

BREEDING BIRDS OF RECLAIMED AND NATIVE WOODLAND DRAWS
ON THE GLENHAROLD MINE, NORTH DAKOTA

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ABSTRACT

Eisinger, Darin James; M.S.; Department of Animal and Range Sciences; Program of Natural Resources Management; College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources; North Dakota State University; May 2004. Breeding Birds of Reclaimed and Native Woodland Draws on the Glenharold Mine, North Dakota. Major Professor: Dr. Don Kirby.

Breeding bird surveys were conducted in two woodlands on the Glenharold Mine in west-central North Dakota, one a native tall shrub community and the second a reclaimed woodland following strip mining activity. Federal law requires that, given time, breeding bird richness, density, and diversity of reclaimed woodlands will be similar to native woodlands. Surveys were conducted between 1986 and 2000, with the exception of 1997 and 1999. Vegetation data were collected each year for the reclaimed woodland, while vegetation data for the native woodland were collected in 2001. Vegetation of the native woodland had ten woody species with western snowberry and hawthorn the most abundant. Foliage height was also diverse, with more than 50% of the stems above 5 m. The reclaimed woodland contained five woody species. Chokecherry and American plum were the most abundant. Foliage height was generally less than 5 m. Breeding bird density and richness were significantly greater in the native woodland throughout the study. The trend in the reclaimed woodland, however, was positive, showing that as it matured, higher densities of birds were attracted to the woodland. Given time, the breeding bird populations of the reclaimed woodland should near those of the native. Additional management of vegetation through the thinning of existing species or the introduction of other native species, especially tall canopy species, either naturally or artificially, could also improve this woodland for native breeding birds.