

## **Appendix G**

### **Validation Plot Field Sampling Protocol**

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## Field Sampling Protocol

The field data collection will be performed across a sampling plot array which consists of a focal plot and four peripheral plots in the cardinal directions (Figure 1). The sampling array is an attempt to collect vegetation community information across an extent that more closely represents the scale communities are being delineated on the imagery.

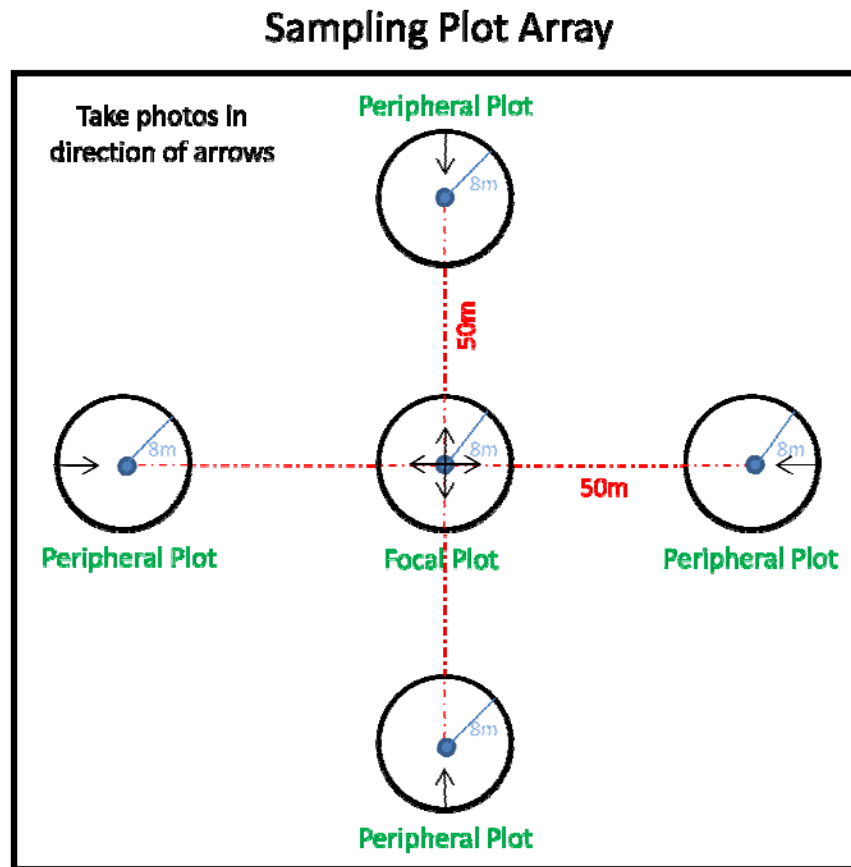


Figure 1. The Idaho National Laboratory Site 2009 field validation sampling plot array.

1. Focal Plot coordinates will be loaded on the GPS receivers and each crew will navigate to the central point of each plot array.
2. Once you arrive at the center point of the Focal Plot, one crew member will place the Ringpin (with 8m length of cord attached) in the ground. The second crew member will extend the cord and begin walking the plot boundary and creating a species list for the plot.
3. A new Rover File will be opened at each sampling plot array. Within a single Rover File, multiple points can be collected, and we will collect point locations at the center of the Focal Plot and each Peripheral Plot. Once all five GPS locations have been collected, the Rover File should be closed until you arrive at the next sampling plot array.

4. The first crew member will collect the GPS coordinate at the central point of the Focal Plot . Every GPS point will be collected holding the receiver still around waist height until 120 points (logging at one second intervals) are collected. There is a data dictionary loaded on each GPS receivers that will require certain information to be entered before a point location can be closed. At each point the Observers, Plot ID, and surface characteristic must be entered. There will be drop-down menus for each data field, but Plot ID will need to be manually entered using the keypad.
5. After the 120 points are collected for the center of the plot the same crew member will take four photos of the plot array area. The photos will be taken in the four cardinal directions starting in the North and then sequentially to the East, South, and West. It is important to always collect the photos and other plot data in the N, E, S, W order.
6. The crew member collecting the GPS points and taking the photos will join the second crew member and assist completing the species list, rank assignments, and community designation from the dichotomous key.
7. Once the species list is made, the crew will assign a cover class (rank) to each of the species in the list. The cover rankings are on a scale of 1-4.  
  
1= Dominant or Co-dominant  
2= Abundant; comprising a substantial portion of live plant cover, but not Dominant  
3= Common; easily found but not contributing a large portion of plant cover  
4= Rare, only a few individuals found within the plot
8. After all the data are collected at the Focal Plot, you will use the GPS to navigate to the North Peripheral Plot and repeat steps 2-4.
9. Then use the GPS to navigate to the N, E, S, and W points in the plot array and repeat the procedure in steps 7-10.

\*In some locations on the INL Site the compasses may not be completely accurate due to magnetic fields put off by underlying rock.