

**THE TALLGRASS PRAIRIE AND SAVANNA LAND MANAGEMENT AND RESEARCH
DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM 5-YEAR PLAN IN THE USFWS.**

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Abstract: The Land Management and Research Demonstration (LMRD) Program in the Midwest Region of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is focused on conservation and management of tallgrass prairies and savannas. It is a Center of Ecosystem and Habitat Excellence that is well integrated with the management of Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge (Neal Smith NWR). Neal Smith NWR is the LMRD home base and serves as the backdrop for demonstrating state-of-the-art ecosystem/habitat management for the FWS, conservation partners, and the general public. A newly completed 5-year plan describes priority research and innovation efforts that are needed to more effectively manage and conserve prairie and savanna. Needs were identified based on input from Neal Smith NWR, FWS and other prairie and savanna managers. Research to address these needs will be solicited from the research community and performed at Neal Smith NWR and other stations. New outreach strategies will include development of interactive experiences including workshops, webinars, field research demonstration, Research Reporting Symposia, and interpretive site visits beyond Neal Smith NWR. Independent learning tools will include self-guided tours of refuge demonstration sites, podcasts, a website, research “take home message” summaries for managers, Best Management Practices bulletins, and research publications and reports. Research and management information will be interjected into refuge educational and interpretive programs and can be exported for use in similar programs at other stations and outside the FWS. Examples of research and demonstration projects currently underway are provided in this presentation.