



## **News Release**

### **Ecosystem Management Research Institute Awarded a Conservation Innovation Grant for Grassland Restoration from the Natural Resource Conservation Service**

July 17, 2009

This week, Secretary of Agriculture Vilsack announced the recipients of the 2009 Natural Resource Conservation Service National Conservation Innovation Grants. The Ecosystem Management Research Institute (EMRI) of Seeley Lake, Montana was awarded a grant of \$650,000 for a project entitled Coordinated Restoration of Native Grasslands Using Innovative Practices. The project will be conducted over the next three years with the objective of implementing coordinated and collaborative grassland restoration in South Dakota and Nebraska. It will also help implement the Grassland Conservation Plan for Prairie Grouse developed by the North American Grouse Partnership. Matching funds to the NRCS grant will be provided by South Dakota Department of Game, Fish, and Parks, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, and Pheasants Forever. Additional partners on the project include the US Fish and Wildlife Service Partners Program, South Dakota Grassland Coalition, the North American Grouse Partnership, the Teddy Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, Ducks Unlimited, and The Nature Conservancy.

The project will implement a grassland restoration program that addresses restoration objectives identified in South Dakota and Nebraska Wildlife Action Plans as well as the Grassland Conservation Plan for Prairie Grouse. It will use NRCS ecological sites as a basis to develop specifically desired native grassland restoration conditions, and will use innovative combinations of management practices and grazing prescriptions to produce the desired restoration. The project will restore 4-8,000 acres of native grasslands in South Dakota and Nebraska and will serve as a pilot to demonstrate how cooperating agencies, organizations, and agricultural producers can restore native grasslands.

For additional information about the project, contact: Jonathan Haufler, Executive Director, Ecosystem Management Research Institute, Seeley Lake, MT 59868, 406-677-0247, [Jon\\_Haufler@emri.org](mailto:Jon_Haufler@emri.org).