

# Human Impact on Native Prairie Land



Grades: 6-12

Subject: Social Studies

- **Essential Question:** How has human interaction with the prairie shaped Minnesota's environment, culture, and identity over time?



## Before Viewing:

- Invite students to imagine what a prairie looks like. What do they think it is used for? Who does it belong to?
- Provide students with background on the prairie's history (before European settlement, Minnesota's prairie supported diverse ecosystems as well as Indigenous communities who relied on the land).

## During Viewing:

Have students watch the video and listen carefully to answer the following comprehension questions:

1. Approximately how many acres of Minnesota did the prairie used to cover?
2. What features and types of wildlife could be seen on the prairie back then?
3. What color is Indian grass?
4. What animals does the prairie attract?
5. How long ago do stories about the glaciers date back?
6. In what ways do Indigenous people use the prairie?
7. What do prairies need to remain diverse?
8. What misconception about national park systems is mentioned in the video?
9. Why is the prairie considered a harsh place to live?
10. Why did European settlers begin colonizing Minnesota prairie?
11. Why was Western expansion devastating for Indigenous inhabitants of the prairie?
12. What percentage of native prairie is left in Minnesota?
13. How do bison impact the prairie's ecosystem?
14. What would happen if we lost all of our native prairies?



## After Viewing:

Activity – Have students write a response explaining how human relationships with the Minnesota prairie have changed over time, using specific evidence from the video to support their ideas.

