

Project Summary
Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Natural Resource Condition Assessments: Fort Laramie National Historic Site, Agate Fossil Beds National Monument, Scotts Bluff National Monument, and Badlands National Park

Discipline: Natural
Type of Project: Technical Assistance
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: University of Wyoming
Effective Dates: 9/1/2014 - 5/31/2017
Funding Amount: \$253,128

Investigators and Agency Representative:

NPS Contact: Kara Paintner-Green, Northern Great Plains I&M Network, National Park Service, 231 East Saint Joseph Street, Rapid City, SD 57701, Tel: 605-341-2807, Fax: 605-341-7192, kara_paintner@nps.gov

Investigator: Nicole Korfanta, Director, Ruckelshaus Institute of Environment and Natural Resources, 1000 E. University Ave., Dept. 3971, University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY 82071, (307) 766-5306, korfanta@uwyo.edu

Gary Beauvais, Director, Wyoming Natural Diversity Database, 1000 E. University Ave., Dept. 3381, University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY 82071, 307-766-3027, beauvais@uwyo.edu

Project Abstract: In collaboration with the National Park Service, the University of Wyoming, Ruckelshaus Institute of Environment and Natural Resources and the Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (WYNDD) propose the following Scope of Work to produce Natural Resource Condition Assessments (NRCAs) for four NPS units: Fort Laramie National Historic Site, Agate Fossil Beds National Monument, Scotts Bluff National Monument, and Badlands National Park. The assessments are a part of an ongoing effort by the National Park Service to evaluate the status of conditions in the parks, identify important threats and stressors to critical resources, and identify data gaps. Principal investigators will include Dr. Nicole Korfanta, an ecologist and director of the Ruckelshaus Institute of Environment and Natural Resources, and Dr. Gary Beauvais, an ecologist and director of the Wyoming Natural Diversity Database.

The goal of the NRCAs will be to provide park leaders and resource managers with information to support near-term planning and management, long-term strategic planning, and effective science communication to decision-makers and the public on resource conditions. To achieve that goal, we will design and lead a process for completing NRCAs for four NPS units. For each unit, we will:

- Use a collaborative approach to tailor analyses to park-specific needs and opportunities;
- Identify the unique biophysical and cultural resources of management interest;
- Identify existing data (and critical data gaps) and available expert knowledge for understanding and assessing park resources;
- Use a spatially explicit analytic approach to evaluate the current conditions of resources, trends in their status, and drivers of change.

Keywords: Northern Great Plains I&M Network, National Park Service, University of Wyoming, Natural Resource Condition Assessment