NATIVE GRASSLANDS IN THE HURON (SOUTH DAKOTA) AREA

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The greater part of the land in eastern South Dakota is under cultivation. Crops have been grown on some of it for 50 years or more, and the remainder has been broken up more or less gradually. During the period of the World War a great impetus was given to breaking much of the remaining prairie sod, due especially to the great demand for wheat. A casual observer might get the impression that practically all of the land in this part of the state is under cultivation. While this is hardly the case, nearly all land suitable for cultivation, and some not suitable, has been broken up. Some of the most serious erosion problems occur on the latter type of land. Interest in virgin areas has been greatly increased during the last few years due to their resistance to erosion by both wind and water. In order to determine the approximate amount and distribution of native sod in this section of South Dakota, the condition of present grass stands, and to get additional information on the distribution of the predominating grasses and weed plants, a survey of a fairly large acreage of land was undertaken.

The Wolsey and Shue Creek Soil Conservation Demonstration areas near Huron were utilized for the study which was carried on during late winter and spring of 1936. The Shue Creek area contains about 144,000 acres and is located east of the James River, principally in the east-central part of Beadle County. Its northeastern part includes the extreme southeast corner of Spink County and a part of southwestern Clark County. Originally this demonstration area was supposed to include the watershed of Shue Creek, but later additional territory to the south was included.

The Wolsey area is located in the western part of Beadle County and extends in a northwest and southeast direction. Cain Creek runs along its border on the west, both north and south, and traverses a part of the west-central portion. Forty-six thousand acres are included in this area.

METHODS OF MAKING SURVEY

A map with numbered sections, townships, and ranges was used in making the survey. An automobile speedometer sensitive to one-tenth mile was used for measuring distances. The project areas were traversed from east to west, and

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