

**Bird Monitoring Protocol for Agate Fossil Beds National Monument,
Nebraska and Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve, Kansas**

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) # 10

Procedures and Equipment Storage After the Field Season

Version 1.00 (July 18, 2003)

Revision History Log:

Previous Version #	Revision Date	Author	Changes Made	Reason for Change	New Version #

This Standard Operating Procedure explains procedures that all field observers using the Bird Monitoring Protocol for Agate Fossil Beds National Monument, Nebraska and Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve, Kansas should be familiar with and follow after the field season is completed.

Procedures:

1. Clean and repair all equipment prior to returning them to their proper storage areas in the Prairie Cluster Prototype Long-term Ecological Monitoring Program (PC-LTEM) I&M building or the PC-LTEM storage building. All reference manuals should be re-shelved on their appropriate bookshelf. Other reference materials and extra data sheets need to be filed in their appropriate filing cabinet. Clean the insides and outsides of all vehicles used in the field.
2. Organize field data sheets and check that they have been filled out completely. As a rule, all data sheets need to be reviewed for completeness before the crew leaves the field. However, because of the number of field days and crewmembers, some deficiencies in data recording may not be identified until all data sheet have been organized and reviewed as a group (e.g. when habitat work has inadvertently been missed for a plot).
3. Identify and obtain ancillary data. It is of critical importance that this data be incorporated into the bird monitoring efforts. First and foremost, knowledge of management efforts in a park for that year (i.e. controlled burns and cattle grazing) will be used to assess the effects of these efforts on the habitat and birds present. Secondly, vegetation data collected by the PC-LTEM will assist in evaluating habitat types and may give an indication as to why the presence or absence of a bird species was observed. Certain plants may be utilized for food, cover or nesting differently by different birds thus altering the bird communities observed. Climate can also influence bird numbers, both directly and indirect. Excess precipitation can disrupt nesting success while drought conditions may limit plant growth thus food and cover availability for young. Therefore, annual climate data will be obtained from the park weather

station (Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve) or from a region wide climatic database on the inter-net.

4. At the end of each field trip, file a trip report with the data manager outlining hours worked, field-crew members and their responsibilities on the project, and any unique situations encountered. This information is incorporated in the database and used during data analysis. This information is critical for identifying causes for discrepancies and inconsistencies in the data. The project manager is responsible for filing all field report.