

Natural Resources Conservation and Wildlife Hazard Assessment on Malmstrom Air Force Base

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Malmstrom AFB is committed to a proactive management strategy focused on an ecosystem-based approach to natural resources management, including the protection and conservation of wildlife, habitat, and the surrounding watershed. Key natural resource management issues at Malmstrom AFB include improving the ecological integrity of the prairie grassland habitat; updating and maintaining awareness of wildlife species on base and throughout the deployment area; protecting the Missouri River watershed; controlling the distribution of invasive plant and animal species; minimizing bird/wildlife aircraft strike hazards; sustaining opportunities for outdoor recreation, and fostering cooperative management with state and federal wildlife and natural resources agencies, NGO, and university stakeholders. A year-long wildlife hazard assessment is currently underway, which includes avian, mammal, and insect surveys using numerous methodologies in adherence with accepted wildlife and industry standards for WHAs, including identification of BASH hazards, natural resources management, and mission safety operations. Data and insights from the first 6 months of the WHA will be presented, including bat monitoring data, nocturnal survey data, avian trends and analyses, along with game camera surveys documenting bird and mammal species presence and abundance. Findings will be used to make recommendations to leadership, and to determine future projects and management goals for Malmstrom, incorporating updated wildlife data, climate change impacts, and mission goals.