

Project Highlight – SD State Wildlife Grant

Project Type Inventory

Title Herpetology Surveys for South Dakota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan

In a nutshell State Wildlife Grants funding presented a great opportunity to collect baseline information on poorly-studied reptile and amphibian species. Ten priority habitats were surveyed, with an emphasis on herptiles that were state listed or species of conservation concern.

Relevant Species of Greatest Conservation Need

- Blanding's Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*)
 - False Map Turtle (*Graptemys pseudogeographica*)
 - Lined Snake (*Tropidoclonion lineatum*)
 - Eastern Hognose Snake (*Heterodon platirhinos*)
 - Black Hills Redbelly Snake (*Storeria occipitomaculata pahasapa*)
 - Cope's Gray Treefrog (*Hyla chrysoscelis*)
 - Smooth Softshell (*Apalone mutica*)
 - Western Box Turtle (*Terrepenne ornata*)
 - Lesser Earless Lizard (*Holbrookia maculata*)
 - Northern Cricket Frog (*Acris crepitans*)
 - Many-lined Skink (*Eumeces multivirgatus*)
 - Short-horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma hernandesi*)
- **Relevant Habitats**
- Sand dune and wetland habitats in Gregory, Tripp, Todd, Bennett and Shannon counties
 - Sagebrush habitats in western South Dakota, Fall River, Butte, and Harding counties
 - Black Hills
 - Prairie coteau and northeast South Dakota wetlands and streams
 - Wetland habitats along the Missouri River
 - River systems of eastern South Dakota including the James, Vermillion and Big Sioux rivers
 - River systems in western South Dakota
 - Buffalo Gap National Grassland; Grand River National Grassland; Fort Pierre National Grassland
 - Custer National Forest in Harding County and sand dune habitats in Harding and Perkins counties
 - Seasonal and temporary natural wetland basins (playas) in western South Dakota

Cooperators Ten contracted herpetologists

Purpose To survey ten priority habitats for all species of reptiles and amphibians to determine if species that were thought to be common were still common and to

determine the status of species that are thought to be rare or are listed as species of greatest conservation need in the South Dakota Wildlife Action Plan of 2006. Turtles were not a priority group since a statewide survey for turtle had just been completed, but field biologists did report many turtle records incidental to other herpetology surveys.

Timeframe September 2003 – January 2005

Summary or Important Findings

- A total of 1,773 records of amphibians and reptiles were generated during the project.
- Individual species accounts summarize locations and generalized habitat descriptions.

Best contact person Eileen Dowd Stukel, SDGFP

More Information

Backlund, D. 2004. South Dakota Statewide Herpetology Surveys. Final Report. South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks, Pierre, SD.