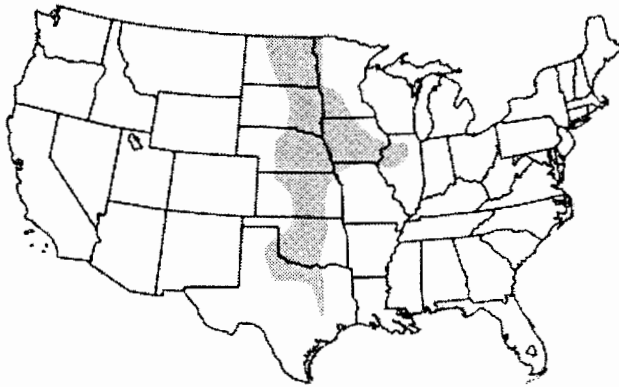


Great Plains Grassland - Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie



Physical Description:

The terrain is characterized by flat to rolling plains. Average annual precipitation ranges from 20 to 40 inches. Precipitation increases from west to east and is received primarily as summer rain and winter snow. Winters are cold, summers are hot.

Dominant Vegetation:

In undisturbed areas, climax vegetation in the Eastern Great Plains (or tallgrass prairie) is typically tall grasses such as various bluestems, Indian grass, and switchgrass. A variety of forbs are also found such as sunflowers, broomweed, ragweed, and lespedezas. Sedges, native plum, buttonbush, cottonwood, willow, and other shrubs and trees are often present in drainages, stream courses, and other moist areas.

The Central Great Plains (or mixed prairie area) consists of a mix of short, intermediate, and tall grasses. Tall grasses dominate moist sites such as flood plains and valleys. Dry sites such as hill tops and south facing slopes are characterized by shortgrass species. Transition sites (in-between areas) consist of a mixture of tall, mixed and short grasses. In addition to the grass species mentioned previously, bluegrasses, prairie sandreed, grama grasses and various dropseeds are found in this area. Drainages and other moist areas may have shrubs and trees such as native plum, buttonbush and cottonwood.

Within the entire Great Plains Grasslands Region there are large areas along major rivers and drainages dominated by trees and shrubs such as cottonwood, green ash, red maple, bur oak, American elm, box elder, eastern red cedar, and various willows. Due to the abundant vegetation and readily available water, these sites are very attractive to wildlife.

In the southeast part of the tallgrass prairie, a mixture of woodland dominated by post oak and blackjack oak exists on upland sites. This area is known as the Cross Timbers. It extends from northern Texas through central Oklahoma into Kansas.

Depressions (potholes), caused by glaciation in the north and closed drainages (playas) in the south, fill with water, creating numerous lakes, ponds, and other wetlands that are extremely valuable to wildlife. These wetlands, especially the smaller ones, are susceptible to periodic droughts.

Farming and Ranching:

Cultivated cropland dominates much of this region. Where precipitation is adequate or where irrigation is possible, large areas are planted into agricultural crops such as barley, wheat, milo, millet, flax, oats, mustard, corn, sunflowers, and alfalfa. In the eastern part of the great plains and other areas where soil is fertile, the main crops are wheat, sugar beets, corn, soybeans, sorghum, edible beans, and alfalfa.

Changes in farm machinery and management have produced large areas of cropland with little or no other types of vegetation available for use by wildlife. Recent irrigation water management techniques have reduced the amount of wetlands and riparian vegetation associated with irrigated crops. In the past, wetlands were drained or altered in some manner so crops could be grown.

Most of the native range is grazed by livestock except for a few locations where terrain is too rugged or water is unavailable.

Plant Succession Stages:

Stage 1 — bareground; Stage 2 — annual forbs and grasses; Stage 3 — perennial grasses and forbs; Stage 4 — shrubs occur most frequently on moist sites in mid and eastern areas, also found mixed with Stage 3 in western area; Stage 5 — young woodland; Stage 6 — mature woodland. Stages 5 and 6 are found along stream and river courses, and are more common in the eastern parts of the great plains. Stages 3 and/or 4 are usually the final stages of succession in this region except for the area known as the Cross Timbers in the southeast part of that region.

Species Recommended For Judging:

Brown thrasher	Wild turkey
Coyote	White-tailed deer
Eastern cottontail	Largemouth bass/
Grasshopper sparrow	Bluegill
Greater prairie chicken	
Mallard (breeding and winter habitat)	
Mourning dove	
Northern bobwhite	
Northern harrier	
Ring-necked pheasant	
Sharp-tailed grouse	

Great Plains Grassland- Tallgrass/Mixed Prairie

	Brown Thrasher	Coyote	Eastern Cottontail	Grasshopper Sparrow	Greater Prairie Chicken	Mallard (breeding)	Mallard (winter)	Mourning Dove	Northern Bobwhite	Northern Harrier	Ring-necked Pheasant	Sharp-tailed Grouse	Wild Turkey	White-tailed Deer	Largemouth Bass/Bluegill
2. Brush chopping (mowing)	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	
3. Brush piles			X						X						
4. Chaining/roller beating	X		X	X	X				X	X					
5. Controlled (prescribed) burning	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
6. Corridors	X												X	X	
8. Decrease bag/creel/season limit		X	X		X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
9. Disking								X	X				X		
10. Fertilize ponds															X
12. Fish (pond) or wildlife survey	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
14. Grain, leave unharvested					X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
15. Harvest timing (crops/hay)				X	X	X			X		X			X	
16. Increase bag/creel/season limit		X	X		X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
17. Livestock grazing management	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
18. Nesting boxes/structures/platforms						X		X							
19. Plant food plots			X					X	X		X	X	X	X	
20. Plant grass and forbs			X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	
21. Plant mast trees													X	X	
22. Plant trees or shrubs	X	X	X					X	X		X	X	X	X	
23. Ponds/lakes, artificial reefs															X
24. Ponds, clear muddy water															X
25. Pond construction						X	X	X			X	X		X	X
26. Ponds, diversion ditches															X
27. Ponds, deepen edges															X
28. Ponds, remove trees near dike						X	X	X			X	X		X	X
29. Ponds, repair spillway						X	X	X			X	X		X	X
30. Ponds, reseed watershed/filter strip															X
31. Ponds, restock															X
32. Ponds, stop leaks						X	X	X			X	X		X	X
34. Roosting platforms/perching poles										X					
36. Small dikes for temporary flooding						X	X								
40. Tillage, delay in spring					X	X					X	X			
41. Tillage, eliminate in fall					X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
44. Water control structures						X	X	X			X	X		X	X
45. Water developments for wildlife						X	X	X					X	X	
46. Wildlife damage management		X	X				X						X	X	