

## University Committee Charter

**Committee:** Field Station Committee

**Committee Background and History:** The committee was formed in 2007 to establish the means and methods used by the institution to maintain each field station, ensure its safe use, and prioritize funding obligations.

Field station lands include a native prairie remnant (Oakville Prairie), a native riparian forest area (Inkster), and agricultural land (Mekinock). The prairie and the riparian forest are rare ecosystems in North Dakota, and are the closest thing to ecosystems that existed at the time the Dakota Territory was settled. Additionally, Oakville Prairie is the only native prairie remnant in a large swath of prairie in Grand Forks County.

At the time of establishment, the committee was under the direction of the Vice President for Finance and Operations. In 2012, upon further development of the field stations, the oversight of the committee, and the areas it governs, management was transferred to the Vice President for Research and Economic Development. The land comprising the field stations is valuable as infrastructure for research, as well as for educational purposes. Preservation of the native prairie remnant at Oakville is also important because it is part of the state's patrimony.

**Field Station Background:** Of the sites, Oakville Prairie is most valuable ecologically. Remnant prairie in this region is rare. Research on grassland ecosystems provides a vital contribution to basic ecological theory, and grasslands continue to serve as a focal ecosystem for basic research in ecological restoration. Grassland ecosystems have served as model systems for research on biodiversity and ecosystem functioning, and the relationship between diversity and stability. Additionally, grasslands are now at the center of the debate about carbon and biofuels. For these reasons, Oakville Prairie has considerable ecological research and education value. A small portion of the Oakville site is fenced off and used as an observatory site.

The Inkster site has several important advantages for hydrological and ecological research, and education in terrestrial and aquatic ecology. There are significant advantages for research and long-term monitoring. Large forest fragments appear to be relatively rare regionally, especially in areas with riparian habitat and streams. The site is strongly impacted by surrounding land use. Stream water quality appears to be an issue, but the site is valuable for cross-site comparative studies.

The Meekinock (airbase) lands are not unique, but they do possess research and education value. Not only the old field site but, also the agriculture fields are the dominant land use type in this region. Ecological research has expanded beyond the focus on remnants of undisturbed nature to understand the full impact of human activities in highly variable landscapes. The agricultural sites provide opportunities for measuring the impacts of row crop agriculture on soil carbon and nitrogen fluxes. They also serve as comparative sites for studies of microbial diversity and of

impacts of agriculture on surrounding habitats. Continuing the agricultural leases on these lands also generates income that can be used for support of field station activities.

Together these three sites represent endpoints in the landscape: forest remnant, grassland remnant, and the most common land-use type, row crop agriculture. Although the grassland and forest remnants are not replicated, they still provide the potential for landscape-scale comparative research. The grassland and forest sites deserve conservation for the ecosystem services they provide, including conservation of biodiversity, aesthetics, and carbon sequestration, all of which have real economic value to the University and the State.

**Classification/Terms of Appointment:** The Field Station Committee will be a standing committee of the Division of Research and Economic Development. The Charter will be reviewed annually by the Vice President for Research and Economic Development.

**Formal Charges:** The Field Station Committee will be advisory to the Vice President for Research and Economic Development on the preservation of the land, and on use of the land for education and/or research by all faculty and students of the University of North Dakota. Proposals for use of the field stations must be submitted to the committee and be approved by it. In exigent circumstances, approval may be given by the Vice President for Research and Economic Development.

**Reporting Channels/Procedures:** The committee reports to the Vice President for Research and Economic Development.

**Membership:** The committee will be composed of two appointees from the Biology Department, one appointee from the office of the Vice President for Finance and Operations, one appointee named by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and one appointee named by the Dean of the School of Aerospace Sciences. The Vice President for Research and Economic Development or a designee from the Division will chair the committee.

**Appointment:** All members will be appointed in writing by the Vice President for Research and Economic Development.

**Membership Terms:** Committee membership will be reviewed periodically.

**Officers:** The Vice President for Research and Economic Development or a designee from the Division will chair the committee.

**Subcommittees:** The Field Station Committee may appoint various subcommittees as necessary and appropriate to manage daily activities of the field stations. Authority granted to any subcommittee must be in writing and approved by the Vice President for Research and Economic Development.

**Frequency of Meetings:** This committee will meet on an annual basis or as determined by the chairperson.

**Notice of Meetings/Meeting Agendas and Support Material:** A notice will be sent to all committee members with the appropriate supportive information.

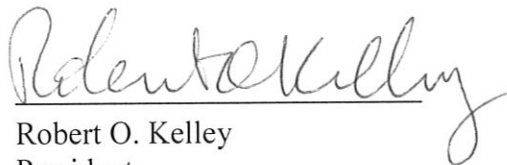
**Committee Minutes:** Minutes of committee meetings will be contained within reporting guidelines. All approved uses of the field stations will be recorded into meeting minutes produced by the chairperson, and will include the person(s) authorized to enter and use the site, the nature of the research or education, and the duration of the use.


**Committee Reports:** Committee reports and recommendations will be prepared and submitted to the Vice President for Research and Economic Development.

**Meeting Quorum:** A simple majority will constitute the necessary quorum for conduct of official business.

**Amendment of the Charter:** Should any amendment to this Charter be required, the Committee Chair will work with the committee (and the VPRED if not part of the committee) in developing suitable language. Proposed changes will be submitted to the President for approval in a timely manner.

**This University Committee Charter is effective as of May 9, 2012.**

  
Robert O. Kelley  
President

  
Phyllis E. Johnson  
Vice President for Research and Economic  
Development