NGPJV Conservation Guidance Web Tool User Guide

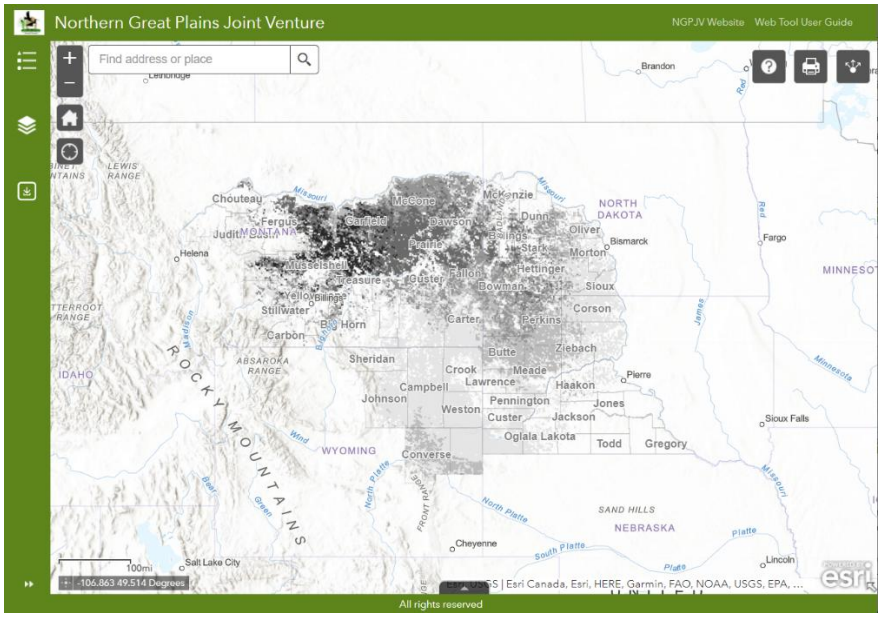
Last Updated: November 5, 2025

Tool Web Address:
https://duinc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=262567b2c6774a65bb1debe70acd0f3d

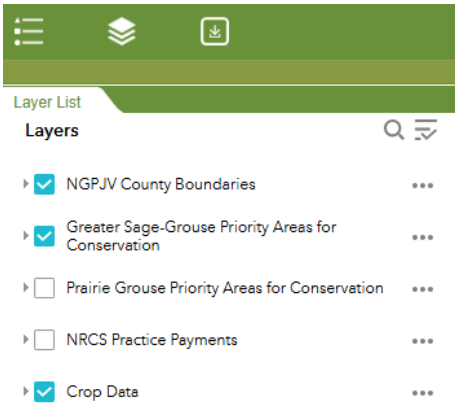
The NGPJV developed a spatial planning web tool to help landowners and conservation practitioners visualize and better understand conservation opportunities and challenges. Our web tool focuses on spatial data that may not be easily accessible elsewhere, including priority species ranges, priority areas for conservation, and local project data. Please review the web tool user guide for more information on the tool and its data layers.

Science integration bridges the gap between research and practical application, working with partners to ensure that conservation planning and decision-making are grounded in the best available science. Through a collaborative approach, the NGPJV works to connect partners with data, tools, and technical resources that support effective, science-based conservation and natural resource management across the region. For assistance with the NGPJV Conservation Guidance Web Tool or other conservation planning tools, please contact NGPJV Science Integration Specialists Krista Erdman (kerdman@ducks.org) or Tayler Scherr (tscherr@ducks.org).

When you open the Conservation Guidance Web Tool, you should see something like the map below:



Note that in the upper left corner there is an icon that will allow you to look at the **Legend** and another icon that will allow you to select from the **Layer List**. Click on each of the icons to see what they do. Click on an icon a second time to close it. When you select the Layer List icon, you should see the image (left) on the left side of your screen.



You can display each individual layer on the map by clicking on its checkbox. To see additional information on the layer, you can open each entry by clicking on the carrot **›** symbol on the left. If a polygon (i.e. county) is selected on any of the generated maps, a host of related data and charts can be viewed, often in multiple pages. Simply click on a county and scroll through the data in the pop-up box that appears.

Layer Details

NGPJV County Boundaries

This layer depicts Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming counties located within the NGPJV boundaries.

Greater Sage-Grouse Priority Areas for Conservation

This layer depicts the greater sage-grouse Priority Areas for Conservation (PACs) as identified in the 2013 Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Objectives Team (COT) Report, to be used in work for the USFWS 2015 Status Review. PAC polygons were provided by states and represent areas identified as essential for the long-term conservation of the sage-grouse. Data are clipped to Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming.

Original data can be accessed here:
https://www.sciencebase.gov/catalog/item/56f96d88e4b0a6037df066a3

Prairie Grouse Priority Areas for Conservation
This layer depicts priority counties for prairie grouse conservation, as identified by the North American Grouse Partnership in the 2008 document, 'A Grassland Conservation Plan for Prairie Grouse.' Counties are classified either as priorities for sharp-tailed grouse or for sharp-tailed grouse and greater prairie-chicken.

NRCS Practice Payments
This layer depicts the total payments for select NRCS practices applied in Fiscal Years 2016 to 2023, including brush management (314), prescribed fire (338), fence (382), livestock pipeline (516), prescribed grazing (528), pumping plant (533), watering facilities (614), and water well (642). County summaries only include releasable data, counties with less than five contract holders had to be excluded to maintain privacy. Values of ($999.00) or –999.00 represent No Data.

Crop Data
This layer depicts the relative density of cropland, which may also help you select practices that are appropriate for desired conservation outcomes. Darker colored counties have more cropland. The layer may also be used to convey that certain counties in highly fragmented landscapes may be of high value for conservation due to their relative rarity and/or vulnerability to conversion. If you click on a county, you will display information about various crops and other cover types in the county. A pie chart at the bottom of the pop-up will show acres in terms of medium and low intensity development and open space.

Total CRP Expirations by Year
This layer displays the relative number of acres enrolled in CRP in 2020 by county. The pop-up provides more information about the amount of CRP enrolled as of 2020 and how it declines through 2030 (which may be impacted by new enrollments at some

point). The line graph at the bottom of the pop-up shows how each county will decline and how urgent it is to do something about the loss of these grassland acres.

Land Ownership
This layer depicts the relative percentage of private land in the county. The darker the polygon, the greater proportion of private lands. The pop-up shows more detail about land ownership and a pie chart provides a snapshot of the proportions of private, state, and federal land ownership in the county.

Human Population
This layer depicts the human population by county. Darker colors indicate more people. Human populations are important in conservation because more people bring more pressures on the land, yet potentially more resources for conservation.

Wetlands
This layer displays the relative wetland acres by county. In this layer, we removed lake data because including them makes the map tell more about where the major rivers/reservoirs are and less about the abundance of other wetland types. When you click on a county, the pop-up will provide more detail about each wetland type, including lakes. The pie chart at the bottom offers another quick snapshot of these data. This layer does not yet include Montana, but we are working to add those data. Not surprisingly, the NGPJV doesn't have many wetland resources and many are associated with riparian areas. Wetlands are both scarce and vital.

Superimposed Breeding Habitat for Five Priority Species
This layer depicts the superimposed priority breeding quartile layers of the five priority bird species (Baird's Sparrow, Chestnut-collared Longspur, Lark Bunting, Sprague's Pipit, and Thick-billed Longspur). The layer ranges from 0 (no priority breeding quartiles present) to 5 (priority breeding quartiles for all five bird species present). It is important to understand that while not depicted in the layer, priority birds and their habitat may be present throughout the NGPJV territory.

Priority Grassland Bird Breeding Quartiles
The next five layers depict the breeding quartiles for the five priority species. The breeding quartiles are displayed as Priority 1 (top 25%), Priority 2 (25-50%), and Priority 3 (50-75%). The data were downloaded from eBird.

(1) Sprague's Pipit Breeding Quartiles

This layer depicts the breeding quartiles for Sprague's Pipit. Priority 1 (top 25%) breeding habitat is shown in red, Priority 2 (25-50%) in yellow, and Priority 3 (50-75%) in green.

(2) Thick-billed Longspur Breeding Quartiles
This layer depicts the breeding quartiles for Thick-billed Longspur. Priority 1 (top 25%) breeding habitat is shown in red, Priority 2 (25-50%) in yellow, and Priority 3 (50-75%) in green.

(3) Lark Bunting Breeding Quartiles
This layer depicts the breeding quartiles for Lark Bunting. Priority 1 (top 25%) breeding habitat is shown in red, Priority 2 (25-50%) in yellow, and Priority 3 (50-75%) in green.

(4) Chestnut-collared Longspur Breeding Quartiles
This layer depicts the breeding quartiles for Chestnut-collared Longspur. Priority 1 (top 25%) breeding habitat is shown in red, Priority 2 (25-50%) in yellow, and Priority 3 (50-75%) in green.

(5) Baird's Sparrow Breeding Quartiles
This layer depicts the breeding quartiles for Baird's Sparrow. Priority 1 (top 25%) breeding habitat is shown in red, Priority 2 (25-50%) in yellow, and Priority 3 (50-75%) in green.

Range Overlay of the 26 NGPJV Priority Species
This layer displays an overlay of ranges for the NGPJV's 26 priority birds. Ranges were downloaded from eBird and can include breeding season, non-breeding season, pre-breeding migratory season, post-breeding migratory season, or year-round data. The data range from 2 (2 species ranges present) to 26 (26 species ranges present).

Central Grasslands Roadmap Assessment Map
This layer displays the Central Grasslands Roadmap's Assessment Map clipped to the NGPJV boundary. The Assessment Map identifies core grasslands, vulnerable grasslands, converted grasslands (crops), altered grasslands (woody encroachment), and natural forests. The Map indicates where the grasslands biome still persists, and users are encouraged to add local filters as needed for local conservation implementation.