



Public Service Commission

State of North Dakota

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October 23, 2008

Jeffrey W. Fleischman, Director
OSM Casper Field Office
PO Box 11018
150 East "B" Street, Room 1018
Casper, WY 82602-5004

RE: Request for Authorization to Proceed for 2009 Coal Fire Suppression Project in North Dakota

Dear Mr. Fleischman:

The North Dakota Public Service Commission requests authorization to proceed with the 2009 Coal Fire Suppression Project. The objective of this project is to extinguish or suppress coal outcrop fires, primarily on U.S. Forest Service lands in the Little Missouri National Grasslands in North Dakota. This project is expected to be conducted in early 2009 and will be a continuation of work conducted beginning in 2003 and continuing through 2007.

The U.S. Forest Service, McKenzie Ranger District, has identified at least 14 coal outcrop fires in northwestern McKenzie County. In addition, we have been notified of more than a dozen others in the Medora Ranger District and on private lands in McKenzie, Billings, and Slope Counties. These fires are uncontrolled and potential threats to property and human safety. We received Notice of Financial Assistance Award No. S09AP12917, dated September 15, 2008, in the amount of \$40,000 for coal outcrop fire suppression. We intend to apply these funds toward this project.

We asked the McKenzie District Ranger to send you a letter with his determination that these coal outcrop fires are linked to wildfire emergencies and as such are excluded from NEPA documentation requirements. Ground disturbance will be limited to the immediate area of each individual coal outcrop fire. Fire suppression activities will likely cause far less environmental damage than allowing the fires to continue burning.

Mr. Jeffrey Fleischman

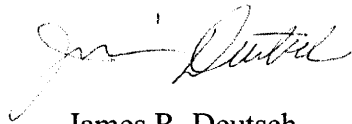
October 23, 2008

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Attached is a map of known outcrop fire locations in the McKenzie District and a spreadsheet with information about individual fires. Also attached is a list of general locations of other known coal outcrop fires. The scope of work and standard procedures will be similar to our previous coal fire suppression projects. We expect that present funding will not be sufficient to suppress all known coal outcrop fires in North Dakota and that there will be a continuing need for coal fire suppression projects in the future.

If any additional information is needed or you have any questions, feel free to call Bill Dodd or me at 701-328-2251.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James R. Deutsch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "D".

James R. Deutsch

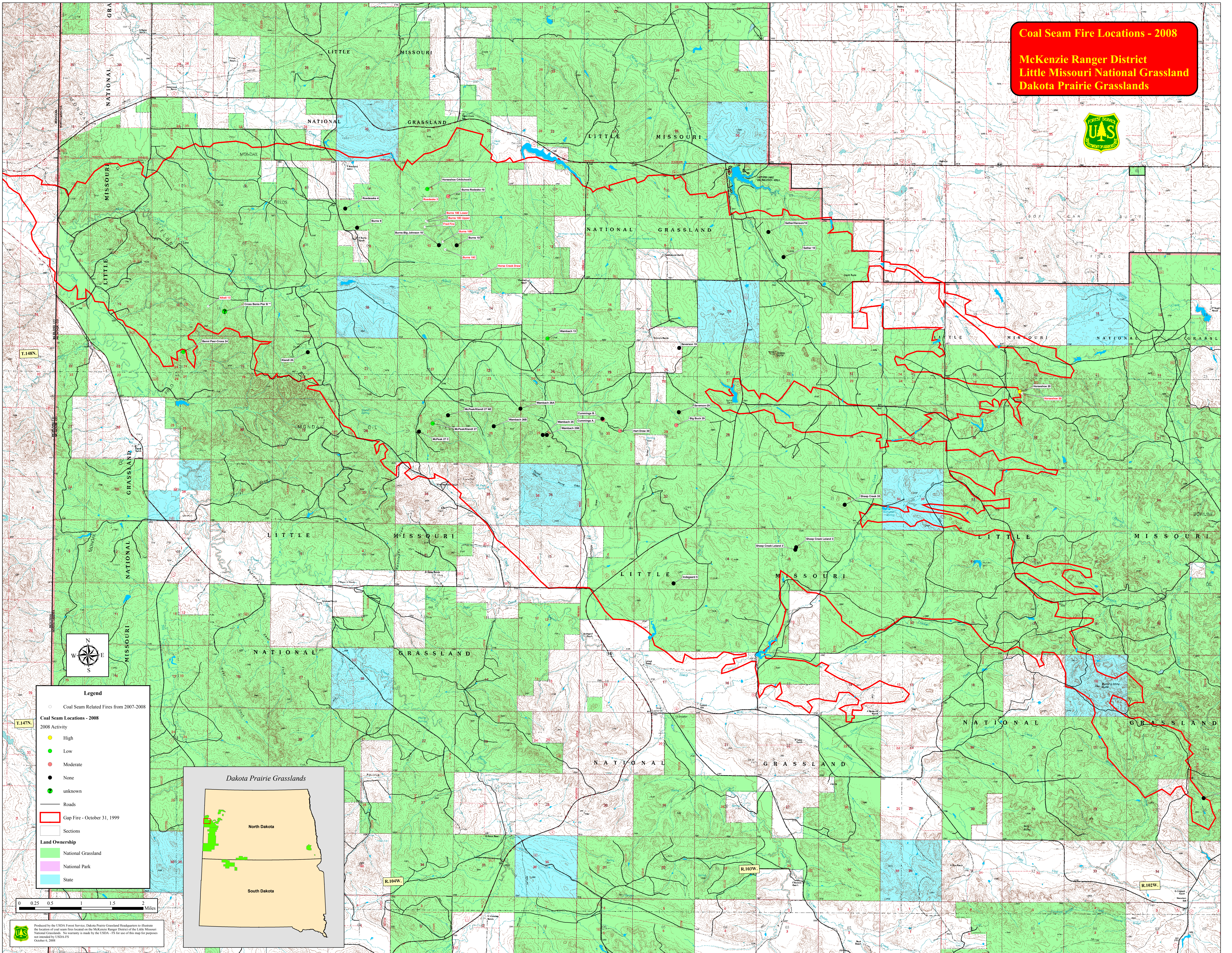
Director

Abandoned Mine Lands Division

Enclosures

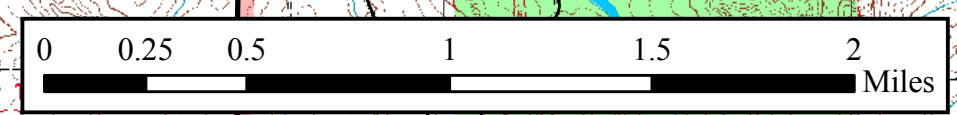
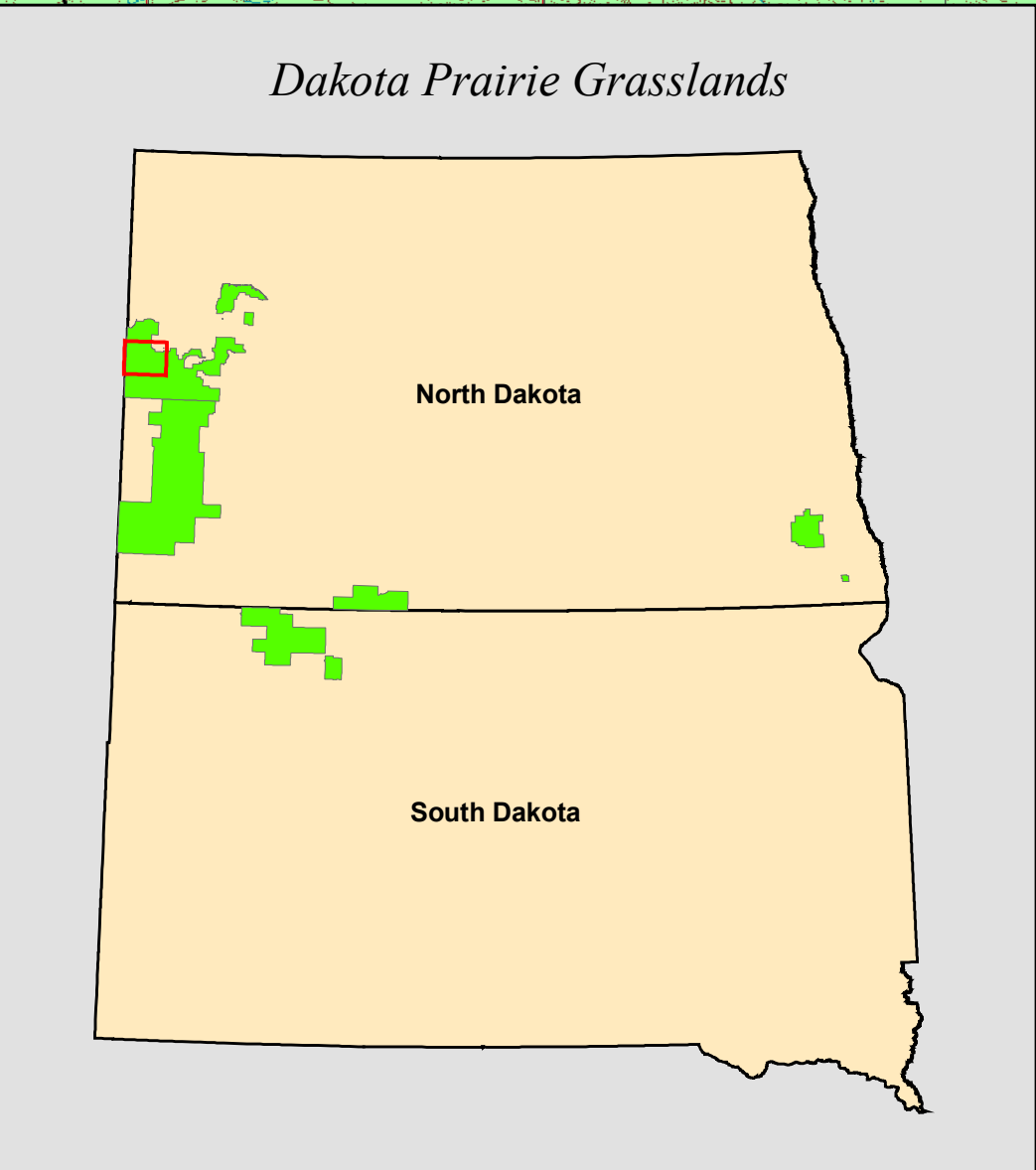
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Coal Seam Fire Locations - 2008
McKenzie Ranger District
Little Missouri National Grassland
Dakota Prairie Grasslands



Legend

- Coal Seam Related Fires from 2007-2008
- Coal Seam Locations - 2008**
- 2008 Activity**
- High
- Low
- Moderate
- None
- unknown
- Roads
- ▭ Gap Fire - October 31, 1999
- ▭ Sections
- Land Ownership**
- ▭ National Grassland
- ▭ National Park
- ▭ State



Produced by the USDA Forest Service, Dakota Prairie Grassland Headquarters to illustrate the location of coal seam fires located on the McKenzie Ranger District of the Little Missouri National Grassland. No warranty is made by the USDA - FS for use of this map for purposes not intended by USDA-FS October 6, 2008

Jun-08 McKenzie RD Burning COAL SEAMS

OUT

NAME	LEGAL	Latitude	Longitude	Prev Action	Activity	Recommendation	Priority	Comments
Burns 9	T148N R 104W NENW Sect 9	47-39-33	103-56-22	Mechanical Int. partial	None			No Activity in last 24 mo.
Old Hwy 25	T145N R 98W NWSE Sect 25	47-21-17	103-06-05	Excavated by GA 2003	None			No Activity in last 24 mo.
Burns-Big Johnson 10	T148N R104W SW/NE Sect 10	47-39-19N	103-54-40	Excavated PSC Dec 03	None			No Activity in last 24 mo.
Severson 19	T148N R103W NE/NE Sect 19	47-37-54	103-49-40	Excavated PSC Dec 03	None			No Activity in last 24 mo.
Severson 29	T148N R103W NE/NE Sect 29	47-37-00	103-49-40	Excavated PSC Nov 03	None			No Activity in last 24 mo.
Sather 10	T148N, R103W NE/SW Sect 10	47-39-11	103-47-31	Excavated FS 2001	None			No Activity in last 60 mo.
Sather-Hanson 10	T148N R103W NE/SE Sect 10	47-39-32	103-47-50	Excavated PSC Dec 03	None			No Activity in last 48 mo
Crighton	T147N, R102W, NE/NW Sect 26	47-31-38	103-38-45	Excavated FS 2001	None			No Activity in last 60 mo.
Cummins B	T148N R103W SE/NW Sect 30	47-36-54	103-51-15	Monitor	None			No Activity in last 24 mo.
Roedeske 4	T148N, R104W SW/SW Sect 4	47-39-49	103-56-37	Int Trench FS Jan 02	None			No Activity in last 24 mo.
Wambach 26B	T148N R104W SW/NE Sect 26	47-36-47	103-53-30	None	None			No Activity in last 48 mo
McPeak 27C	T148N R104W NESW Sect 27	47.36'42"N	103.55'03"W	Excavated PSC Feb 05	None			No Activity in last 24 mo.
Indegaard 5	T147N R103W SW/SE Sect 5	47-34-36	103-49-45	Excavated PSC Jan 05	None			No Activity in last 24 mo.
Burns 10	T148N R104W NW/SE Sect 10	47-39-19	103-54-18	Excavated PSC Mar 07	None			No Activity in last 12 mo.
McPeak/Klandl 27 NE	T148N, R104W NE/NE Sect 27	47-36-56	103-54-27	Int Trench FS Jan 02	None			No Activity in last 48 mo
Sheep Creek 35	T148N R103W SE/NW Sect 35	47-35-43	103-46-13	Excavated PSC Dec 03	None			No Activity in last 48 mo
Benni Peer-Cross 24	T148N R105W SW/NE Sect 24	47N 37.789#	103 59.957	Excavated PSC Mar 07	None			Need to ground truth.
Sheep Creek Leland 3 A	T147N R103W SE/NW Sect 3	47-35-05	103-47-14	Excavated PSC Jan 05	None			Need to ground truth.
Sheep Creek Leland 3 B	T147N R103W SE/NW Sect 3	47-35-07	103-47-13	Excavated PSC Jan 05	None			Need to ground truth.
Wambach 25	T148N R104W SE/NW Sect 25	47-36-40N	103-52-29	Exc PSC 03 and 05	None			Need to ground truth.
Wambach 25B	T148N R104W SE/NW Sect 25	47-36-40N	103-52-24	Excavated PSC Feb 05	None			Need to ground truth.

Oct-08 McKenzie RD Burning

COAL SEAMS

ACTIVE NAME	LEGAL	COAL Latitude	SEAMS Longitude	Prev Action	Activity	Recommentation	Priority	Comments
HartDraw 30	T148N R103W NE/SW Sect 30	47-36-44	103-50-53	Monitor, mitigate fuels	Moderate	Continue to monitor	Low	Deep overburden
Cummings A	T148N R103W SE/NW Sect 30	47-36-53	103-51-14	PSC 05 Int& excavate	Moderate	Re-excavate W side		7 New activity west end
Horseshoe 20	T148N, R102W, SE/SW Sect 20	47-37-19	103-42-36	Dug line x3 mitigate fuels	High	Excavate on SE end		1 N end has burned around
Big Buck 29	T148N. R103W, SW/NE Sect 29	47-36-49	103-49-43	Int trench 01/monitor	Moderate	Excavate on S end		8 Burned fuels around 3 holes
Burns_Rodeseke 10	T148N R103W NE/NE Sect 10	47-39-60	103-54-29	Monitor	Moderate	Excavate when \$\$ avail		9 Steep aspect
Horseshoe CrkSchool3	T148N R103W NW/SE Sect 3	47-40-06	103-54-55	Monitor	Low	Monitor unless \$\$ avail		10 Need to re-evaluate
Wambach 13	T148N R104W SW/NE Sect 13	47-38-01 N	103-52-24	Scratchline/monitor	Low/none	Monitor	Low	Little/no activity Mar 08
Burns 10B	T148N R104W SE/NE Sect 10	47-39-21	103-54-36	New Found	Moderate	Excavate when \$\$ avail		2 Will need to move a lot of dirt
Burns 10C	T148N R104W SE/NE Sect 10	47-39-15	103-54-34	New Found	Low	Excavate when \$\$ avail		3 South end?
Burns 10D Upper	T148N R104W NENW Sect 10	47-39-38	103-54-57	New Found	Moderate	Excavate when \$\$ avail		4 Will need to move a lot of dirt
Burns 10E Lower	T148N R104W NENW Sect 10	47-39-39	103-54-58	New Found	Low	Excavate when \$\$ avail		5 Easy access
Rodeseke 4	148N R104W SESW Sect 3	47-39.813	103-55.224	New Found	Low	Excavate when \$\$ avail		6 Easy access
McPeak/Klandl 27	T148N, R104W SW/NE Sect 27	47-36-49	103-54-46	Int trench 01/monitor	Low	Monitor	Low	Int trench holding
Alkali 13	T148N R105W NESE Sec 13	47-38-26	103-59-28	New Found	Low	Excavate when \$\$ avail		10 burning NE-SW easy access

Consider monitoring and fuel mitigations until such time as funds become available for excavation.

Costs for excavations will vary per site. Burns 10B & Burns 10D upper are burning on both sides of narrow ridges.

Coal Fire Locations in ND Outside McKenzie Ranger District
 Reported by Oscar Knudtson, AFMO, McKenzie District
 October 7-8, 2008

County	Township N	Range W	Section	Comments
McKenzie	149	98	28	Private property, Prestangen ownership, ignited a grass fire in 2008
McKenzie	144	101	20 & 21	Two fires in Magpie Creek area
Billings	142	100	7&8	"Big Sticks" Fire north of TR Park, S Unit
Slope	135	105	9&16	Approximately 12 fires on public and private lands west of Little Missouri River, north of Marmarth, ND.