

College Range & Ag Clubs

Science in the Sagebrush Steppe

April 25-28, 2019
Out on the Range near Burns, OR



Why a College Rangeland Gathering?

College Range and Ag Clubs provide a great conduit to explore career opportunities in the rangeland science field and to begin meeting those who work in this field. At EOARC we conduct extensive rangeland research that becomes “science managers can use” to enhance and improve rangeland management. Through this event, you can meet people making a career in rangeland management, we can learn together about the real issues facing rangeland management, and you will gain some extra experience on the land in a fun setting! We are glad to have you out on the range!



What to bring?

- Be prepared for being outside, with good shoes or boots, sunscreen, hats, warm coats, rain gear, insect repellent, etc.
- Weather permitting, students attending will sleep in tents. Pack your tents, sleeping bags, etc. There are separate camping areas for men and women.
- A camp chair for around the campfire would be good to pack if you have room.
- Since we will be outdoors in tents, please be prepared for changing weather conditions—rain or shine! Seriously—see above snow picture from 2014.
- There are indoor restrooms and showers available.
- Meals will be provided. Special dietary needs—please bring with you.
- Cell phone service is limited.

Where?

The Northern Great Basin Experimental Range (NGBER) is about 35 miles west of Burns, OR and encompasses more than 16,000 acres. The rangeland is used by researchers investigating many aspects of sagebrush steppe ecology and livestock production. NGBER supports a variety of plant communities including western juniper, sagebrush and many of the grasses and forbs common to northern Great Basin rangelands. Make sure you e-mail or call if you need specific directions.



Questions? Contact:

Gabi Johnson
Camp Coordinator
541-589-1239

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Friday Night

~Dutch Oven Dessert Competition~
Teams! Bring your Dutch oven, a recipe and ingredients for your favorite dessert. We provide the coals and the prizes!

The Range Management Plan Competition—Bring your A game

You might have heard something about a bird—the Greater Sage-Grouse. In Harney County a dedicated group of people concerned about the economic and ecological health of our region have developed the Harney County Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAAs) for private land owners who may be impacted by an endangered species listing for this bird. These are US Fish and Wildlife approved land owner agreements where a land owner may voluntarily enroll their private lands into the program for up to 30 years and remove or reduce threats to the benefit of the species at risk. In return for managing their lands to the benefit of a species at risk, landowners receive assurances against additional regulatory requirements should the sage-grouse ever be listed under the Endangered Species Act. Enrolled lands are assessed for health and overall habitat conditions. The Science in the Sagebrush Steppe Management Plan competition is patterned after the CCAA Site Specific Plans and teams will develop a plan based on these guidelines. Each team will have a different site to evaluate and develop a plan for.



Tentative Schedule for “Science in the Sagebrush Steppe”

Thursday April 25—teams arrive by 5 pm-Welcome to the Sagebrush Steppe

- Set up camp
- Introductions, materials, competition guidelines & expectations for the weekend
- Night time navigation
- Around the campfire

Friday April 26— Getting out on the Land

- Dynamic relationship between soil, water, and plants
- Plant ID, functional groups & plant surveys
- Sagebrush & Juniper Ecosystems—What do we Manage & How do we Manage them?
- Invasive Weeds—How they Change the Management Picture?
- Livestock interactions on the land
- Evening presentation—Collaboration in Harney County - with the events that have been occurring in Harney County over the last couple of months we will invite speakers to share their perspective.

Saturday April 27– Developing a Management Plan Competition

- Fire ecology and western juniper
- Management options for restoration and improving re-seeding success
- Teams prepare and present Management Plan
- Awards
- Campfire



Sunday April 28—Head on Home

- Pack-up & Breakfast
- Hike to the Butte, more plant ID on your own
- Head on back to School—Hope you had a great time!



We have a great line-up—We have invited a rancher presentation, agency folks from BLM in Burns, Forest Service, NRCS, Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife and US Fish and Wildlife Service. Harney Co. Watershed Council and Soil & Water Conservation Districts they will be presenters, team leads and judges in the management plan competition.

A few of the folks from Eastern Oregon Agricultural Research Center you likely will hear from include:



Jon Bates - Dr. Bates is a Rangeland Ecologist. His current research focuses include management and plant community restoration in juniper woodlands, and response of sagebrush steppe to altered precipitation patterns.

Roger Sheley - As a Rangeland Ecologist at the ARS, Dr. Sheley's research focus is invasive plants and understanding the true causes of infestations. Previously, he was with Montana State Univ. as extension rangeland specialist and has extensive experience in range settings.



David Bohnert—A ruminant nutritionist, Dr. Bohnert is the OSU Beef Cattle Specialist at EOARC. His current research focus is on nutritional management strategies to improve the sustainability of beef production in the Intermountain West.

Chad Boyd- Dr. Boyd is the research leader for ARS at EOARC, and a Rangeland Scientist who received his PhD from Oklahoma State University. His current research interests are focused on sage grouse, management riparian grazing ecology, stream temperature and willow monitoring.



Brenda Smith— A Weed Scientist by training, Dr. Smith works on invasive plant research, education and outreach. She has been a farmer and taught weed science courses. Her interest is in creating field based educational opportunities and organizes the SSS.

Tony Svejcar - Dr. Svejcar is a Rangeland Scientist and recently retired Research Leader for ARS at EOARC. His research interests include carbon and nitrogen cycling in the sagebrush steppe, western juniper ecology, prescribed fire, grazing impacts on upland and riparian areas.



Dustin Johnson- Dustin is a rangeland outreach specialist with OSU at EOARC. He has a background in rangeland ecology and conducts research to improve management of both private and public rangelands.

Urban Strachan—As a range technician for Dr. Davies, Urban works in rangeland forage management research. He also has a background in the military and will lead our night-time navigation with the use of GPS technology.



Lori Ziegenhagen - Lori is a Rangeland Science Technician and is responsible for carrying out field and laboratory research at EOARC. Among her many talents are her excellent skills in Botany, especially in identifying rangeland grass species.