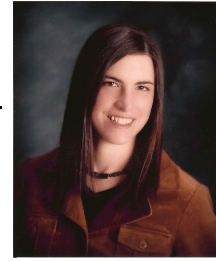


# Sara Simmers, M.S.

## *Environmental Scientist/Biologist*

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### RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Sara Simmers joined the WPC team as an Environmental Scientist/Biologist with a background in a variety of biological fieldwork. Her primary expertise and interests are in floristic surveys, vegetation sampling, and plant ecology research. She also offers experience in GPS mapping, various types of biological sampling and environmental data collection, development of restoration/reclamation plans, and modeling/decision analysis regarding land management problems.

Ms. Simmer's other responsibilities include: Phase I Environmental Site Assessment research for pre-purchase and property transfers - done according to ASTM Standards and working under qualified environmental professionals, research for project proposals, assistance with Forest Stewardship and Firewise Plans for individual landowners, quality control and editing, mapping applications using ArcView, and assistance with wetland delineation projects.

### PROJECT EXAMPLES

- **Project Manager, Botanist - Prairie Remnant Vegetation Studies, Minnesota.** Vegetation sampling, plant identification, management of field technician and field work logistics, data management and communication with partner agencies. Completed projects in a timely and efficient manner.
- **Project Manager, Botanist - Botanical Assessments, Wind Farm Development, North Dakota and South Dakota.** Conducted pre-construction botanical surveys for large consulting firms and energy companies to identify and evaluate quality of native prairie remnants for use avoiding the siting of turbines within high quality native prairie. Communication and coordination with federal agencies such as the US Fish and Wildlife Service was required.
- **Project Manager, Botanist/Ecologist - Ecological Assessment, Missouri River, North Dakota.** Identified and assessed the composition and quality of remnant ecological communities along a 3-4 mile wide corridor of the Missouri River between the Garrison Dam and Oahe Reservoir in central North Dakota for a state agency.
- **Botanist - Biological Assessments / Evaluations of Oil Well Settings - Western North Dakota.** Conducted botanical surveys for oil companies for pre-development oil well settings on U.S. Forest Service lands. Develop recommendations/determinations of the potential effects on threatened, endangered and sensitive flora and fauna to the U.S. Forest Service. Report data and prepare GIS maps.
- **Environmental Scientist/Botanist.** Involved in vegetation assessment component of numerous wetland delineations for pre-development and mitigation assessment projects.
- **Environmental Scientist/Botanist – FAA EIS Project.** Completed botanical surveys, wetland delineations and other aspects of an EIS study related to an airport expansion project.
- **Natural Resources Specialist - Revised Forest Stewardship Plans / “Firewise” Assessments.** Conducted assessments of established and native forest stands to develop initial and revised Forest Stewardship Plans. Met with forest landowners to discuss and provide “firewise” assessments regarding wildfire danger to the farmstead and livestock feed supplies and make recommendations towards improved fire protection.
- **Environmental Scientist.** Conducted numerous Phase I Environmental Site Assessments involving pre-purchase and property transfer site assessments. These projects involve assessing properties for environmental liabilities, evaluating regulatory and historical records for properties, and recommendations, if any, with environmental liabilities on these properties.

## **SPECIALIZED TRAINING**

- Plant identification: Proficient in the field identification of the flora of mixed grass prairie systems in the northern Great Plains using vegetative and flower/fruit characteristics (2 field seasons in western North Dakota; 2 field seasons in western MN, eastern SD, and throughout ND); also familiar with the flora of forests and savannas of Minnesota and heathlands and forests of the northeastern US
- Vegetation sampling: Trained in various quadrat sampling methods, relevé sampling, belt transect sampling, Visual Obstruction Measurements, biomass sampling, and the point-centered quarter method
- Practiced in using handheld GPS units and PDA devices for navigation and data manipulation including entering, basic editing, and downloading
- Competent in using ArcGIS (ArcMap interface) to view GIS data, generate maps, perform basic editing tasks, and perform simple modeling of spatial data
- Current techniques in restoration and reclamation of terrestrial and aquatic systems, including the development of restoration plans

## **EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE**

University of Minnesota - Graduate Research

Bismarck State College - Biology Laboratory Technician, Adjunct Biology Instructor

USDA Northern Great Plains Research Lab - Biological Science Aide, Agricultural Technician

Harvard Forest, Research Assistant

Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory - Research Assistant

## **EDUCATION**

M.S., Conservation Biology, University of Minnesota

B.A., Biology, Jamestown College

A.S., Biology, Bismarck State College

## **AFFILIATIONS**

Member, Ecological Society of America

Member, North Dakota Academy of Science

Member, Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory

Member, Society for Conservation Biology

Member, Society for Ecological Restoration



