

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF PRAIRIES WITHIN CLIMATE CHANGE?

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Abstract: Of all the threats to the success of prairie restoration and protection, climate change is likely the greatest threat. Invasive plant competition is a close second. Lack of native seed sources remains third. We are fast expanding a knowledge base on why and how to repair the natural landscape. Even native seed sources and related technology are increasing. However, all that good news is meaningless, in the face of climate change. Will prairies be part of the solution via carbon sequestration and/or biofuels? Or will our native grasslands be so changed in their composition and structure, these new uses will not be sustainable? Let's look at what we know and do not know at this point in time in order to predict our vegetation future.