



**Shortgrass Steppe  
Long Term Ecological Research**

Information for Researchers and Visitors

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Updated 21 April 2009

Additional copies of this guide may be obtained from the SGS LTER website:

[http://sgslter.colostate.edu/Researchers\\_info.aspx](http://sgslter.colostate.edu/Researchers_info.aspx)

## **Contacts**

CSU SGS Field Station Addresses:

### North Side

SGS LTER Headquarters  
14791 Weld County Rd. 114  
Nunn, Colorado 80648  
970-897-2210

### South Side

SGS Research & Interpretive Center (R&IC)  
14698 Weld County Rd. 114  
Nunn, CO 80648  
970-897-2276

### **LTER Field Research Staff**

Mark Lindquist, Site Manager  
970-897-2210 (North Side HQ)  
970-213-9576 (cell)  
970-897-2217 (North Side house)  
970-897-2276 (South Side R&IC)  
[Mark.Lindquist@colostate.edu](mailto:Mark.Lindquist@colostate.edu)

### **LTER Administrative Staff**

Sallie Sprague, Project Manager  
970-491-2366 (campus)  
NESB A311 (office: 9 am-3pm M-F)  
[Sallie.Sprague@colostate.edu](mailto:Sallie.Sprague@colostate.edu)

Carolyn Schultz, Administrative Assistant  
970-491-4996 (campus)  
NESB A317 (office: 11:30-3:30 M,W)  
[Carolyn.Schultz@colostate.edu](mailto:Carolyn.Schultz@colostate.edu)

Nicole Kaplan, Information Manager  
970-491-1147 (campus)  
970-416-7726 (home)  
NESB A315  
[Nicole.Kaplan@colostate.edu](mailto:Nicole.Kaplan@colostate.edu)

Bob Flynn, IT/GIS  
970-491-6832 (campus)  
Shepardson 7 (office: after 1 pm)  
[Robert.Flynn@colostate.edu](mailto:Robert.Flynn@colostate.edu)

### **Other Important Numbers**

Field Crew Cell Phone: 970-213-9646  
Mary Ashby, ARS-CPER Site Manager: 970-897-2226  
CSU Motor Pool: 970-491-0116, 491-0172, or 491-0016 (Sandy Gilbert)

### **SGS Web Page**

<http://sgslter.colostate.edu>

**For agency and emergency numbers, see page 23 of this document.**

## **Campus Headquarters**

Administrative offices of the SGS-LTER Project Manager and Administrative Assistant are located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Natural and Environmental Sciences Building (NESB), rooms A311 and A317. SGS-LTER project posters, staff mailboxes, FAX, photocopier and power point projector are available for use.

Information Management and IT/GIS staff are located in both NESB A315 and the SGS-LTER satellite offices in the basement of the Shepardson building, room 7. Archived materials, computer laboratory and a small conference area are located in Shepardson.

Various laboratory facilities are available on campus through SGS-LTER and the Natural Resources Ecology Laboratory (NREL). Special arrangements need to be made for use. Contact Sallie Sprague for information.

## **Information Technology**

### ***Mapping a network drive to the LTER server***

**\*\*You must first request a ‘user’ or ‘project’ folder from Nicole Kaplan or Bob Flynn. Criteria and rules for user and project folders are described on the following pages.\*\***

**You must have Windows 2000, XP, or Vista as your operating system in order to access the ASCALON server (Mac users, please contact Bob Flynn at 491-6832). Follow these steps to map to Ascalon:**

Open Windows Explorer Select **Tools>Map Network Drive**, or right click on My Computer and select **Map Network Drive**.

In the **Map network drive** dialogue box enter these values:

Drive: (enter any letter drive, preferably one you can keep using)

Folder: [\\ascalon.cas.colostate.edu\lter](http://ascalon.cas.colostate.edu/lter)

Reconnect at Logon: (You can check this box if you wish and the computer will prompt you for your eID username and password to automatically map to ascalon when you first logon to your computer.)

Click **Connect using a different username** and enter these values in the dialogue box:

Username: colostate\*eidname*

Password: *eidpassword*

Where *eidname* is your CSU EID username (for example ssprague, not sallie.sprague) and *eidpassword* is your CSU EID password

Click **OK** and then **Finish**

In Windows Explorer you will now see on this mapped drive two main subfolders, “users” and “projects”. Click the “users” folder and you will see all user folders including yours.

*(Here's an explanation for the extra work in case you are interested...*

*We are now working within the university domain, so we need to use our eID username and password. In addition, we need to indicate that our username is part of the CSU domain that's why we need to type colostate\ before our username.)*

### ***Rules for using the LTER server***

1. All users must follow the acceptable uses for computing and networking at CSU. This policy can be found at <http://www.colostate.edu/Services/acns/aup.html>.
2. Do not read or copy files from other people's directories without permission.
3. Only work on LTER related data may be stored on the server. Please check your home department for back- up of non-lter files.

### ***Permissions to access directories and files on the SGS Server***

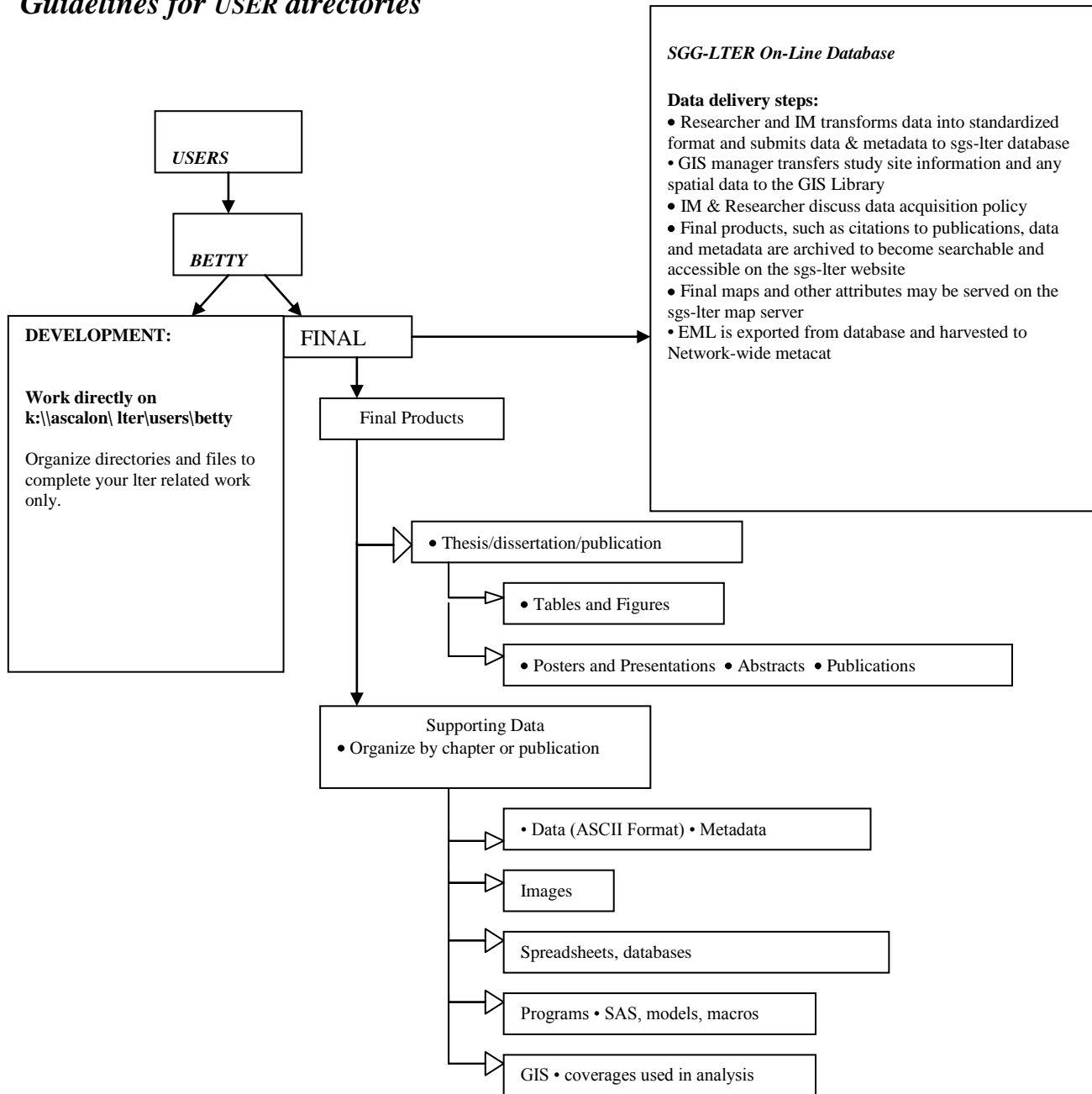
All lter users are part of a general group of users that has permission to navigate through every directory, and read and copy files inside. Thus, be aware that the default settings allow any other user to read and copy files in your user folder, but not edit them. We suggest that you store confidential correspondence, strategic planning documents, financial disclosures, and personal files off the server. The lter database and file organization has been managed this way in the past and we have never had a problem. The benefit is that information managers and staff that are part of the lter group, may find data and information to work with, even when a PI is away

from his or her office. The original files are protected because other users may only copy a file, not alter it. In addition, other users may not paste a file into your directory. If necessary, you can alter the default protection settings on files and folders to prevent other users from reading or copying them. *Call your IM staff to show you how to make these changes (Nicole, 491-1147 or, Bob 491-6832).*

## Server Organization

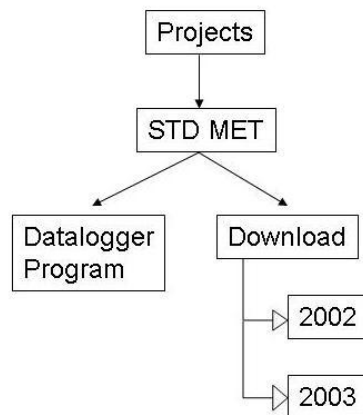
The LTER work areas on ASCALON are divided into 2 categories. One area supports the work of individual USERS, where each lter user has his or her own directory. The other area contains directories that organize and store information for PROJECTS, which a few users may access and work on together as a group.

## Guidelines for USER directories



## ***Guidelines for PROJECT directories***

- Communicate with your group members to establish a ***naming convention for files***. File names should reflect the date and site from which the data are collected. Example: 5b052803.dat  
The data contained in this data file were collected from site 5b on May 28, 2003.
- Communicate with your group members to establish rules for ***version control***. Example: cr21x\_program.dld is the program you used when you installed the data logger in 2002. Then, you had to reprogram the data logger because you added some new equipment, but you want to keep track of the old program to correspond with older data. So, save the new program as cr21x\_program2.dld. *OR* You have a grant proposal that is being edited by group members. Met equip\_nek1.doc was then edited by Bob, so the new file should be named met equip\_bob2.doc. The final file that is submitted should reflect that in the file name, met equipf.doc.
- Create ***journals or logs*** using Microsoft Notepad or WordPad. In the digital journal, keep track of equipment problems and calibrations, changes in protocols, etc.
- Create ***separate folders for data and programs***. ***Organize data by year***, as shown from an example on the Ascalon server:



- This is a good place to share files with your colleagues, instead of attempting to send large files over e-mail.

## ***LTER Data Access Policy***

The SGS-LTER follows the LTER Data Access Policy to categorize access to data:

- 1) There are two types of data: Type I (data that is freely available within 2-3 years of processing) with minimum restrictions regarding its use by others and, Type II (Exceptional data sets that are available only with written permission from the PI/investigator(s)). Implied in this timetable, is the assumption that some data sets require more effort to get on-line and that no "blanket policy" is going to cover all data sets at all sites. However, each site would pursue getting all of their data on-line in the most expedient fashion possible.
- 2) The number of data sets that are assigned TYPE II status should be rare in occurrence and that the justification for exceptions must be well documented and approved by the lead PI and site data manager. Some examples of Type II data may include: locations of rare or endangered species, data that are covered by copyright laws (e.g. TM and/or SPOT satellite data) or some types of census data involving human subjects.

Please use the following tag line in reports or manuscripts when using data from the SGS-LTER: Data sets were provided by the Shortgrass Steppe Long Term Ecological Research group, a partnership

between Colorado State University, United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, and the U.S. Forest Service Pawnee National Grassland. Significant funding for these data was provided by the National Science Foundation Long Term Ecological Research program (NSF Grant Number DEB-0823405).

## **Field Headquarters (SGS-LTER)**

The facilities on the Shortgrass Steppe are expanding. The existing SGS-LTER buildings lie to the north of WCR 114. The facilities to the south of WCR 114 comprise the Shortgrass Steppe Research and Interpretive Center (R&IC). They include a classroom/meeting room and two housing units. As of this writing the South Side facilities are available for limited use. Potable water is NOT yet available at the R&IC. The on-line version of this information booklet will be updated when the South Side facilities are in full operation. See <http://sgslter.colostate.edu/visitors.aspx> for additional visitor information.

### ***Facilities and their use: North Side***

Our facilities are shared by all researchers, however, the SGS-LTER Field Crew has priority for facilities during the field season. Notify the Site Manager before any visitors are scheduled to arrive. Visitors, please leave emergency contact information with the Site Manager upon your arrival. **No pets are allowed at the field station. Please leave our facilities in the same, or better, condition than you found them.**

#### **Dormitory**

There are six rooms, each with sink, heater, up to three beds, small dresser, and suite bathrooms (shower & toilet). If you plan to stay in the dorms you need to schedule your stay and check out keys with Mark Lindquist (970-897-2210). Bring your own linens, or fitted sheet and sleeping bag.

Residents are expected to maintain their dorm area while they are on site:

- Keep the bathroom clean and stocked with paper goods.
- Remove trash weekly.
- Make sure door is completely closed at night or when the room is unoccupied.
- Sweep and mop floors weekly.
- Quiet time at the station is from 10 pm to 7 am.
- Replace light bulbs with 60 watt or less.

#### **Kitchen**

A fully-equipped kitchen in the main building contains a stove/oven, microwave, pots/pans, dishes and refrigerator. Cleaning supplies are located in the kitchen closet. Visitors-in-residence are responsible for the propane supply. Instructions are located next to the propane tank. Talk with Mark Lindquist for assistance.

The kitchen is a shared facility. Please respect the instructions below so that all residents are able to use the kitchen during their visit.:

- Immediately wash, dry and put dishes away after each use.
- Keep counters, stove, microwave, refrigerator, and toaster clean.
- Sweep and mop floors weekly.
- Frequently take the trash out to the dumpster.
- Keep kitchen door locked over night.
- Keep food and cooking utensils out of the way.
- Recycle weekly!
- Replenish propane supply.

## Conference Room

The conference area in the main building contains tables, chairs, black board and projection screen. It has a capacity of approximately 40. There are two adjacent restrooms. Restock with paper products when needed.

## Laboratory

Sinks, bench space, drying oven, balance and other miscellaneous equipment is available. Contact the Site Manager to arrange for their use. A first aid kit is located in the lab.

Users of the Conference Room, Computer Room and Laboratory should plan to share the following tasks:

Sweep and mop floors weekly.

Weekly remove the trash from the cans around the station.

Wipe off counter and table tops when necessary.

Keep bathrooms clean and re-stock with paper goods.

## Computer Lab **\*\*\*THE LAB IS NOT AVAILABLE DURING CONVECTIVE STORMS!\*\*\***

Adjacent to the conference room, the computer lab contains four computers with internet access via Internet Explorer and access to CSU e-mail accounts. Major software includes Microsoft Word XP, Access XP, Outlook XP, Photo Editor 3.0, PowerPoint XP, Publisher 2000, Excel XP and Adobe Acrobat 3.01. You may map a network drive to the SGS-LTER server as if you were on campus (see page 5). The server provides a centralized location for your files. Files on the computers in the field station lab *are not backed up* with the exception of this folder on the CPER20 computer: C:\Data\Field Work Data\CRITICAL\_DATA. Save your data here if you wish it to be backed up nightly.

**TURN ALL COMPUTERS OFF DURING CONVECTIVE STORMS, i.e., WITH LIGHTENING.**

Respect the working space of the SGS-LTER field crew and graduate students. They have priority over use of the computers and any reference materials. Take turns using the computers and limit yourself to ten minutes. **Do not download any material under any circumstances. Do not move any cables or alter configuration of computers, printer, router or wireless hub.** To log on to the computer:

Username: sgslder

Password: pawnee

### Instructions for Hardwire Connections

1. Open your local area network settings as follows:  
Click **Start>Control Panel>Network Settings**  
Double Click **Local Area Connections**
2. Click the General Tab and Double Click **Internet Protocol (TCP/IP)**
3. In the properties dialog click these options

**Obtain an IP Address Automatically**

**Obtain DNS server automatically**

### Instructions for Wireless Connections

1. Open your wireless network settings as follows:  
Click **Start>Control Panel>Network Settings**  
Double Click **Wireless Network Connections**
2. Click **View Wireless Networks**
3. Double Click **sgslder** network box
4. Enter this network key (and in confirm box too):

**16AB845E0C** (Note the 0 is numeric zero)

5. Click **Connect**

**You should be connected now. NOTE YOU WILL ONLY NEED TO RUN THE ABOVE STEPS ONCE. Afterwards your wireless will connect automatically.**

## **Instructions for Connecting to HP Color Printer**

1. Go to Printer/Fax Connections (**Start>ControlPanel>Printers/Faxes**).
2. Select **Add a Printer** on left side.
3. In dialog box select **Next** then select **Network Printer or Printer attached to another Computer**.
4. Click **Next**.
5. Select **Connect to this Printer** and enter:

\\cper23\HP Officejet 5600 series

6. Select **Next** then Accept driver installation and click OK to make default if desired.
7. Click **Finish**.
8. Printer will be listed as **HP Officejet 5600 series on CPER 23** on your computer.

## **Library**

The library area contains a small collection of field guides, archived reports and other information.

Permission from the site manager is required for use of maps, books, field guides, or publications. Please handle materials with care and keep cabinets closed.

## **Reference Collection**

The reference collection consists of plants, small mammal study skins, bones, scat, dental impressions, insects, reptiles, amphibians and slides. A dissecting microscope, plant presses and boards for pinning insects are available.

Contact the Site Manager for access to these items. Please treat them gently so they will be available in the future.

## **Tools and equipment**

Some tools and equipment are available; check them out from the Site Manager.

## **Garage**

Located between the main building and dormitories, the garage has limited space for work and storage. Do not park in front of the garage or dumpsters.

Please contact the Site Manager before storing samples in the garage.

## **Telecommunications**

The telephone is for local calls only. Use a calling card or your cell phone for long distance calls.

## **Mail and packages**

The site address may be used to receive letters and parcels. Items are delivered to the site mailbox that is not close to the station. Mail will be collected and brought to the field station by the Site Manager. Please let him know ahead of time about any anticipated packages, particularly non-postal service items that may arrive at times other than the normal daily delivery. Please ask friends and family to stop mailing items well before you leave the station so items don't arrive after you depart, or give the Nunn post office forwarding information.

## **Parking**

Please park to the east of the office. Spaces immediately adjacent to the buildings are limited and used for loading and unloading and short term parking. Do not park in front of dumpster or garage doors.

## ***Facilities and their use: South Side (SGS Research & Interpretive Center)***

A classroom/meeting room is available to accommodate 100 participants.

Two housing units have been completed. Each has a kitchen, bedrooms, baths and small gathering areas. A third unit should be under construction soon.

Initially, these new buildings will not have any computers available for general use. However, wireless access and direct ethernet high-speed connections are available in the buildings for those who have their own notebooks or other mobile computers. In the future, we expect to have desktop and notebook computers available for researches and visitors.

### **Instructions for Wireless Connections (from any building on the southside.)**

1. Open your wireless network settings as follows:  
Click **Start>Control Panel>Network Settings**  
Double Click **Wireless Network Connections**
2. Click **View Wireless Networks**
3. Double Click **sgs\_lter** network box
4. Enter this network key (and in confirm box too):

**gopher\_hole**

5. Click **Connect**

**You should be connected now. NOTE YOU WILL ONLY NEED TO RUN THE ABOVE STEPS ONCE. Afterwards your wireless will connect automatically.**

### **Site Use Policies**

#### ***ARS regulations for all non-US citizens visiting or working at the CPER***

Agricultural Research Service (ARS) requires that information on all non-US citizens coming to their facilities be collected and maintained for review. Therefore, ALL non-US citizens visiting or working with the Shortgrass Steppe Long-Term Ecological Research (SGS-LTER) on the Central Plains Experimental Range (CPER) must follow certain procedures regarding their presence. There are no exceptions. Whether you are a visitor or a worker will be defined by your length of stay.

VISITORS are defined as any non-U.S. citizen spending less than 10 days on the CPER, whether going to SGS-LTER headquarters and/or any research plots, and s/he must sign a registry at the SGS-LTER headquarters EACH TIME upon arrival and departure. For any visitor staying in the SGS-LTER field site dormitories, the registry must be signed each time that person leaves the CPER and returns.

WORKERS are defined as anyone spending more than 10 days on the CPER, whether working or touring, and need to have documentation submitted BEFORE actually arriving on the CPER. All non-US citizen workers must fill out the current Non-Citizen's Data Sheet (ARS 230) as completely as possible and email to Sallie Sprague ([Sallie.Sprague@colostate.edu](mailto:Sallie.Sprague@colostate.edu)) prior to arrival in Colorado. Since the form is under revision, non-citizens should contact Sallie well before their planned visit to the SGS-LTER and the CPER to receive a copy of the most current version. Sallie must submit this form to the ARS at least 45 but not more than 90 BUSINESS days prior to arrival on the CPER; 45 business days is about NINE weeks prior to arrival.

Once at Colorado State University, and prior to "working" on the CPER, please make an appointment with Sallie Sprague (970-491-2366) to bring Visa, Passport or Green Card., I-94 or any other supporting

documentation regarding entrance into the U.S. to her office, A311 Natural and Environmental Sciences Building, Colorado State University. Additional information will be added to the electronic file previously sent. The ARS 230 form will then be submitted to the appropriate ARS personnel. An amended ARS 230 will need to be provided anytime any information changes or the worker's status changes, i.e. leaves the CPER, etc.

The requirement for the visitor registry and the worker ARS 230 is a mandate of the USDA-ARS Office of Homeland Security. Failure to comply will result in non-citizens being unable to work/visit the CPER. If you have any questions, please contact [Sallie.Sprague@colostate.edu](mailto:Sallie.Sprague@colostate.edu).

## ***CPER protocols***

### **Research project approval**

ARS requires submission and approval of a proposed research description prior to the initiation of new experiments on the CPER. Forms are found at:

<http://sgslter.colostate.edu/ars>

Please contact the ARS Site Manager for any questions regarding the approval process:

Mary Ashby  
970-897-2226

[Mary.Ashby@ars.usda.gov](mailto:Mary.Ashby@ars.usda.gov)

### **Prior to traveling to the CPER**

*Site Managers must be notified whenever you visit the site!*

Contact **both** Mark Lindquist (LTER Site Manager, 970-897-2210, [Mark.Lindquist@colostate.edu](mailto:Mark.Lindquist@colostate.edu)) and Mary Ashby (ARS Site Manager, 970-897-2226, [Mary.Ashby@ars.usda.gov](mailto:Mary.Ashby@ars.usda.gov)), with destination, approximate departure and return times and description of the vehicle you will be driving.

As a safety precaution, e-mail your destination, approximate departure and return times, and cell phone number to your immediate supervisor **and** Sallie Sprague ([Sallie.Sprague@colostate.edu](mailto:Sallie.Sprague@colostate.edu)) before you leave campus. This is of great help to you and us in the event you need to be located for emergencies.

## ***Greater PNG Protocols***

### **Research project approval**

The Forest Service is presently compiling research authorization forms, similar to those required by ARS for work on the CPER. Before initiating a project on the greater PNG, you must contact the Forest Service:

Beth Humphrey  
USDA-FS Pawnee National Grasslands  
660 "O" Street  
Greeley, CO 80631  
[ehumphrey@fs.fed.us](mailto:ehumphrey@fs.fed.us)  
970-346-5000

### **Prior to traveling to the PNG**

Contact Beth Humphrey ([ehumphrey@fs.fed.us](mailto:ehumphrey@fs.fed.us)), if you plan to drive on secondary roads (not county roads) or traverse the site on foot, with *date* you will visit the site, a *description* of the vehicle you will be driving and your approximate *destinations*.

As a safety precaution, e-mail your destination, approximate departure and return times, and cell phone number to your immediate supervisor **and** Sallie Sprague ([Sallie.Sprague@colostate.edu](mailto:Sallie.Sprague@colostate.edu)) before you leave campus. This is of great help to you and us in the event you need to be located for emergencies.

If you are planning on using an LTER vehicle, use the reservation system at [http://www.sgslter.colostate.edu/vehicle\\_reservations.aspx](http://www.sgslter.colostate.edu/vehicle_reservations.aspx).

### **Off-road usage**

If you are planning on driving off the county roads onto any secondary PNG road, you must first obtain permission. Driving off 2-track roads is not permitted, except in pre-approved instances. See pages 20 and 21 for specific ARS and FS guidelines.

### **Cell phone coverage**

For safety reasons, please consider carrying a cell phone. Be aware that coverage is limited, particularly on the eastern PNG. ATT Cingular and Verizon have comparable coverage; Sprint has no coverage in the Briggsdale area. There is no coverage whatsoever in the Grover area. (coverage information as of 3/06) Coverage may be better at the top of a rise, as opposed to a lower landscape position.

### **Fuel stops**

There are two gas stations in Ault and three in Wellington. Please fill vehicles when gas gauge shows the tank is half full. See page 16 for addresses.

The *only* gas station between Ault and Sterling is in Briggsdale (AgLand, 38657 Highway 14), **and it is not always open! Please plan accordingly!** The station accepts the university fuel card, **but only at one pump**. If you're not certain which pump to use, check with the station attendant.

### **Sampling/collecting protocols**

Soil: Ground disturbances larger than 1 m<sup>2</sup> require an archaeological survey and other permits which may take several months to obtain. Permission must be obtained to sample using the probe truck (hydraulic sampling device), even though the surface disturbance is small, because it is used off-road.

Rock, Minerals, Fossils: Rock, mineral and fossil collecting on USFS lands requires a permit. Although collecting for personal use is allowed in most districts and permitting is usually free, collecting rules may vary.

Antiquities: The American Antiquities Act (1906) prohibits the removal or destruction of archaeological sites or objects without a permit. Please do not remove arrowheads, chipping debris, etc. or disturb any feature that may be a fire ring, etc.

Flora: Permission may be required prior to collection of plant material. Contact the appropriate Site Manager.

Fauna: Permits are required for all animals, including dead carcasses and feathers from endangered bird species. A scientific collection license may be issued for temporary or permanent possession of wildlife. Applicants must apply on forms provided by the Division of Wildlife at least 30 days prior to the anticipated need for such a permit. See <http://wildlife.state.co.us/RulesRegs/Regulations/>. For bird work, permits are required by both the DOW and US Fish & Wildlife Service. See <http://www.fws.gov/permits/>.

### **Miscellaneous**

Keep a road map with you at all times and be able to communicate your location to emergency responders.

Implement "Leave no Trace" practices. Prepare for emergencies, dispose of waste properly, leave what you find, minimize your impacts.

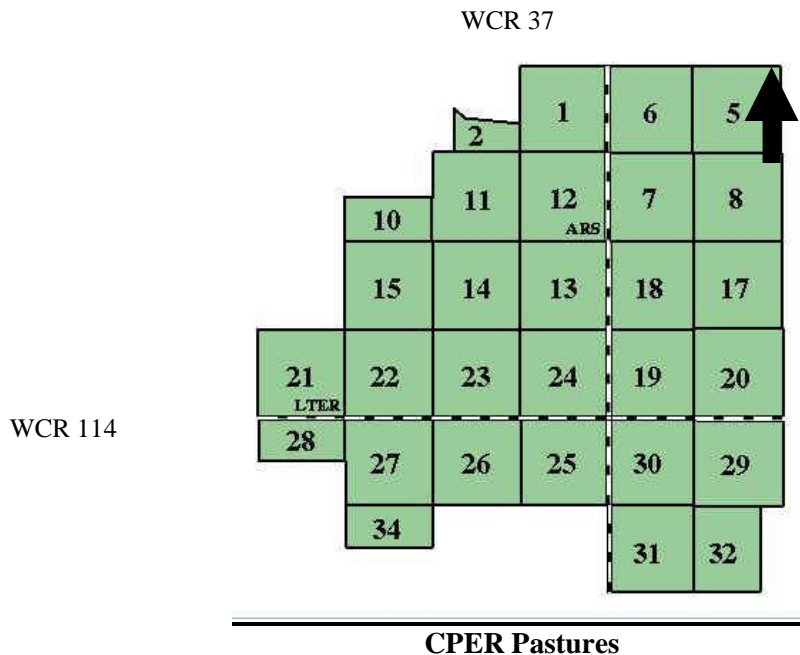
Leave gates how you find them. Do not block their access.

## Vehicle Management

### *Driving directions to CPER from CSU*

SGS-LTER Field Station  
14791 Weld County Rd. 114  
Nunn, Colorado 80648  
(Drive time: 45 minutes; Distance: 45 km)

1. North (left) on College Ave. out of the University
2. East (right) on Mulberry
3. Take I25 North towards Cheyenne, WY
4. Take Wellington Exit
5. Turn right at stop sign and make second left onto I-25 frontage road, immediately after interstate on-ramp
6. Make next right (east) onto Nunn Rd, (also Larimer County Rd 64 and Weld County Rd 100)
7. Continue for approx. 11 miles to stop sign in Nunn and turn North (left)
8. Continue North on Highway 85 for approx. 7 miles
9. Turn East (right) on Weld County Rd 114, at entrance of ARS/USDA Central Plains Experimental Range (large wooden sign)
10. The station is about .75 miles east of intersection of WCR 114 and Highway 85 on your left (north side of the road.)



## ***Summary policies for vehicle use***

### **How the public views state vehicles**

**IMAGE IS EVERYTHING! Know exactly where you are. Make sure that where you drive and park is a place that you have permission to be and represents good judgment, in general.**

Citizen complaints, as well as other agencies' complaints, have been received regarding State vehicles being driven improperly. These complaints may result in a disciplinary action to the driver by SGS-LTER. State drivers should also be concerned about the reflection of State employees and State vehicles as perceived by the public. Because drivers represent the State of Colorado, it is extremely important that they represent a good image. Bad feedback may result in vehicle resource requirements being more stringently applied. State vehicles are highly visible and represent a valuable resource. Be sure that where you drive is a place that you have permission to be.

### **Use of state vehicles**

Familiarize yourself with the vehicle you will be using. Check the glove compartment to see that the SGS-LTER log book, a map of the Grasslands, flashlight, the vehicle's registration, the Wright Express gas credit card, the sheet listing gas stations and PIN number, the yellow roadside assistance card, the accident report information, and the Colorado State University Fleet Vehicle User's Guide (the last page is the Proof of Insurance) are all there. The manual specific to that vehicle will give information about how to change a tire or check the oil, for example. A fire extinguisher, first aid kit, and wheel block are located behind the seat.

As the operator of a State vehicle, the driver is responsible for its proper use, service, and protection and must be familiar with the following guidelines:

Purpose for use: State vehicles are to be used for official State business only and may not be used for personal errands including transporting family members or pets. State vehicles may not be loaned to or driven by any unauthorized individual.

Driver's license: Driver must possess a valid U.S. driver's license for the class of vehicle operated. (Responsibility for making this determination rests with SGS-LTER.)

Fuel cards: Report lost, damaged or stolen fuel cards immediately.

Seat belts: Seat belts must be worn by drivers and all passengers in a State vehicle.

Cleaning fee: A \$25-\$50 cleaning fee will be assessed to vehicles that do not comply with the following clean interior policy:

1. No smoking.
2. No alcohol or drugs in any form, or anyone under the influence.
3. Remove all trash, personal items, excessive mud, seeds, plant material, etc.
4. No pets.

Keys: Drivers must pay directly for expenses to open a locked vehicle.

Portable audio devices, including cell phones: Colorado State University does not allow earphones or headphones of any type to be worn by a person operating a University owned vehicle. Listening to portable

audio devices (including cell phones) while driving, through ear or headphones, is illegal while driving a University vehicle.

### **Cell phones**

It is highly recommended that all persons working alone on the CPER/Pawnee carry a cell phone for safety and emergencies. Plug the cell phone in, turn it on, and check periodically throughout the day for missed calls and attempt to return those calls (but not while driving a University vehicle). **KNOW YOUR LOCATION.**

### **Fuel cards and types of fuel**

Cards are assigned to the vehicle, not the driver. At the pump, enter PIN number and the odometer reading. NOTE: The fuel card is not to be used for any product or service not sold at the fuel pump island. (Washes, oil, washer fluid are okay. Tires, alignments, engine repair, body repairs, general merchandise, food, etc., are NOT allowable.) Drivers must use self-service, regular grade gasoline. Premium grades and full-service fuel may not be purchased by the driver.

Fuel locations near the PNG:

Ault Conoco, Ault CO  
970-834-1373  
Monday – Saturday 5:00 AM – 10:00 PM  
Sunday 6:00 AM – 10:00 PM

Ken's Convenience, Ault CO  
201 S US Highway 85  
970-834-1581  
Monday – Saturday 7:00 AM – 10:00 PM  
Sunday 7:00 AM – 9:00 PM

Agland, Inc., Briggsdale CO  
970-656-3412  
Does not keep regular hours!

Loaf 'n' Jug, Wellington, CO  
8211 6<sup>th</sup> St.  
970-568-3778  
Open 24 hours

Schrader's Country Store, Wellington, CO  
3700 Cleveland Ave.  
970-568-3252  
Monday – Friday 5 AM – 10 PM  
Saturday and Sunday 6 AM – 10 PM

Shell, Wellington, CO  
8214 6<sup>th</sup> St.  
970-568-7200  
Every day 5:30 AM – 10 PM

### **Daily care of the vehicle**

Drivers are responsible for the day-to-day care of vehicles. After each use, clean trash out of the vehicle and dispose of it properly. Wind on the Pawnee presents many challenges, including the potential for damaging vehicle doors. You must either hold the vehicle doors firmly when opening them in the wind, or park your

vehicle facing into the wind to prevent damage to the vehicle doors. Report immediately and/all damage, dings, scraps, windshield cracks, etc., to Mark Lindquist.

No State employee is expected to drive a vehicle that is unsafe or to ignore an unsafe condition. Follow the advice listed below to keep your vehicle in a safe, operable condition.

Fluids: Check oil and fluids DAILY. Fill as necessary but have your vehicle checked if you are low on engine oil, automatic transmission or power steering fluid, brake or clutch fluid or engine coolant. In order to prevent freeze-up, do not add plain water to the radiator, coolant reservoir or windshield washer container.

Leaks: Look on the ground under the vehicle for fluid leaks. Report any leakage immediately to Mark Lindquist.

Tires: Visually inspect the tires daily. Look for imbedded nails, check regularly for uneven wear and for proper air pressure. Correct air pressure is the major contributor to extended tire life. Recommended tire pressure is usually found on the driver's door post.

Flats: Drivers are responsible for replacing a flat tire with the spare. DO NOT drive the vehicle with a flat tire as it will ruin the tire and/or the rim. **A working vehicle has 5 functional tires.** You need to make sure the flat tire is repaired by **Howard's Auto Repair**. Tire repairs are preauthorized by CSU Transportation Services and can be fixed immediately. All other repairs require an authorization (see first paragraph under BREAKDOWNS AND REPAIRS). Please notify motor pool (970-491-0175) when you do have a tire repaired. Be prepared to give Howard's and motor pool the vehicle plate number and odometer reading. This information is needed for Howard's to be paid for the tire repair.

Howard's Auto Repair, Pierce CO  
970-834-2733  
Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM  
Saturday 8:00 AM – 12:00 noon  
Towing Service

Damage: Check the vehicle before driving for body damage. Report any damage promptly (see procedures and definition of an accident in the Accident section)

Improper use: Do not drive your truck or sport utility through rivers, creeks or streams that will exceed the limits of your vehicle. Do not drive sedans on four-wheel drive roads. Drivers and/or SGS-LTER are responsible for the full amount of any damage caused by improper use of their vehicle.

Lights: Check exterior lights and turn signals regularly for proper operation.

Noises: Be alert for unusual noises that could signal mechanical problems. Report immediately to Mark Lindquist.

Gauges: If the temperature gauge reads abnormally hot, the oil pressure gauge reads low, or the red critical Engine Light is "on", STOP THE VEHICLE IMMEDIATELY.

If the amber caution light (check/service engine light, power loss light or emissions light) in late model vehicles is "ON", it indicates a potential problem. Have the vehicle checked as soon as possible. Notify Mark Lindquist.

### **Breakdowns and repairs**

If mechanical problems are experienced while on a trip, Transportation Services must be called to obtain authorization for repairs or towing (970-491-0103 or 970-491-0175 during normal business hours 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM). All information on how to report vehicle problems can be found in the Transportation Services

booklet in the blue packet of every vehicle. **There is also a section on after-hours emergency repairs (evenings and weekends).**

No assistance will be given for locking keys in vehicle, running out of fuel, or flat tires. The driver is responsible for these situations.

If the vehicle must be left unattended until assistance arrives, be sure that the vehicle is clear of traffic, windows are rolled up, doors are locked and the keys and credit cards are in the driver's possession.

### **Accident information**

**This information is also located in the Fleet Vehicle User's Guide in glove box of every CSU vehicle. Please read before any action is taken!**

An accident is described as **ANY** incident that may have caused damage to a Colorado State University vehicle, or caused damage to private property. Accident damage includes damage caused by another vehicle, road hazard, wildlife, weather (wind, rain, hail, etc.), vandals (this includes glass, tires, body damage, stolen vehicles, etc.) Stolen vehicles must be reported immediately. If you are in doubt, please call Transportation Services at 970-491-0103 or 970-491-0116.

#### **A. ACCIDENT PROCEDURES**

At the scene of an accident involving a State vehicle, the driver must:

1. Stop immediately and aid any injured persons.
2. NOTIFY THE LOCAL POLICE by calling 911. If the local police will not send an officer to the scene, file a counter report at the local police station or State Patrol station.
3. DO NOT leave the scene or move the vehicle until the law enforcement agency has completed its investigation or until they have asked you to move it.
4. If vehicles create a definite hazard, please mark the location of each vehicle involved, then move the vehicle.
5. CALL YOUR SUPERVISOR.
6. DO NOT ADMIT FAULT OR MAKE COMMITMENTS. DO NOT GIVE STATEMENTS TO ANYONE EXCEPT THE POLICE OR YOUR SUPERVISOR.
7. Present the State of Colorado Insurance Card (located on back page of Colorado State University Fleet Vehicle User's Guide).
8. Write down ALL information required on the other driver: name; address; drivers license number and state; expiration date, date of birth; home and work phone numbers; vehicle owner's name and address; year, make, model and license of vehicle; insurance company and policy number; injured parties name(s); witnesses names, addresses and phone numbers; write notes concerning the accident. These notes will help when you complete the accident report.
9. TOWING – DO NOT ATTEMPT TO DRIVE AN UNSAFE VEHICLE OR A VEHICLE WITH FLUID LEAKS.
  - a. In the Fort Collins area, call Choice City Towing at 482-0159. Have the vehicle towed to Transportation Services, 201 W. Pitkin Street.
  - b. Outside of the Fort Collins area, see the quick reference section for a list of vendors.

**DO NOT HAVE THE VEHICLE TAKEN TO A BODY SHOP OR INSURANCE COMPANY!** The State driver must call Transportation Services Maintenance Assistance section the same day or the next business day to give location of the vehicle and potential storage charge. If this is not done, the storage charges will be the responsibility of SGS-LTER.

#### **B. REPORTING AN ACCIDENT TO TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

1. Call Risk Management at 970-491-1432 immediately, if the accident involved serious injury and/or damage to OTHER persons or property.

2. Call Transportation Services within one business day to report the accident. Provide the state vehicle's license number, the state driver's name, the date of accident, and who was at fault.
3. Complete the "ACCIDENT FORM" in the blue packet and return it to Transportation Services with ALL OF THE FORMS listed below WITHIN 10 DAYS of the ACCIDENT. Make sure SGS-LTER receives a copy of each form.
  - a. POLICE REPORT: Include one clean, legible copy of the INVESTIGATOR'S TRAFFIC ACCIDENT REPORT from the police department that investigated the accident. (It is the driver's responsibility to acquire a police report. Please do not expect the accident section of Transportation Services to acquire the report for you. )
  - b. RISK MANAGEMENT VEHICLE ACCIDENT REPORT (#DRM-01): This form is found in the state driver's VEHICLE PACKET. (Additional forms can be requested through the accident section personnel.) Please complete each section of the accident report as precisely as possible and make sure every copy is legible. If the information on the other driver is missing, the state driver has a responsibility to acquire this information. Send the white and yellow copies to RISK MANAGEMENT. Send the pink copy to Transportation Services and keep the golden rod copy for your records.
  - c. The state driver must have their signature as well as their supervisor's on the accident report before sending to Transportation Services.
  - d. Please be sure to write in the license number in the upper right hand corner. If the license number is not visible, it will hinder authorization of the body repairs of your vehicle.
4. REPAIR ESTIMATES WILL BE DONE BY TRANSPORTATION SERVICES. DO NOT go to an insurance company to have an estimate done.

EVEN THOUGH THE ACCIDENT IS MINOR AND THE STATE DRIVER DOES NOT SEE ANY DAMAGE, AN ESTIMATE IS STILL REQUIRED.

STATE LAW REQUIRES THE STATE DRIVER TO FILE THIS FORM WITHIN TEN DAYS IF THERE IS INJURY/DEATH, OR DAMAGE EXCEEDS \$1,000. FAILURE TO REPORT MAY CAUSE SUSPENSION OF DRIVER'S LICENSE.

PLEASE WRITE "THE STATE OF COLORADO IS SUBJECT TO GOVERNMENTAL IMMUNITY ACT, SECTION 24-10-101. IN ADDITION, THE STATE OF COLORADO IS SELF-INSURED PURSUANT 24-30-1501" on the accident form.

### **C. OBTAINING AUTHORIZATION FOR:**

1. Body repairs: Once the completed "accident form" is received by the accident section of Transportation Services, the accident personnel will call the state driver or SGS-LTER to set up an appointment to bring the vehicle to Transportation Services for estimates.
2. For back glass, door glass, vent glass, rearview mirrors (inside and outside), windshields broken by vandals or tires slashed by vandals, this damage is not considered usual wear and tear. The state driver must call Transportation Maintenance Assistance to set up an appointment for the vehicle to be dropped off for glass repairs. The glass and/or tires will be authorized provided the state driver faxes or sends the photocopy of the accident report (DRM-01) at a later time.
3. Mechanical repairs (accident damage such as running over something causing a hole in oil pan, gas tank, etc.) follow the body work instructions for accident mechanical repairs.

## ***Vehicle reservation***

*Please be aware that we are managing these vehicles for the benefit of the entire SGS-LTER community. While we will do everything we can to protect reservations, we reserve the right to reassign a vehicle if an emergency situation arises. We know that any such actions by us will create problems for researchers, and will make every attempt to not alter reservations. Please remember that these are not your personal vehicles and that their use is a privilege, not a right. We are expecting you to behave in a professional manner, treat the vehicles well, keep them clean, promptly report mechanical or other problems, use vehicles during the time you reserved them, or promptly release vehicles you may have previously reserved when you have a change in your research plans. We are expecting you to share these resources or coordinate trips when possible so that no one has to walk to their research sites. Misuse of vehicles, unprofessional behavior or abuse of the system will result in loss of privileges.*

From the SGS-LTER webpage:

Go to the Vehicle Reservations page: [http://www.sgslter.colostate.edu/vehicle\\_reservations.aspx](http://www.sgslter.colostate.edu/vehicle_reservations.aspx). In the 'View the Full Calendar' section, follow the directions to determine which vehicles have already been committed. Use the single arrows on either side of the top of the calendar to move to other months. This calendar is to be used to check availability of vehicles.

**You must submit a reservation request to secure a vehicle. Reservation requests must be made at least two working days ahead of the desired date.** To make a vehicle reservation, return to the Vehicle Reservations page [http://www.sgslter.colostate.edu/vehicle\\_reservations.aspx](http://www.sgslter.colostate.edu/vehicle_reservations.aspx), scroll down to the 'Reserve your Vehicle' section and enter the information requested. Click the 'submit' button to request your reservation. This will send your information to Mark Lindquist and Sallie Sprague, who will add the reservation to the calendar. Requests are generally handled within two hours (during weekdays). You will be notified by email to confirm your reservation. (Please remember that Sallie's normal business hours are 9 am – 3 pm.)

## **Travel outside of Colorado**

Travel to other states must be approved by SGS-LTER. The vehicle's fuel card is good throughout the country; however, you should verify the card's acceptance prior to the sale when at an unfamiliar vendor. Wyoming, Kansas and Nebraska are out-of-state!

## ***Road policies***

### **Central Plains Experimental Range (CPER)**

The USDA-Agricultural Research Service (ARS) Central Plains Experimental Range (CPER) has an extensive 70-year history of rangeland research directed at understanding how land management and grazing practices affect above- and below-ground responses in the shortgrass steppe. Currently, there are over 57 ongoing experiments at the CPER. This number of studies, coupled with the need to protect the integrity of the CPER land area for current and future research needs, necessitates that all persons utilizing the CPER assist in efforts to protect the rangeland resource at the CPER. Therefore, we are requesting that all persons utilizing CPER:

- 1) refrain from driving any vehicle off of established roads,
  - 2) adhere to the gate policy of closing a gate behind you if it was closed when you arrived (open gates can remain open), and
  - 3) please help us keep the CPER clean by picking up litter/trash whenever possible and properly disposing of it.
- Established roads are characterized by the complete lack of vegetation in the wheel tracks. A current map of the established roads can be found on the SGS LTER website map page: <http://sgslter.colostate.edu/maps.aspx>. When working in an area, vehicles should be parked immediately adjacent and parallel to the established road to facilitate travel on the road by other personnel. When turning a vehicle around, please back up until perpendicular to the road and then proceed forward to the road. In all cases, please minimize the area that is disturbed when turning vehicles around. To prevent degradation of established roads during wet conditions, please refrain from driving on roads unless travel is deemed absolutely necessary; if travel is warranted under

these conditions, please use slow speeds to prevent splashing from puddles in the road. Roads with vegetation in the wheel tracks are defined as 1) those that have been abandoned and are in the process of healing or 2) those which have been created without authorization; please refrain from driving a vehicle on these roads. If off-road travel is truly warranted for one-time sampling or other endeavors, the person(s) must request permission from Mary Ashby (Station Manager, CPER, 970-897-2226, or [Mary.Ashby@ars.usda.gov](mailto:Mary.Ashby@ars.usda.gov)) **prior to** any off-road driving. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in a written warning to the person(s) and his/her supervisor(s) for first time violation, and subsequent violations may result in the loss of use of CPER for the person(s). If you have any questions pertaining to this road policy at CPER, please contact the Scientist-in-Charge of CPER, Justin Derner, at 307-772-2433 x. 113, or [Justin.Derner@ars.usda.gov](mailto:Justin.Derner@ars.usda.gov).

### **Pawnee National Grassland (greater PNG)**

The Pawnee National Grassland has established motor vehicle travel controls in order to enable safe motorized travel while also protecting natural resources and minimizing conflicts with non-motorized uses. Specific rules are implemented by order of the Forest Supervisor and are available at the District Ranger's Office. A network of numbered roads will take you within easy walking distance to almost all parts of the Grassland. Travel by motorized vehicles is authorized only on constructed roads, two-track roads, and specific areas designated for travel. Travel by motorized vehicles is not authorized on roads signed as "Administrative Use Only" or "Closed". Motorized vehicles must comply with State law. Open roads are marked by a sign with a Forest Service shield and road number. To protect prairie vegetation and avoid soil erosion, motorized travel cross-country is prohibited unless authorized in writing by the District Ranger. Another exception is for over-snow travel by snowmobile. Cross-country hiking and horse travel is permitted and is an excellent way to enjoy the prairie. Free motor vehicle us maps for the Pawnee are available at the PNG Office at 660 O Street in Greeley, or on the web at [www.fs.fed.us/r2/arnf](http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/arnf) or from the SGS LTER website map page <http://sgslter.colostate.edu/maps.aspx>.

Direct motorized vehicle access is authorized to suitable parking sites within 300 feet of an open road for recreation activities such as camping, picnicking, bird-watching, or hunting.

Some roads are closed temporarily in the spring and early summer to minimize soil disturbance and protect wildlife habitat. Contact the District Rangers' Office for information on these closures.

Mountain bike riding is becoming a very popular activity on the Grassland. The best routes are two-track roads and constructed roads. Cross-country travel is not recommended, because tires may be punctured by cactus spines.

The majority of the Pawnee's roads can be traveled by high clearance vehicles. Sedans can travel many of the roads during dry conditions but are not suitable on rougher roads. Most Forest Service roads are not graveled. Many of the arroyos do not have bridges or culverts. Travel on wet un-graveled roads is discouraged, both for your own safety and to prevent damage to the road. Return to a graveled road if storms threaten. During heavy rains, even graveled roads can be impassable.

## **Field Safety**

### ***Medical dangers and precautions***

**Prairie rattlesnakes** are abundant; watch where you walk and listen for their characteristic rattle.

**Poisonous spiders** include the Black Widow (identified by a red hour-glass shape on a shiny black body) and the Brown Recluse (identified by a brown fiddle shape on a lighter brown body). Do not reach into small and/or dark spaces (e.g. pitfall traps) without protective tools or gloves.

**Heat exhaustion/stroke** can be prevented by drinking plenty of water, wearing light-colored clothing, and wearing a hat.

**Sun burns** are common. Bring sunscreen and a hat for yourself.

**Infected wounds** can occur from abrasions, lacerations, and punctures that go untreated. Barbed wire cuts can easily become infected even when the wound seems small and insignificant. Band-Aids and disinfectants are good items to keep with you. You may want to consider getting a tetanus shot if you haven't had one recently (consult physician).

**West Nile Virus** can be carried by birds and transmitted to humans by mosquitoes. If you are going to be working near wet areas or during dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active, wear bug repellent (DEET) and cover exposed skin to prevent bites. Check CDC guidelines for additional information.

**Hanta Virus** can be carried by the deer mouse and can be transmitted to humans who come in contact with deer mouse feces. If you will be working with deer mice or in areas where feces may be present (garages, barns), you may want to take precautions recommended by CDC.

**Bubonic Plague** can be carried by prairie dogs and fleas. If you will be working with prairie dogs, you may want to take precautions recommended by CDC.

## ***Thunderstorm safety***

The weather may change very rapidly; lightening, hail, tornados and snowstorms are all possible. If you are outdoors:

Attempt to get into a building or a hardtop car and keep the windows closed.

If no structure is available, go to an open space and squat low to the ground.

Avoid tall structures, such as towers, tall trees, power and telephone poles, and equipment that might function as a natural lightening rod, such as backhoes, soil augers, weather stations, etc.

If you are isolated in a level field and feel your hair stand on end (which indicates lightening is about to strike) drop to you knees and bend forward, putting your hands on your knees. Do not lie flat on the ground!

If you are in a vehicle:

Pull safely onto the shoulder of the road; turn on emergency flashers.

If flash flooding is possible, go to higher ground.

If you are indoors:

Secure outdoor objects that could blow away and cause property or personal injury.

Do not handle any electrical equipment or telephones, as lightening can follow wiring.

Listen to a battery-operated radio.

Do not take a bath or shower, as metal pipes can transmit electricity.

Turn off computers and other items that can be damaged by lightening-induced power surges.

## ***What to do in an emergency***

It is advisable to have a cell phone with you at all times. Use 911. The address of the LTER (North Side) Field Station is 14791 Weld County Road 114, approximately 3/4 mile east of the intersection of HWY 85 and CR 114. The address for the Shortgrass Steppe Research and Interpretive Center (South Side) is 14698 Weld County Road 114, approximately 3/4 mile east of the intersection of HWY 85 and CR 114. The address of the ARS field station is 58009 Weld County Road 37, approximately 2 miles north of the intersection of CR 114 and CR 37.

**Keep maps with you at all times and be able to communicate your location with emergency responders. If you see behavior on the PNG, the CPER or adjacent private land that may be dangerous to people/livestock/wildlife or damaging to personal property, please note date, time, location, license/tag number, vehicle description or other details, and report the activity to the appropriate law enforcement official and/or the ARS or PNG offices.**

## **Emergency Numbers:**

### **911**

SGS-LTER (North Side) Field Station – 970-897-2210

Mark Lindquist cell phone – 970-213-9576

ARS Field Station – 979-897-2226

USFS PNG Field Office – 970-353-5004

DOW Game Warden (Troy Florian): 970-356-2753

Colorado State Patrol – 303-239-4501

Weld County Sheriff – 970-356-4015

## **Other Emergency Numbers:**

Fort Collins Police – 970-221-6540

Larimer County Sheriff – 970-686-7439

Road and Weather Conditions – 970-356-7420

Poison Control – 1-800-332-3073

Arson Hotline – 0 + 892-7766

West Ridge Animal Hospital (certified animal rehab): 970-330-7283

## Local Hospitals:

North Colorado Medical Center

1801 16th St.

Greeley, Colorado

Emergency Room – 970-350-6244

Hospital – 970-972-4121

Poudre Valley Hospital

1024 S. Lemay

Fort Collins, Colorado

970-495-7000

## Recommended First Aid Kit Contents:

Red Cross CPR Pocket Mask

Alcohol Wipes

Antibacterial Ointment

Betadine

Benadryl

Bug Repellant

Ibuprofen

Imodium AD

Pepto Bismol

Snake Bite Kit

Slings

Sunscreen

4X4 Bandages

Roller Bandages

Assorted Band Aids

Occlusive Bandages

Tweezers

Scissors

Rubber Gloves

And any personal medicines you may need on a regular or emergency basis.

There is a first aid kit in the lab at the North Side headquarters building.