

**NORTHWEST PRAIRIE CONFERENCE:
SUMMARY OF BREAKOUT GROUPS AND FINAL DISCUSSION**

COMMON THREADS AND GENERAL AGREEMENT

- 1) Major agreement and concern: Prairies are changing! The historic composition, structure and functions of prairies are rapidly disappearing, being replaced by forests, cities, weed fields, lakes, etc.
- 2) Given the geologic, biotic, climatic, and human dimensions of prairie systems, an interdisciplinary approach is imperative to understand and manage prairies. Interdisciplinarity is essential, exciting, and fundable.
- 3) Given the multiple dimensions and broad community interest in prairies, collaboration is essential. Collaboration includes tribal, academic, federal and state agencies, non-government organizations and private landholders. Innovative and effective partnerships should emerge.
- 4) There is an urgent need for a comprehensive Geographic Information System (GIS) data base and means for information transfer among researchers and stewards of prairies.
- 5) Education and outreach are essential. We need to communicate the reasons and urgency for studying, conserving, and restoring prairies. Communication should target educators, policy makers, and funding agencies.
- 6) An adaptive management approach must be applied in prairie stewardship, based on understanding from indigenous knowledge, and basic and applied science.
- 7) There is great excitement for future collective studies on prairies.

Two immediate next steps are needed (see attached statement to the Cooperative Environmental Studies Unit (CESU):

- 1) Solicit funds from CESU to establish a comprehensive GIS data base.
- 2) Write a statement about prairies—emphasizing that they are disappearing, valuable to study, and demand merger of social sciences, natural sciences and understanding of native peoples. This will force participants to focus their thoughts and identify realistic goals for future research. Possibly publish in *Northwest Science*.

REPORTS FROM BREAKOUT GROUPS:

1) *What are the major research and policy needs for future prairie restoration and maintenance?*

- Locations of historic prairies (where restoration should occur)
- Place of environmental baseline (reference sites)
- Restoration methodologies (e.g., invasive species control)
- Information sharing
- Technological needs (GIS)
- Typology of prairie
- Need to manage/restore complexity of landscapes
- Need to set targets for management, restoration
- Need to characterize the structure, composition and function of prairies
- Need to develop ecocultural restoration
- Need to identify ecosystem services, values and other key ecological functions

Group Members

Bivin, Mignonne	Hashisaki, Sono
Chaney, Marty	Hoover, Monica
Chappell, Chris	Lombardi, Angel
Dederich, Peter	Pearson, Scott
Devine, Warren	Ramsden, Kate
Dunwiddie, Peter	Riley, Ralph
Gleason, Bill	Rocheffort, Regina
Gleeson, Paul	Thomas, Jeffrey
Green, Phil	Wallin, David
Gurchewsky, Mark	Wilber, Ed

2) How do we develop a comprehensive understanding of Northwest Coast People's use of prairie ecosystems in the past and present?

Group 1:

- Develop a map/atlas of current and historic prairies.
- Synthesize and document archaeological use of prairies
- Identify data sets needed to reconstruct history of use (e.g., soils, pollen, charcoal, maps)
- Engage and work with tribes to get their involvement
- Identify and network with other disciplines (biologists, agronomists, etc)
- Communicate to other disciplines the traditional management of prairies.
- Tie prairie resources to modern Indian health issues.

General thoughts:

- Regular meetings and conferences are important
- Funding is a consistent issue—need to find ways to tap sources
- Consider a “Journal of NW Prairie Studies”?

Group 2: TRIBAL + ACADEMIC + GOVERNMENTAL

- Connections, trust, long-term relationships
- Reciprocity between tribes and institutions
- Ask tribes what they need studied
- Build institutional trust, takes time
- Don't use “helicopter approach” to science and education
- Build personal relationships
- Students volunteering and internships in tribal programs
- Workshops, seminars and recruitment on campuses
- Archeological obstacle of “grave robber” image, return of bones
- Relevant tribal questions, respect
- Old vs new approaches, long memory
- Increase in tribal archaeologists (but are they actually native people?)
- Name sites in GIS data base
- Identify common grounds in conservation and stewardship
- Network for advocacy
- Need programs on public attitudes about landscape

Group Members

Burtchard, Greg	Mierendorf, Bob
Conca, Dave	Noble, Megon
Diaz, Ben	Onat, Astrida
Ferry, Jackie	Smith, Leigh
Han, Jessie	Stein, Julie
Hunn, Gene	Storm, Linda
Hutchings, Rich	Vouri, Mike
Jessie, Piper	Weiser, Andrea
Knox, Margaret	Wilber, Ed
Kramer, Stephanie,	Williams, Scott
Lape, Peter	Wilson, Doug

3) What research is needed to build a regional understanding of the origins and changes in Northwest prairies over the Holocene?

- Needs and Goals
 - Inventory of prairies
 - Common data bank on prairies
 - Paleoenvironmental data (future GIS goal)
- Challenges
 - Ownership: private and public
 - Management/Maintenance
 - Methods might have undesirable secondary impacts (e.g., smoke)
- Funding of interdisciplinary work

Group Members

Agee, Jim	Labbe, Ted
Alverson, Ed	Peter, Dave
Bach, Andy	Spooner, Alecia
Graham, Stan	Sprenger, Carson
Hopey, Mark	Thrush, Coll
Kamkoff, Josie	Walsh, Megan

4) Can research on Northwest prairies contribute to the understanding of fundamental interactions among and within ecological, human and cultural system? Are these ideas worth pursuing in the current funding arena?

- Yes! Importance and challenge of being inclusive
 - Identifying the constituents
 - How to “get the word out”
 - Importance of collaboration
 - Difficulties of collaboration (language, data sets, etc....)
 - Opening up the “research” process
- Uncertainty about human role in ecosystems
 - Disagreements about management
 - Importance of research to resolve
- Collaborative and cross-disciplinary research is highly fundable
- Prairies are a natural for these kinds of studies (e.g., need for restoration)
- Why are prairies so interesting? And why now?

Group Members

Almaguer-Bay, Mitchell	Lambert, Amy
Burtchard, Greg	Lepofsky, Dana
Compton, Brian	Lertzman, Ken
Dunn, Patrick	Rombold, John
Heckman, Anna	Shebitz, Daniela

RESPONSE: WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN ASSESSMENT OF FUTURE
RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Agee, Jim
Almaguer-Bay, Mictchell
Alverson, Ed
Bach, Andy
Barsh, Russel
Burtchard, Greg
Chappell, Chris
Chaney, Marty
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Dunn, Patrick
Ferry, Jackie
Fisher, Jacob
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