this alternative.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">VEGETATION RESOURCES</p>	<p>The proposed exchange will not affect the integrity or value of the existing vegetation present on either property. Vegetation on the Vanderploeg property will remain in place and managed for wildlife habitat benefits.</p>	<p>Without additional habitat development on the SDGFP property, including discontinuing annual agricultural use and vegetative restoration, there would be no affect on the existing vegetative resources.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">WILDLIFE RESOURCES</p>	<p>The exchange will not negatively affect the local wildlife species composition, population levels or value of either property to wildlife species. Any additional harvest of game species from the property will not affect local populations, as hunting seasons and limits provide for only sustainable harvest levels. Under SDGFP ownership and management, wildlife habitat conditions will improve on the Vanderploeg property.</p>	<p>Without additional habitat development on the SDGFP property, there would be a no affect on current wildlife resources.</p>

<p align="center">FISH AND OTHER AQUATIC SPECIES</p>	<p>The proposed exchange will not negatively affect aquatic wildlife species, and it is anticipated that the wetlands on the SDGFP property will remain intact under private ownership and continue to provide seasonal habitat for aquatic species.</p>	<p>Without additional wetland habitat improvements to the SDGFP property, including vegetative restorations, there would be no affect on aquatic species.</p>
<p align="center">SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES</p>	<p>The proposed exchange will not affect or impact endangered, threatened, or candidate species or critical habitat in the area for these species as these species and their habitats are not present on either property.</p>	<p>Because the SDGFP property contains no endangered, threatened, or candidate species or critical habitat in the area for these species, there is no affect for this alternative.</p>

Cumulative Impacts

SDGFP purchased the Todd Game Production Area in 1997 for wildlife habitat and public hunting purposes. In the decade since, SDGFP has developed and managed wildlife habitat on the property, and has provided untold hours of wildlife related recreation opportunities consistent with the purpose for which the Todd GPA was acquired. Further, SDGFP has long desired to reduce management challenges associated with a private in-holding and a semi-isolated tract. Only recently has a legitimate opportunity to accomplish this become available.

The exchange of SDGFP property for Vanderploeg property would help SDGFP attain its desire to more efficiently and effectively manage its property, but also reduce a perennial trespass situation resulting from the partial in-holding. Any loss of wildlife habitat and wildlife related recreational opportunities by disposal of the SDGFP property will be replaced in full by the habitat and recreation opportunities present on the Vanderploeg property.

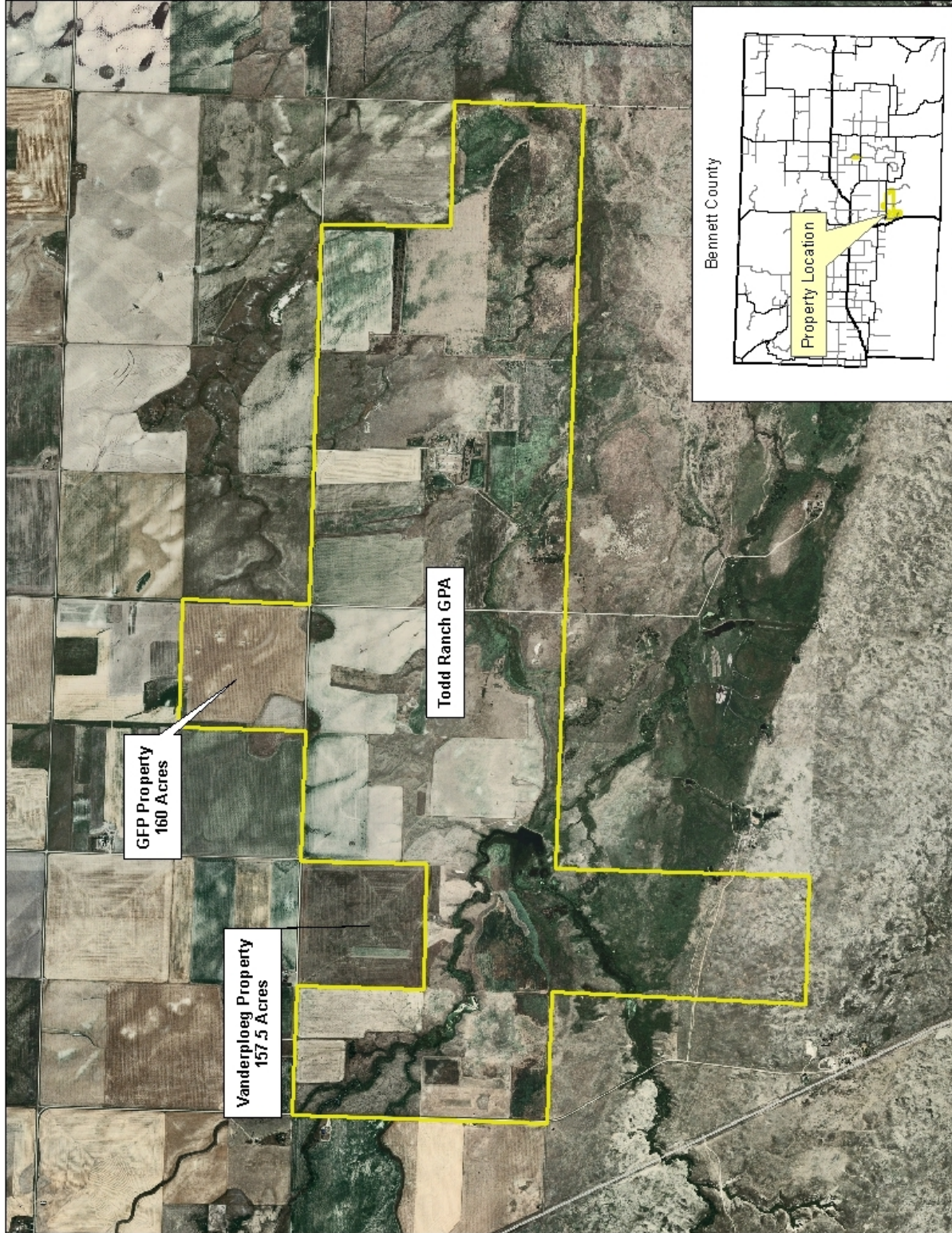
Public Review

List of Preparers

- Paul Coughlin, Habitat Program Administrator, SDGFP, Pierre, SD
- Nora Kohlenberg, Federal Aid Coordinator, SDGFP, Pierre, SD
- Dennie Mann, Regional Habitat Program Manager, SDGFP, Rapid City, SD
- Tom Beck, Wildlife Conservation Officer, SDGFP, Martin, SD
- Eddie Bennett, Grant Specialist, USFWS- Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration, Region 6, Lakewood, CO
- Connie Young-Dubovsky, Team Leader, USFWS- Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration, Region 6, Lakewood, CO

APPENDICIES

Appendix A: Map of Exchange Properties



EXCHANGE AGREEMENT

This AGREEMENT is made and entered into by and between the following parties:

DEPARTMENT: South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks
523 East Capitol
Pierre, South Dakota 57501

VANDERPLOEG: Martin J. Vanderploeg
22958 293rd St.
Martin, SD 57551

Whereas, DEPARTMENT owns an interest in real estate described as:

SE1/4 of Section 9, Township 36 North, Range 37 West of the 6th P.M., Bennett County, hereinafter referred to as GFP PROPERTY, which is valued at \$88,000.00; and

Whereas, VANDERPLOEG owns an interest in real estate described as:

NE1/4 of Section 17, Township 36 North, Range 37 West of the 6th P.M., excepting there from the NW1/4NW1/4NW1/4NE1/4 of said Section 17, Bennett County, hereinafter referred to as VANDERPLOEG PROPERTY, which is valued at \$90,500.00; and

Whereas, DEPARTMENT and VANDERPLOEG each desire to exchange with one another the interest in real estate as above described and owned by each other for purposes of providing DEPARTMENT with real property that is more suitable to DEPARTMENT purposes at Todd Game Production Area located in Bennett County, South Dakota (i.e., the VANDERPLOEG PROPERTY will better consolidate each parties' holdings and provide for more efficient and effective management); and

Whereas, the parties hereto have orally agreed upon terms and conditions of the exchange of their respective interest in properties which properties have been appraised with GFP PROPERTY valued at \$88,000.00 and VANDERPLOEG PROPERTY valued at \$90,500.00; and

Whereas, it is the intent of this AGREEMENT to provide for the conditions and terms of an exchange of interest in GFP PROPERTY for VANDERPLOEG PROPERTY based on said oral agreement; and

Whereas, VANDERPLOEG and DEPARTMENT have knowledge of the physical dimensions, boundaries, and location of the property to be exchanged; and

Whereas, VANDERPLOEG acknowledges that it is a condition precedent to the exchange of the above referenced interest in properties that the Game, Fish and Parks Commission approve of the exchange by appropriate RESOLUTION; and

Whereas, VANDERPLOEG further acknowledges that there are statutory requirements relating to procedures and methods of exchange and conveyance of property owned by

DEPARTMENT by which DEPARTMENT must obtain approval of the Governor of the State of South Dakota, and any conveyance of title of GFP PROPERTY must be signed by the Governor and attested to by the Commissioner of School and Public Lands, all of which must be completed before DEPARTMENT is authorized to exchange its interest in the property subject to this AGREEMENT, which also constitute conditions precedent to exchange of the respective interest in properties; and

Whereas, Governor approval of the exchange requires that DEPARTMENT will obtain marketable and merchantable title to the property to be exchanged by VANDERPLOEG reserving unto VANDERPLOEG all mineral rights thereto, and that DEPARTMENT will provide VANDERPLOEG with marketable and merchantable title to the property to be exchanged by DEPARTMENT reserving unto the STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA all mineral rights as required by SDCL § 5-2-12; and

Whereas, following execution of this AGREEMENT by the parties hereto and its approval by the GFP Commission, DEPARTMENT agrees to submit this AGREEMENT to the Governor of the State of South Dakota to obtain Governor approval of the intended exchange of interest in property pursuant to the terms and conditions contained herein; and

Whereas, the parties understand and agree that in the event either the GFP Commission or the Governor do not approve of the property exchange contemplated herein, this AGREEMENT shall be deemed null and void from the beginning without expense or further obligation of either party; and

Whereas, this AGREEMENT encompasses and incorporates all of the terms and conditions of the oral understandings between the parties hereto relative to this AGREEMENT.

Now, therefore, for adequate consideration consisting of the mutual obligations and covenants contained herein, the parties hereto further agree to the following in the event the Governor approves of the exchange of property and executes the deed of conveyance to VANDERPLOEG (said deed to be delivered upon compliance with all terms and conditions contained herein):

1. Prior to time of exchange of Deeds to their respective properties, each party hereto agrees that all 2007 real estate taxes due and payable in year 2008 and prior years are paid in full, and that the 2008 real estate taxes due and payable in 2009 shall be paid and prorated according to time of possession of the respective parcels of property, said pro-ration to be based upon the 2007 real estate taxes.

2. VANDERPLOEG and DEPARTMENT shall each furnish the other with title insurance in an amount equal to the appraised value of each party's respective parcel of property and which shows merchantable title thereto in said party except that DEPARTMENT shall reserve unto itself all mineral rights in its property as required by SDCL § 5-2-12, and VANDERPLOEG shall reserve unto himself all mineral rights in his property.

Within a reasonable time after receipt of approval of the exchange of property from the Governor and at a time to be agreed upon by the parties hereto, each party shall deliver to the other party its respective deed conveying title to the following:

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA (for the use and benefit of the Department of Game, Fish and Parks), 523 East Capitol, Pierre, South Dakota 57501

MARTIN J. VANDERPLOEG, 22958 293rd St., Martin, SD 57551

3. Subject to approval of the exchange by the GFP Commission and the Governor, completion of the exchange and delivery of the deeds shall occur as soon as is practicable following a determination that each party can convey marketable title of said party's property to the other.

4. Each party shall pay any transfer fees which may be due and owing on the property they are transferring to the other. Each party hereto shall be responsible for paying its own closing costs and expenses incurred in connection with the implementation of this Agreement, including but not limited to its own attorney's fees and costs.

5. DEPARTMENT and VANDERPLOEG mutually agree that payments for the CRP contract currently in place on the VANDERPLOEG property shall remain with VANDERPLOEG, and that the DEPARTMENT and VANDERPLOEG will complete any necessary FSA paperwork to affect such arrangement. Further, VANDERPLOEG agrees that said CRP contract shall not be renewed, extended or in any way continued beyond the original expiration date.

6. In the event either the GFP Commission or the Governor do not approve of the property exchange contemplated by this AGREEMENT, then the parties hereto acknowledge and agree that this AGREEMENT shall be deemed null and void from the beginning and without expense or further obligation of either party.

MARTIN J VANDERPLOEG:

_____ on this _____ day of _____, 2008.

Martin J. Vanderploeg

DEPARTMENT:

_____ on this _____ day of _____, 2008.

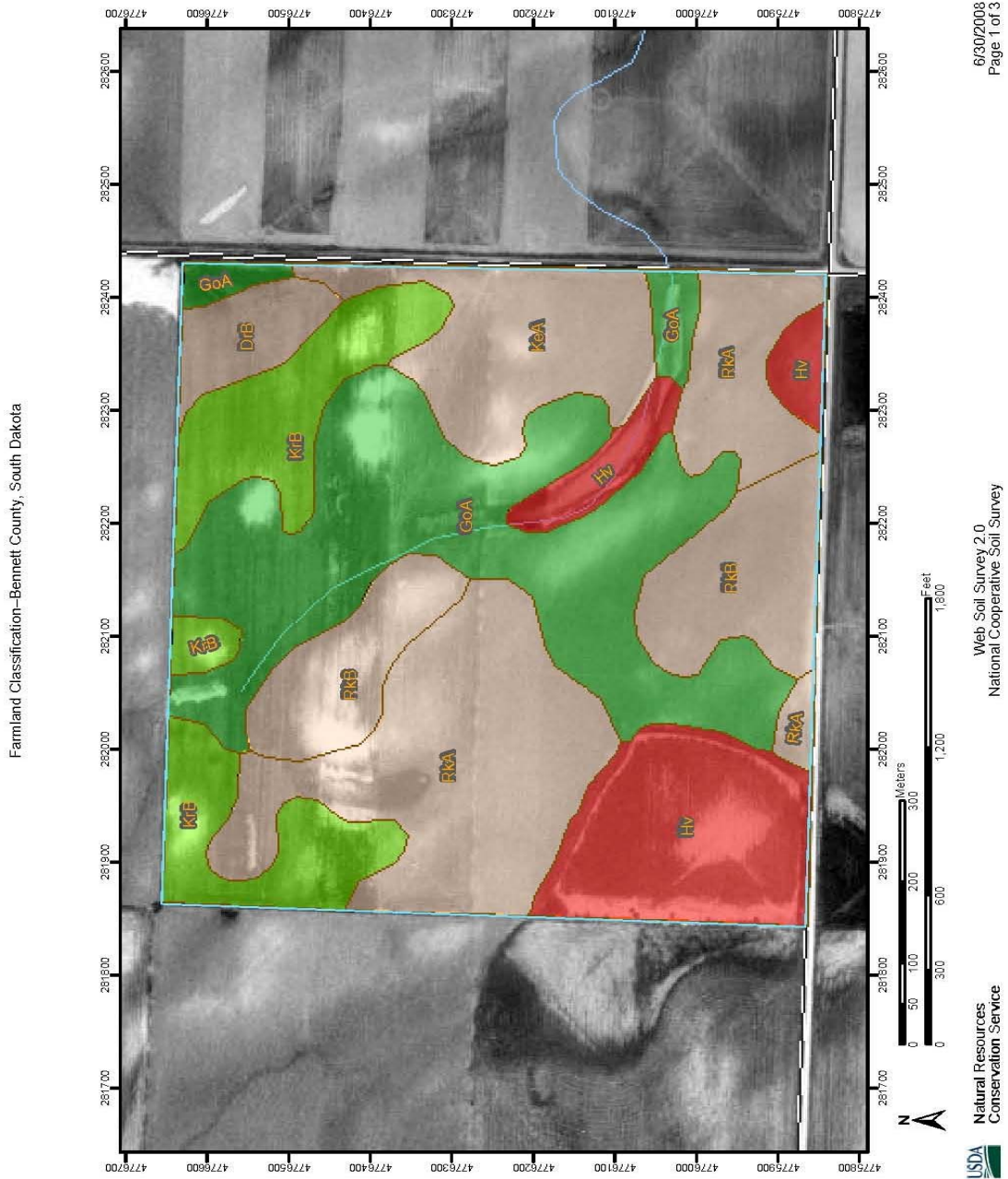
Anthony P. Leif, Director
SD Game, Fish & Parks - Wildlife Division

Appendix C: Wetland Resources (NWI) Map of Exchange Properties



Appendix D: Soil Map of Exchange Properties

SDGFP Property



MAP LEGEND

Area of Interest (AOI)

- Area of Interest (AOI)
- Soil Map Units

Soil Ratings

- Not prime farmland
- All areas are prime farmland
- Prime farmland if irrigated
- Prime farmland if drained
- Prime farmland if protected from flooding or not frequently flooded during the growing season
- Prime farmland if irrigated
- Prime farmland if drained and either protected from flooding or not frequently flooded during the growing season
- Prime farmland if irrigated and drained
- Prime farmland if irrigated and either protected from flooding or not frequently flooded during the growing season

Soils

- Prime farmland if subsoiled, completely removing the root inhibiting soil layer
- Prime farmland if irrigated and the product of (soil erodibility) x C (climate factor) does not exceed 60
- Prime farmland if irrigated and reclaimed of excess salts and sodium
- Farmland of statewide importance
- Farmland of local importance
- Farmland of unique importance
- Not rated or not available

Political Features

Municipalities

- Cities
- Urban Areas

Water Features

- Oceans
- Streams and Canals

Transportation

MAP INFORMATION

Original soil survey map sheets were prepared at publication scale. Viewing scale and printing scale, however, may vary from the original. Please rely on the bar scale on each map sheet for proper map measurements.

Source of Map: Natural Resources Conservation Service
 Web Soil Survey URL: <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov>
 Coordinate System: UTM Zone 14N

This product is generated from the USDA-NRCS certified data as of the version date(s) listed below.

Soil Survey Area: Bennett County, South Dakota
 Survey Area Data: Version 8, Feb 6, 2008

Date(s) aerial images were photographed: 8/21/1991

The orthophoto or other base map on which the soil lines were compiled and digitized probably differs from the background imagery displayed on these maps. As a result, some minor shifting of map unit boundaries may be evident.

Roads

- Rails
- Interstate Highways
- US Routes
- State Highways
- Local Roads
- Other Roads

Streams and Canals

Farmland Classification

Farmland Classification— Summary by Map Unit — Bennett County, South Dakota				
Map unit symbol	Map unit name	Rating	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
DrB	Dawes-Richfield silt loams, 0 to 5 percent slopes	Prime farmland if irrigated	4.6	3.0%
GoA	Mobridge silt loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	All areas are prime farmland	41.8	26.9%
Hv	Hoven silt loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes	Not prime farmland	21.4	13.7%
KeA	Keith silt loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	Prime farmland if irrigated	14.3	9.2%
KrB	Keith-Rosebud silt loams, 2 to 6 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance	19.8	12.7%
RkA	Richfield-Keith silt loams, 0 to 2 percent slopes	Prime farmland if irrigated	35.4	22.8%
RkB	Richfield-Keith silt loams, 2 to 6 percent slopes	Prime farmland if irrigated	18.1	11.7%
Totals for Area of Interest (AOI)			155.4	100.0%

Description

Farmland classification identifies map units as prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, farmland of local importance, or unique farmland. It identifies the location and extent of the soils that are best suited to food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops. NRCS policy and procedures on prime and unique farmlands are published in the "Federal Register," Vol. 43, No. 21, January 31, 1978.

Rating Options

Aggregation Method: No Aggregation Necessary

Tie-break Rule: Lower

Vanderploeg Property

Farmland Classification—Bennett County, South Dakota



6/30/2008
Page 1 of 3

Web Soil Survey 2.0
National Cooperative Soil Survey

USDA
Natural Resources
Conservation Service

MAP LEGEND

Area of Interest (AOI)

- Area of Interest (AOI)

Soils

- Soil Map Units

Soil Ratings

- Not prime farmland
- All areas are prime farmland
- Prime farmland if irrigated
- Prime farmland if drained
- Prime farmland if protected from flooding or not frequently flooded during the growing season
- Prime farmland if irrigated
- Prime farmland if drained and either protected from flooding or not frequently flooded during the growing season
- Prime farmland if irrigated and drained
- Prime farmland if irrigated and either protected from flooding or not frequently flooded during the growing season

- Prime farmland if irrigated and the product of (soil erodibility) x C (climate factor) does not exceed 60 and reclaimed of excess salts and sodium
- Farmland of statewide importance
- Farmland of local importance
- Farmland of unique importance
- Not rated or not available

Political Features

Municipalities

- Cities
- Urban Areas

Water Features

- Oceans
- Streams and Canals

Transportation

Roads

- Rails
- Interstate Highways
- US Routes
- State Highways
- Local Roads
- Other Roads

MAP INFORMATION

Original soil survey map sheets were prepared at publication scale. Viewing scale and printing scale, however, may vary from the original. Please rely on the bar scale on each map sheet for proper map measurements.

Source of Map: Natural Resources Conservation Service
 Web Soil Survey URL: <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov>
 Coordinate System: UTM Zone 14N

This product is generated from the USDA-NRCS certified data as of the version date(s) listed below.

Soil Survey Area: Bennett County, South Dakota
 Survey Area Data: Version 8, Feb 6, 2008

Date(s) aerial images were photographed: 8/21/1981

The orthophoto or other base map on which the soil lines were compiled and digitized probably differs from the background imagery displayed on these maps. As a result, some minor shifting of map unit boundaries may be evident.

Farmland Classification

Farmland Classification— Summary by Map Unit — Bennett County, South Dakota				
Map unit symbol	Map unit name	Rating	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
Hv	Hoven silt loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes	Not prime farmland	0.2	0.1%
KrB	Keith-Rosebud silt loams, 2 to 6 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance	0.0	0.0%
Mm	Mosher-Minutare complex, 0 to 6 percent slopes	Not prime farmland	2.6	1.7%
RkA	Richfield-Keith silt loams, 0 to 2 percent slopes	Prime farmland if irrigated	72.0	47.8%
RkB	Richfield-Keith silt loams, 2 to 6 percent slopes	Prime farmland if irrigated	75.9	50.4%
Totals for Area of Interest (AOI)			150.7	100.0%

Description

Farmland classification identifies map units as prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, farmland of local importance, or unique farmland. It identifies the location and extent of the soils that are best suited to food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops. NRCS policy and procedures on prime and unique farmlands are published in the "Federal Register," Vol. 43, No. 21, January 31, 1978.

Rating Options

Aggregation Method: No Aggregation Necessary

Tie-break Rule: Lower

Appendix E: South Dakota SHPO Letter & Cultural Resources Survey Report



Preserving the Land, Cultural
Heritage, Tradition for the
Future Generation

Rosebud Sioux Tribe

Tribal Historic Preservation Office

P.O. Box 809

Rosebud, South Dakota

Telephone: (605) 747-4255

Fax: (605) 747-4211

Email: rstthpo@yahoo.com



Russell Eagle Bear
Officer

Kathy Arcoren
Administrative Assistant

September 5, 2008

Department of Game, Fish and Parks
Foss Building
523 East Capitol
Pierre, South Dakota 57501-3182

Re: Todd Game production Area (GPA) and Vanerploeg Land Exchange

Dear Ms. Kohlenberg,

We are responding to your letter dated August 1, 2008 in reference to the Exchange and transfer Federal interest in SDGFP property for the Vanderploeg property.

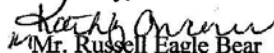
As the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the Rosebud Sioux Tribe I appreciate your notification of the undertaking and the awareness you are demonstrating for the archaeological sites and cultural heritage of Indigenous peoples.

In review of the area shown on the accompanying maps of your proposed undertaking we do not have sites listed in our data base. This does not preclude the possibility of a site of heritage importance being located by forest personnel or an archaeological contractor that may have an oral reference among the Rosebud people.

At this time we have no concerns for this project to proceed with the recommendation of No Historic Properties Affected.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this letter.

Sincerely,


Mr. Russell Eagle Bear
RST- THPO Officer





December 8, 2008

Ms. Nora Kohlenberg
Department of Game, Fish and Parks
Foss Building
523 East Capitol
Pierre SD 57501

SECTION 106 PROJECT CONSULTATION – IDENTIFICATION/EVALUATION

Project: 080804004F – Todd Game Production Area and Vanderploeg Land Exchange –
Disposal of Todd Game Production Area
Location: Bennett County
(USFWS/GFP)

Dear Ms. Kohlenberg:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above referenced undertaking pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended). The South Dakota Office of the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurs with your determination regarding the effect of the proposed undertaking on the non-renewable cultural resources of South Dakota.

We have made this consensus determination based on the information provided in your letter and the survey report entitled “A Level III Cultural Resources Inventory Survey of the Todd Game Production Area Land Disposal Project Area in Central Bennett County, South Dakota” prepared by Jeff Buechler and received on November 25, 2008. Given that no historic properties were identified during the survey of the Todd Game Production Area, the SHPO concurs with the determination of No Historic Properties Affected for this undertaking. Activities occurring in areas not identified in your request will require the submission of additional documentation pursuant to 36 CFR part 800.4.

If historic properties are discovered or unanticipated effects on historic properties are found after the agency official has completed the Section 106 process, the agency official shall avoid, minimize or mitigate the adverse effects to such properties and notify the SHPO/THPO, and Indian tribes that might attach religious and cultural significance to the affected property within 48 hours of the discovery, pursuant to 36 CFR part 800.13.

Office of Tourism
Governor’s Office of Economic
Development
Tribal Government Relations
711 E Wells Ave / Pierre, SD 57501-3369
Phone: 605-773-3301 / Fax: 605-773-3256
travelsd.com / sdgreatprofits.com /
sdtribalrelations.com

South Dakota Arts Council
800 Governors Dr. / Pierre, SD 57501-2294
Phone: 605-773-3131 or 1-800-423-6655 in SD
Fax: 605-773-6962
sdao@state.sd.us / sdarts.org

**South Dakota State
Historical Society**
900 Governors Dr. / Pierre, SD 57501-2217
Phone: 605-773-3458 / Fax: 605-773-8041
sdhistory.org

South Dakota Housing
Development Authority
PO Box 1237 / Pierre, SD 57501-1237
Phone: 605-773-3181 / Fax: 605-773-5154
sdhda.org

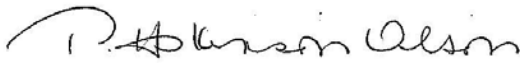


Concurrence of the SHPO does not relieve the federal agency official from consulting with other appropriate parties, as described in 36CFR Part 800.2(c).

Should you require additional information, please contact Paige Hoskinson Olson at (605) 773-6004. Your concern for the non-renewable cultural heritage of our state is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Jay D. Vogt
State Historic Preservation Officer

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paige Hoskinson Olson".

Paige Hoskinson Olson
Review and Compliance Coordinator

A Level III Cultural Resources Inventory Survey of the
Todd Game Production Area Land Disposal Project Area
in Central Bennett County, South Dakota

Prepared for

South Dakota Department of Game, Fish & Parks
Wildlife Division
523 East Capitol
Pierre, South Dakota

Prepared by

Jeff Buechler, RPA



Dakota Research Services
13110 Michelle Drive
Rapid City, South Dakota
Project Number 08-66

October 2008

A Level III Cultural Resources Inventory Survey of the Todd Game Production Area Land Disposal Project Area in Central Bennett County, South Dakota

Abstract

This report summarizes the activities, results, and recommendations derived from a Level III cultural resources inventory survey of the Todd Game Production Area (GPA) project area in central Bennett County, South Dakota. The project area encompasses approximately 160 acres located within the White River Badlands archaeological management region (Winahm and Hannus 1991). No cultural properties were identified within the surveyed area therefore, a determination of no historic properties affected is recommended for the proposed Todd GPA land disposal undertaking to proceed as planned.

Introduction and Project Background

The South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) is proposing to undertake the disposal of land purchased with Federal Assistance funds in southern Bennett County, South Dakota (Figure 1 -inset). The Todd Game Production Area (GPA) encompasses approximately 160 acres.

In mid-October 2008, a Level III cultural resources inventory survey was conducted to assess the impact the proposed land disposal may have on cultural resources. This research was conducted in accordance with an agreement between GFP and Dakota Research Services of Rapid City, South Dakota.

The objective of the cultural resources inventory survey was to identify, record, and assess the National Register of Historic Places significance of prehistoric and historic cultural properties within the proposed construction right-of-way (area of potential

effects). Cultural resources are defined as any building, structure, object, site, district, data, or other material property significant in history, architecture, archaeology, or culture. Cultural properties are considered a unique, non-renewable expression of human behavior. Interpretation of these behaviors concentrates on material or physical remains. "Significance" is evaluated in terms of National Register of Historic Places eligibility criteria defined by Federal regulation (36 CFR 60).

The fieldwork and supplemental records search was conducted by the author. The cooperation of Ms. Nora Kohlenberg of the Division of Wildlife for the GFP is gratefully acknowledged.

Environmental Parameters of the Todd GPA Project Area

The Todd GPA project area is located near the interface of the Tertiary Table Lands (Badlands) section and the High Plains (Sandhills) section (Figure 2) of the Missouri Plateau division of the Great Plains province (Rothrock 1943). The project area can be characterized as a gently-rolling plain located north of the Little White River valley.

The Recent climate of the region is a typical continental-type characterized by extremes in temperature and precipitation. Official weather observations recorded at Pine Ridge indicate an annual average growing season lasting 124 days (Spuhleretal. 1971). The average annual precipitation is 16.47 inches with about seventy-eight percent of this total occurring during the growing season, May to September, inclusive. In general, the dominant character of the local climate is variability or instability.

Johnson and Nichols (1970) characterize the dominant native vegetation in the region as a short to mixed grass prairie association of Buffalograss (*Buchloe dactyloides*), Western wheatgrass (*Agropyron smithii*), Blue grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*), Needleandthread (*Stipa comata*), and Green Needlegrass (*Stipa viriduld*). A variety of shrubs, forbs, and sedges were also observed in the area.

In summary, the above-mentioned characteristics of the area are considered major factors contributing to both prehistoric and historic population adaptation in the region.

Natural Landscape (Setting)

The general character of the Todd GPA project area can be described as a rural landscape. Typical features of the rural landscape of the area include cropland, grazing pastures, fences and corrals, windbreaks or shelter belts, grain bins, windmills, feed lots, barns, and ranch houses. Commerce and industry are inconspicuous. The land consists of rolling plains. Native vegetation is present where the land is steep, or conditions are otherwise unfavorable for cultivation.

Where views extend for some distance, the rural landscape of the area is generally low in profile and horizontal. The primary vertical elements are occasional ranch buildings, utility line poles, and trees. Patterns in the landscape tend to be simple, well defined, and geometric (i.e., the grid patterns of fields and the right angle intersection of roads and fences).

Smallness of scale is integral to the rural landscape: towns are small, roads are two-lane, and development is dispersed. The primary aesthetic qualities of rural landscapes tend to be natural rather than manmade. In spite of the pervasive influence of man in rural landscapes, structures are comparatively few.

Records Search Results

Prior to the initiation of the field inventory survey, a records search was conducted at the State Archaeological Research Center in Rapid City, South Dakota. These records included National Register of Historic Places listings; an examination of digitized CIS maps; and on-line database site records for the Todd GPA project area. The records search research

Federal Aid Project Proposal

CIS

South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks

Name: **Todd GPA**

County: **Bennett**

TWN: 36N

RNG: 37W

Section: 9 (SE1/4)

Quadrangle Name: **Martin SW 43101-A6**

Description of Project: **Land purchased with Federal Assistance holds federal nexus, propose to dispose property, must identify historic properties before it can be disposed**

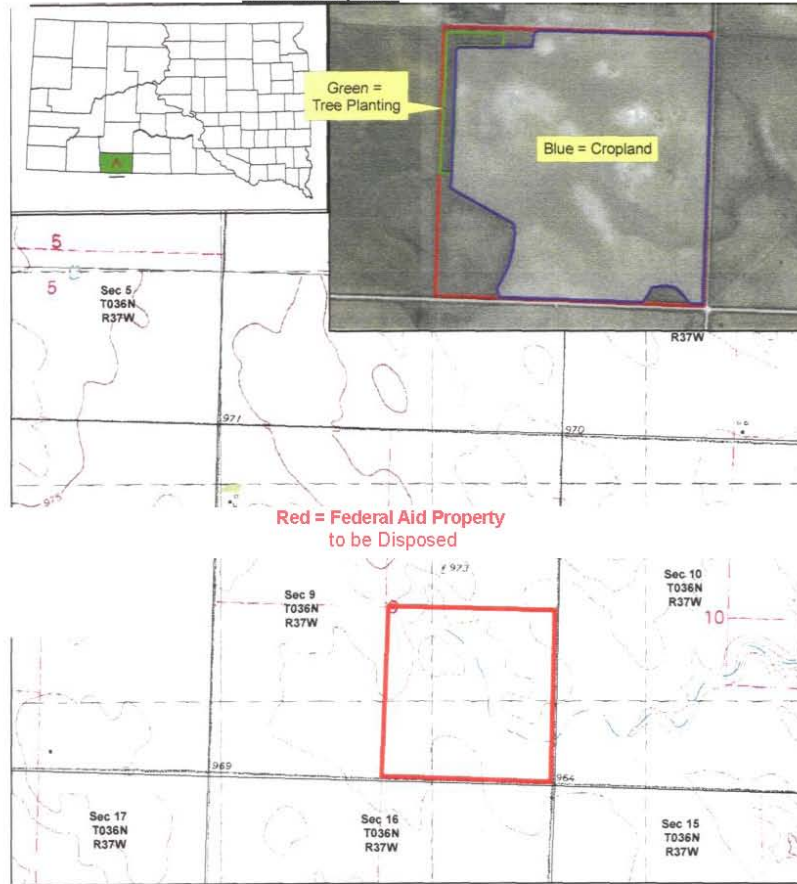


Figure 1. Todd GPA project area. Section 9, T36N, R37W.

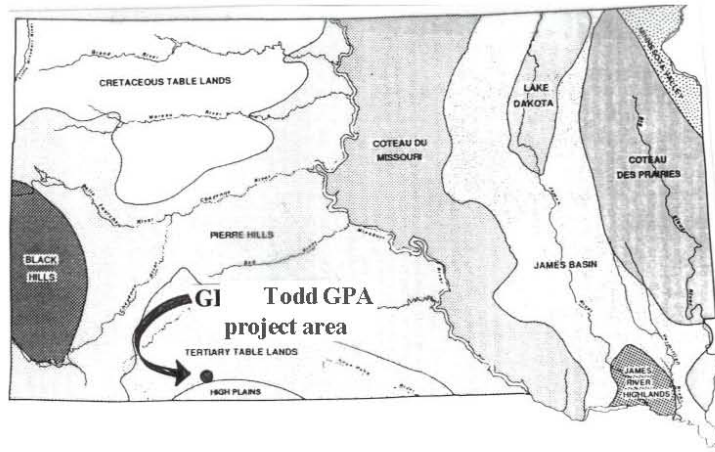


Figure 2. Map indicating the physiographic divisions of South Dakota. Source: South Dakota Geological Survey (1971).

examined an area approximately one mile surrounding the Todd GPA project area. The digitized GIS files indicate the locations of recorded sites and research projects in the vicinity of the project area and an online database for research projects and site data is maintained by the South Dakota State Archaeological Research Center. The results of this research are integrated within the general outline of historic contexts and subcontexts developed around six organizing principles (State Historic Preservation Center 1989, 2006). Each of these organizing principles provides a temporal parameter for defining historic contexts and subcontexts.

The results of the records search indicated one archaeological investigation and three historic

structures had been recorded in the general vicinity (within one mile) of the Todd GPA project area (Figure 3). The archaeological investigation involved an inventory survey of shelterbelt plots conducted by Gilbert (2001). No archaeological properties were identified within the Gilbert (2001) surveyed areas.

Site [BT-000-00089](#) consists of a historic farmstead located in the NW/4 of Section 9, T36N, R37W (see Figure 3). Buildings associated with this property include a barn and outbuildings. This property is considered not eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places and is not expected to be impacted or disturbed by the proposed GFP land disposal undertaking.

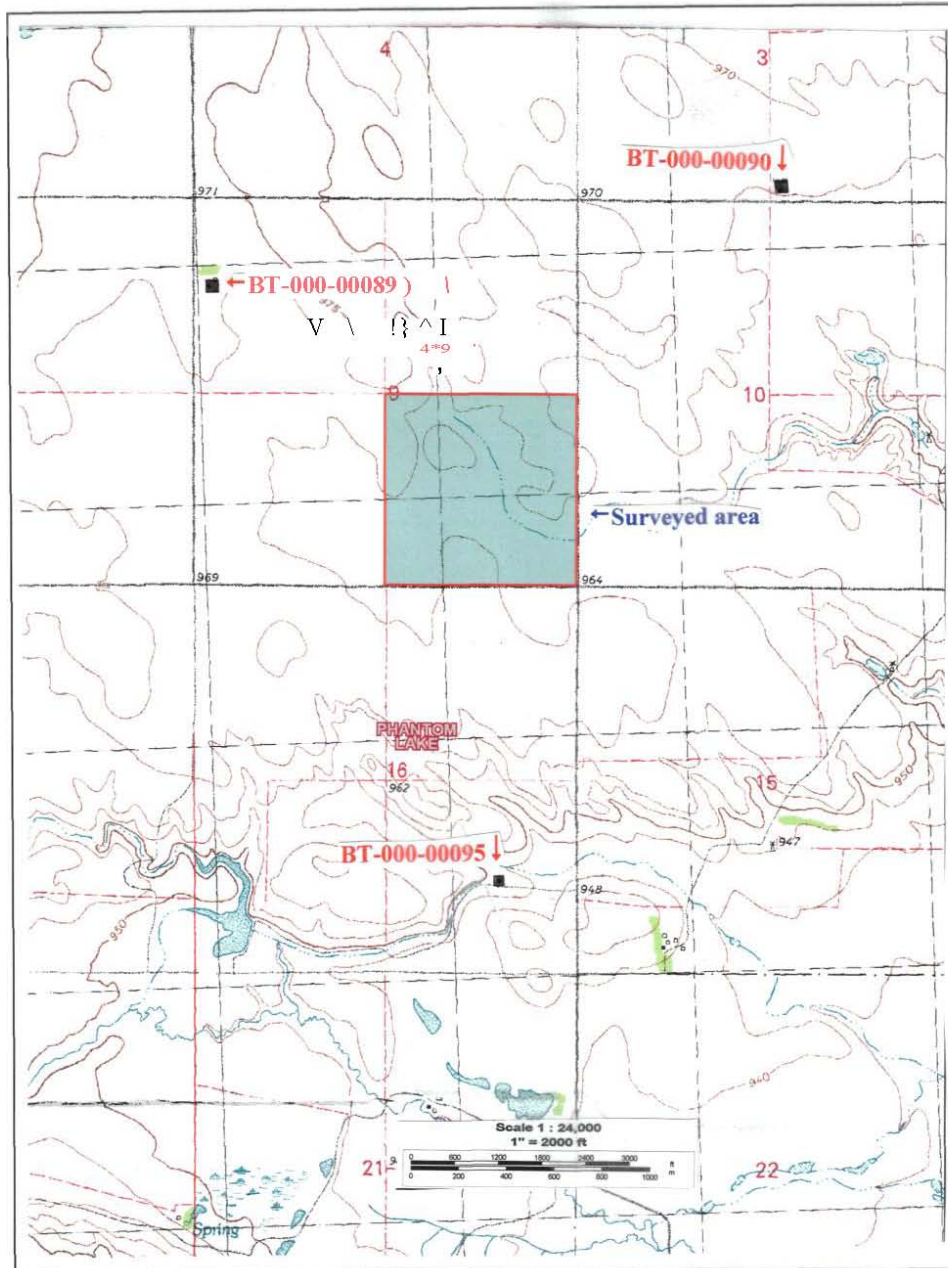


Figure 1. USGS quadrangle map (Phantom Lake quad) showing the Todd GPA surveyed area (blue shaded). Section 9, T36N, R37W.

Site BT-000-00090 consists of a historic farmstead located in the SEVi of Section 3, T36N, R37W (see Figure 3). Buildings associated with this property include a vacant house, machine shed, well shed, and grain bins. The vacant house was reported be constructed *circa* 1925. This property is considered not eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places and is not expected to be impacted or disturbed by the proposed GFP land disposal undertaking.

Site BT-QOO-00095) consists of a vacant house located in the SWVi of Section 16, T36N, R37W (see Figure 3). The vacant house was reported be constructed *circa* 1910. This property is considered not eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places and is not expected to be impacted or disturbed by the proposed GFP land disposal undertaking.

No archaeological sites or historic buildings, structures or sites have been identified in the immediate (\pm 500 feet) of the Todd GPA project area.

Description of the Todd GPA Project Area

As previously mentioned, the Todd GPA land disposal project area encompasses approximately 160 acres situated within the SE% of Section 9, T36N, R37W (see Figure 3). This area is located west of the LaCreek National Wildlife Refuge and north of the Little White River valley. The Todd GPA project area can be characterized as gently-rolling plain. Vegetation within the project area consists a variety of cultivated cropland (grain stubble) offering fair to good ground surface visibility. Small pothole sloughs were noted at the southwestern and southeastern corners of the project

area. A shelter belt was noted along the northwestern margin of the surveyed area. Photographs depicting the general setting of the project area are presented in Appendix A.

Research Orientation and Methods

General research orientation for the Todd GPA research activities were formulated within the context of the results of the records search research results; the research questions and goals outlined for the White River Badlands archaeological management region (Winham and Hannus 1991); and the historic contexts developed by the State Historic Preservation Center (1989, 2006).

Field inventory methods involved the implementation of a non-exclusive pedestrian survey (White and King 2007) with sinuous transects ranging from eight to ten meters in width. Each of the transects closely inspected rodent burrows and other active erosional or disturbed surfaces. Recent cultural items such as roadside litter were not recorded as historic sites.

Inventory Survey Results and Management Recommendations

Approximately 160 acres of the Todd GPA were examined for the GFP's Todd GPA land disposal undertaking in central Bennett County, South Dakota. No cultural properties were identified within the Todd GPA surveyed area. Therefore, a determination of **no historic properties affected** is recommended for the proposed land disposal undertaking to proceed as

planned. The proposed land disposal actions are not expected to involve known historic properties.

Station, South Dakota
State University, Brookings, SD.

References Cited

- DeLorme
2002 *3-D TopoQuads - South Dakota*.
Yarmouth, ME.
- Flint, Richard F.
1955 *Pleistocene Geology of Eastern South Dakota*. Professional Paper 262. US Geological Survey, Washington D.C.
- Gilbert, Miles
2001 *Inventory Survey - Todd Ranch Tree Planting Plots*. Contract Investigations Series 1467a. State Archaeological Research Center, Rapid City, SD. [ABT-0015]
- Johnson, James R. and James T. Nichols
1970 *Plants of South Dakota Grasslands*. Bulletin 566. South Dakota State University, Brookings, SD.
- Rothrock, E.P.
1943 *A Geology of South Dakota, Part I, the Surface*. Bulletin 13. State Geological Survey, Vermillion, SD.
- South Dakota Geological Survey
1971 *Major Physiographic Divisions of South Dakota*. Educational Series Map No. 4. South Dakota Geological Survey, Rapid City, SD.
- South Dakota State Historic Preservation Center
1989 *Historic Contexts for Historic and Architectural Resources in South Dakota*. Pierre, SD.
- 2006 *Statewide Preservation Plan: 2006-2010*. State Historic Preservation Center, Pierre, SD.
- Spuhler, Walter, W.F. Lytle, and Dennis Moe
1971 *Climate of South Dakota*. Bulletin 582. Agricultural Experiment
- White, Gregory G., and Thomas F. King
2007 *The Archaeological Survey Manual*. Left Coast Press, Inc., Walnut Creek, CA.
- Winham, R. Peter and L. Adrien Hannus
1991 *South Dakota State Plan for Archaeological Resources: 1990-1991 Update*. Prepared for the State Historic Preservation Center, Pierre, SD.

Appendix A

Photographs showing the general setting of the
Todd GPA project area



Figure A-1. Photo of Todd GPA project area, facing northeast (from southwest corner).



Figure A-2. Photo of Todd GPA project area, facing northwest (from southeast corner).



Figure A-3. Photo of Todd GPA project area, facing southwest (from northeast corner).



Figure A-4. Photo of Todd GPA project area, facing southeast (from northwest corner).

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF GAME, FISH AND PARKS



**Division of Wildlife
Federal Aid**



DATE: 07/17/2008
TO: Doug Backlund
FROM: Nora Kohlenberg
SUBJECT: Todd Game Production Area Property Exchange, Bennett County

Dear Doug:

The Wildlife Division is proposing to participate in a land exchange involving property that was purchased using Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration funds and property that is in private ownership, Vanderploeg property.

This proposed action is submitted for your review in fulfillment of the requirements of NEPA and the ESA; in your review please consider the following species:

Species considered

Whooping crane, interior least tern, piping plover, Eskimo curlew, black-footed ferret, gray wolf, American burying beetle, prairie-fringed orchid, Topeka shiner, Lynx, Mountain plover, Dakota skipper, Ute ladies'-tresses, scaleshell mussel, pallid sturgeon, Higgins eye and Dakota skipper where appropriate by site.

PROPOSED ACTION (Alternative A):

The proposed action is to exchange a 160 acre tract of the Todd Game Production Area for a 157.5 acre tract of property owned by Martin Vanderploeg, in Bennett County. The GFP property was purchased using PR funds in 1997, and is managed for wildlife habitat and public hunting opportunities. Basically this project will involve an exchange of two parcels that will eliminate an in-holding of private property. The GFP property legal description is SE1/4 of Section 9, T36N, R37W. The legal description of the Vanderploeg property is NE1/4 of Section of 17, T36N, R37W.

Most of the GFP property is currently in annual crop production (130 acres), with the remaining portion being wetland, planted shelterbelt, and road right-of-way. The Vanderploeg property is currently planted to a mixture of native grasses and forbs.

OTHER ALTERNATIVES

As part of an Environmental Assessment, please also consider the other alternatives.

Alternative B – No Action

Alternative C – Purchase the Vanderploeg property.

Alternative D – Dispose of the quarter section of GFP property that was purchased using PR.

Are any **federally listed endangered species** known to occur either permanently or temporarily in the immediate vicinity of the GFP or the Vanderploeg property? If so, could you offer some direction as to how we might proceed to minimize and avoid adverse effect or significant impact to those species.

Thank you for your reviewing assistance in the pursuit of accomplishing ~~these shooting range~~ projects.

Sincerely,



Nora Kohlenberg
Federal Assistance Coordinator

Attachments: (2) site map

"No effect" This project(s) will have "no effect" on threatened, endangered, or candidate species as it involves localized disturbance. Based on current information, this project will have no effect on state listed or federally listed threatened, endangered, or candidate species and will have no significant impact on fish or wildlife resources. If threatened, endangered, or candidate species are encountered during construction, the Department of Game Fish and Parks shall initiate consultations with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services to determine appropriate steps to avoid any effects to these species, including cessation of construction.

Signature Gregory A. Backlund 7/17/2008

Species considered: whooping crane, Eskimo curlew, interior least tern, piping plover, black-footed ferret, gray wolf, American burying beetle, Topeka shiner, pallid sturgeon, western prairie fringed orchid, Ute ladies-tresses, Higgins eye, scaleshell mussel, and Dakota skipper.

This proposed land exchange will have no negative impact on any of the threatened, endangered, or candidate species considered. American burying beetle occurs in south-central South Dakota, but has not been located on the Todd GPA. Surveys have been done at the Todd GPA to detect American burying beetle presence, but none have been found nor documented. Gray wolves, river otter and black-footed ferrets do not occur in the study area. Ute ladies-tresses have not been documented in South Dakota. The pallid sturgeon, scaleshell mussel and Higgins eye mussel are only found in the Missouri River and occasionally along the Cheyenne River. Whooping cranes and Eskimo curlews only migrate through the project area during the spring and fall. The Topeka shiner inhabits prairie streams of eastern South Dakota and these areas will not be affected. The western prairie fringed orchid formerly occurred in eastern South Dakota but has not been seen in the state since 1916. Piping plovers currently nest primarily along the Missouri River and occasionally on shorelines of certain alkaline wetlands of eastern South Dakota. The Dakota skipper occurs in northeast South Dakota. Therefore, this proposed land exchange will have no effect on threatened or endangered species.