NORTHERN PLAINS CONSERVATION NETWORK
INTERACTIVE WEB MAP
USER’S GUIDE

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The Northern Plains Conservation Network (NPCN) interactive web map is a repository for shared spatial data that represents the collective priorities of the group of organizations and agencies that are a part of NPCN. These data include the distribution of priority species, demographic data and data on threats to the ecoregion, including energy development and climate change. Data that are currently displayed in the web map are the best available data sources that cover the majority or entirety of the ecoregion. The Interactive Web Map may be updated at any time to reflect more accurate data when available.

The interactive web map is designed for viewing in Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome or Safari browsers. It will work in older versions of Internet Explorer, however not all functions will operate properly. For best results, upgrade to Internet Explorer 9 or one of the browsers listed above.
A variety of datasets are available for viewing in the NPCN web map. To view the datasets, mouse over the ‘Map Layers’ boxes until the group of layers you are interested in (e.g., Mammal layers) turns blue. Click on the group heading and a drop-down box will appear with data layer choices. Click the box next to the layer you want to display. The box will remain open so that you can click on multiple layers to overlay in the map display. Once you have finished adding layers, you will need to click outside of the drop-down box to close the box. (*Note: If you click outside the ecoregional boundary, a dialog box will pop up to tell you that you are outside the extent of the mapping application. You can then click the ‘x’ to close this dialog box.)
The Map Layers Control box can be closed by clicking the ‘x’ in the upper right-hand corner of the box. A ‘Show Map Controls’ button will then appear, so that you can reopen the map layers box.

You can move the entire map layers box to a different part of the screen by mousing over the header called ‘Map Layer Controls’ until a 4-way arrow symbol appears. Once the 4-way arrow symbol appears, you can click and drag the box to another spot on the map. Release the mouse button to drop the box in the desired location.
After clicking on data layers from the drop-down menus, a legend box with matching entries appears in the upper right corner of the screen. The legend box will continue to add legend items until it reaches a pre-set maximum length, at which time a scroll bar will appear along the right-hand side of the box. Once the scroll bar appears, you can click your mouse on the scroll bar to move it up and down. Legend items will appear in the order that you add the data layers, with the most recently added layer appearing at the top of the legend. Legend items cannot be rearranged.

The legend can be closed by clicking the ‘x’ in the upper right-hand corner of the box. A ‘Show Legend’ button will then appear, so that you can reopen the legend box.

You can move the entire map legend box to a different part of the screen by mousing over the header called ‘Map Legend’ until a 4-way arrow symbol appears. Once the 4-way arrow symbol appears, you can click and drag the box to another spot on the map. Release the mouse button to drop the legend in the desired location.
The transparency controls dialog box allows you to adjust the transparency of all data layers that have been added to the map. Once a layer has been added to the map, the transparency controls box will appear in the bottom right corner of the screen. You can then mouse over the gray box on the right-hand side of the slider for the layer of interest. Once the box turns blue, click your mouse (the box turns orange) and slide the box to the left to make the layer of interest more transparent (i.e., you will then be able to see layers underneath), or to the right to make the layer less transparent. Moving the slider all the way to the left-hand side will make the layer completely transparent.

Layers can also be rearranged in the transparency control box. To rearrange a layer, mouse over the name of the data layer until a 4-way arrow symbol appears. Once the 4-way arrow symbol appears, left click and then drag the layer to up to make it closer to the front of the display, or down to make it closer to the back of the display.
You can move the entire transparency controls box to a different part of the screen by mousing over the header called ‘Transparency Controls’ until a 4-way arrow symbol appears. Once the 4-way arrow symbol appears, you can click and drag the box to another spot on the map. Release the mouse button to drop the transparency controls box in the desired location.

The transparency controls can be closed by clicking the ‘x’ in the upper right-hand corner of the box. A ‘Show Transparency’ button will then appear, so that you can reopen the transparency controls box.
Once a layer has been added to the map, a button called ‘DataSources’ will appear in the upper right-hand corner of the screen, above the Map Legend. If you click on this button, the screen will be grayed out and a dialog box will appear that gives data sources for each of the data layers that have been added to the map. This dialog box cannot be moved.

The data sources can be closed by clicking the ‘x’ in the upper right-hand corner of the box. A ‘Data-Sources’ button will then appear, so that you can reopen the data sources box.
A custom zoom button is available near the fixed zoom-in and zoom-out buttons in the bottom left-hand corner of the map. This zoom button allows you to drag a custom-sized rectangle around your area of interest to zoom in and examine data layers. To use the button, click the magnifying glass icon to turn the custom zoom button on. Then click your mouse on the upper left-hand corner of the box you would like to draw, and drag to the lower right until the box is the desired size. The box will be highlighted in purple as you draw its outline. Once you release the mouse, the map will zoom into the outlined area.

Please note that the custom zoom button will not work in Internet Explorer versions less recent than Internet Explorer 9.
To zoom back out to the full extent of the map, click on the fixed zoom out button near the bottom left-hand corner of the screen.
To pan around the map, make sure the cursor is in pan mode (small white hand) which is the default setting. Click and hold the left mouse button and drag the map to your desired location.
If you would like to zoom in on a specific city or town, you can type the name into the ‘Search for Location (City, State)’ box at the bottom of the Map Layers box. This function will zoom into the specific location and drop a Google map pin at the location, which will remain on the map until you clear the map.
You can retrieve specific data values for any point within the active extent of the map. Once you have added data layers to the map, click on ‘Retrieve Data’ near the bottom of the Map Layers box. A dialog box will open next to the Map Layers box and crosshairs will appear. Move the crosshairs to the desired location on the map and then click your mouse on that point. The geographic coordinates of the location will appear in the ‘Query Result’ box, along with the values of all data layers at that specific point.

You can move the entire query result box to a different part of the screen by mousing over the header called ‘Query Result’ until a 4-way arrow symbol appears. Once the 4-way arrow symbol appears, you can click and drag the box to another spot on the map. Release the mouse button to drop the box in the desired location.

The query result box can be closed by clicking the ‘x’ in the upper right-hand corner of the box.
If you would like to clear the map of all data layers, transparencies, etc., click the ‘Clear Map’ button near the bottom of the Map Layers box.
Google Earth (http://www.google.com/earth/index.html) is used as the background layer for the interactive web map. ‘Map’ is the default view, showing political boundaries, roads, water bodies, topography, and land cover. To switch to satellite view, click the ‘Satellite’ button in the lower left corner of the web map.
For questions, please contact:

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