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Planning for Potential Climate Change Impacts on Land Use in North Dakota: Attitudes, Policy, and Barriers

Grand Forks, ND – Despite increasing levels of awareness of the scientific evidence for climate change, actions toward mitigation and adaptation measures are lagging in many regions of the United States, such as the Northern Great Plains.

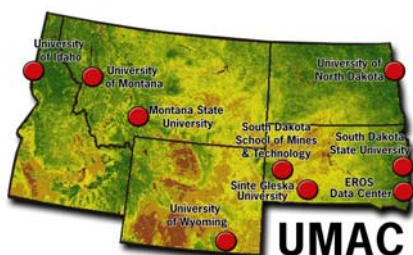
Dr. Rebecca Romsdahl, an Assistant Professor in UND's Department of Earth System Science and Policy (ESSP) will present the findings of a mail survey she is conducting to assess levels of consideration and planning for climate change impacts amongst a sample of 495 state, regional, and local government decision-makers in North Dakota on Friday, March 14, 2008 at 3:00 p.m. in Clifford Hall Auditorium, room 210, on the UND campus.

The Great Plains regions of the United States are significant in climate-relative categories such as agriculture and renewable fuels development. However, the NGP region is not well studied and therefore often suffers from lack of attention on national policy agendas.

Dr. Romsdahl's survey aims to address the following questions: to what degree are these decision-makers considering the potential implications of changing climatic conditions and what, if any, steps are they taking to adapt their management of natural resources and public health? How can climate research be made more accessible for these decision-makers; and how can they become engaged in a dialogue with researchers so that climate science can better inform government decision-making in North Dakota? The survey serves as a pilot project to help prepare for a more extensive survey of government decision-makers across 6 states in the Northern Great Plains region.

Dr. Romsdahl joined ESSP in 2006. Her research interests focus on the human dimensions of global environmental change and government interaction with stakeholders in developing environmental policies. She received her BA in Environmental Studies from Gustavus Adolphus College, her MS in Resource Development at Michigan State University and received her PhD in Environmental Science & Public Policy from George Mason University.

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