

## **Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center (NPWRC): Northern Plains Domain**

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**Location within Domain:** Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center (NPWRC) is affiliated with the United States Geological Survey. It is geographically located in the heart of the northern prairie region, with main offices located in Jamestown, North Dakota.

**History:** NPWRC was officially opened on September 18, 1965. During its 40+ year history, NPWRC scientists have earned an international reputation for leadership and expertise on the biology of waterfowl and grassland birds, wetland ecology and classification, mammal behavior and ecology, and grassland management. Through time, new tools such as computer modeling, remote sensing, and use of geographic information systems have become an integral part of the Center's research program.

**Key Characteristics:** The NPWRC provides the scientific information needed to conserve and manage the nation's biological resources, with an emphasis on the species and ecosystems of the nation's interior. The research program at the Center is unique in that scientific projects are typically long-term and geographically extensive efforts to address large problems through a series of conceptually linked studies.

**Existing Infrastructure:** NPWRC's Cottonwood Lake Study Area is located in the Missouri Coteau 35 miles northwest of Jamestown and is composed of 17 wetlands on a 200-acre Waterfowl Production Area. This intensively instrumented wetland complex has been the site of cooperative studies involving Northern Prairie, the USGS Water Resources Discipline, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation, and several universities. The project goal is an ecosystem-level understanding of the dynamics and interrelationships among water chemistry, hydrology, climate, soils, and the biota of a prairie wetland complex.

**Facilities:** The headquarters of NPWRC consists of two office buildings (Main and Riverside), a modern aquatics laboratory, a laboratory-freezer building, a combination dormitory-laboratory building, two shop buildings, several equipment storage buildings, carnivore holding pens, two residences, and 20 experimental ponds. The main building contains a Geographical Information Systems (GIS) laboratory and a research library. The Riverside Building contains a research herbarium and a modern 4,000-ft<sup>2</sup> wet laboratory with state-of-the-art equipment to support the Center's wetland research program. The laboratory features exhaust hoods for work with aquatic invertebrates and water chemistry, work space to accommodate up to 14 laboratory technicians, and invertebrate keying stations with high-quality dissection scopes. In addition, there is a data entry room equipped with a fire-proof data safe, a weighing room that houses drying ovens, desiccators, and analytical balances, an experimental room equipped with 100 aquaria and day length and temperature control, and wash and sample prep rooms.