

USDA NRE PROJECT MID-YEAR REPORT
South Dakota State University
April, 2005

Capacity Building: Prairie PhD

Still central to our efforts is the support of NRE staffer's Linda Hugelen (SBC), Hank Miller (NICC) and Kerry Hartman (FBCC) with part-time assistantships as they pursue their coursework through our 'Prairie PhD' – cohort graduate program leading to MS/PhD in Biological Sciences. These funds have helped support these individuals as they have donned the hat of graduate students, along with their many responsibilities at their home institutions. Kerry's dissertation research on Juneberries, Linda's on the soil seed bank, and Hank's thesis on prairie restoration all point to positive outcomes for the NRE project.

Funded through SDSU and other grant resources, NRE personnel also enrolled in the following graduate courses in Fall 2004, and Spring 2005:

Bioethics

Establishing Lakota Sovereignty (in cooperation with Oglala Lakota College)

*Seminar in Biological Sciences – (both semesters)

Qualitative Research Methods

Disturbance Ecology

Rural Real Estate Appraisal

This summer we are also offering a course in social-cultural aspects of food, and a one-week, on-campus, special topics course to assist students as they progress with their research programs.

New Graduate Student: Chris Kirk

SDSU is delighted to welcome Ms. Chris Kirk as a new graduate student working on the NRE grant. A SD native, Chris comes to us with a BS in Horticulture from Iowa State University, and professional experience working in the specialty vegetable industry. Since coming to campus, Chris has been particularly active in gearing up for SDSU's role with the sage project, and in interaction with Sinte Gleska University (see below). Her role with the project will be to assist SDSU in enhancing partnerships with participating tribal colleges.

Partnership Programs and Opportunities

'Subodh Singh's Sinte Sage': Sinte Gleska University was successful in landing a grant to pursue production of Native American sage. Chris Kirk will be graduate student assisting Dr. Singh on this project. We have visited SGU's greenhouse and field plots. Chris has assisted Dr. Singh in researching requirements for organic production. She and Dr. Singh will attend an organic expo in Chicago later this month.

*Support for FBCC's recruitment and retention projects.

*SBC's turfgrass project and new campus landscaping projects

SDSU faculty in horticulture and landscape architecture have been in dialogue with Linda Hugelen at SBC about turfgrass research and landscaping projects associated with their new campus in Fort Yates. These efforts are expected to gain momentum later this Spring and through the coming summer months.