



# NEWSLETTER

Fall 2020

## NDGLC Update from the Chairman

*Jerry Doan, Chairman NDGLC*

It sure is hard to believe we're already into September. As always, in North Dakota agriculture, we have areas in severe drought and areas that are very wet. Mother Nature will always challenge even the best management skills! I do know with regenerative agriculture, utilizing planned rotational grazing and good soil health principles we can manage the tests Mother Nature throws our way.

I want to thank all who attended the Summer Tour at Gene Goven's Ranch close to Turtle Lake. We had a very good crowd and the tour was very educational! Gene is one of the pioneers in holistic management and planned rotational grazing in North Dakota, and has a wealth of knowledge and experience to share. The networking among participants and sharing ideas is one of the best tools for us all to learn and expand our knowledge. It is always fun and exciting to challenge traditional thinking and explore or show other ways to bring profitability while regenerating our natural resources.

It was very exciting to see many young people at the tour looking for ideas and thoughts on how to improve and become successful. Gene and I both told the tour group that day that it is a challenge in agriculture and ranching to embrace different ideas and practices. Main stream agriculture is very traditional and new, and creative ideas can be looked on as dumb or foolish. The North Dakota Grazing Land Coalition (NDGLC) is here to help you with those challenges. We have both Trish Feiring on staff to help as well as our whole mentor network. We can all help you through those challenges. Please go to our [website](#) for contact information.

I would also like to thank everyone that helped with the Bird Bonanza held at the Goven Ranch. Dr. Rebecca Phillips, Audubon Dakota and NDGLC put together a unique birding program that incorporated grasslands and soil conservation. This event is important because it gets our city friends that love the birds and wildlife out on the grasslands. We can then teach the importance of the grasslands as well. This year the event targeted educators. The educators received credits for the class and it was very well received.

I believe it is very important for us to reach out and partner where we can with other groups to reach different audiences about the importance of the grasslands. Remember, North Dakota has lost 75 percent of its native grasslands in the last 200 years. I appreciate the vast agricultural diversity in North Dakota and the many farm crops we grow. However, if we love wildlife and the vast diversity and beauty it offers, the carbon sequestration native grassland helps with, and the healthy products our ruminant animals give us, maybe we should work hard to regenerate those grasslands for future generations. We know that when Lewis and Clark came to what is now North Dakota they wrote of abundant grasslands. These were very diverse and healthy because of vast herds of buffalo. It is the grazing animals that keep that grassland health alive and well! Allen Savory said at our workshop a couple years ago, "if you take the animals off the land the land will desertify"

Have a great fall and stop to enjoy the beauty of the landscape!

**Registration is Open for the Mentor Guided Workshop**



## North Dakota Grazing Lands Coalition MENTOR-GUIDED WORKSHOP

Wednesday, Oct. 28

8:00 a.m.	Registration	12:00 p.m.	Lunch
8:30 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why We Seek and Keep Seeking - <i>Joshua and Tara Dukart</i></li> <li>• Grazing in the Denbigh Sandhills - <i>Rob Kramer</i></li> <li>• The Things We Learn Along the Way - <i>Amanda Njos</i></li> </ul>	1:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why We Seek and Keep Seeking - <i>Joshua and Tara Dukart</i></li> <li>• Grazing in the Denbigh Sandhills - <i>Rob Kramer</i></li> <li>• The Things We Learn Along the Way - <i>Amanda Njos</i></li> </ul>
9:15 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sleeping with the Boss - Living, Loving and Working with Your Partner - <i>Annie Carlson</i></li> <li>• Retirement Ranching - <i>Brad Sand</i></li> <li>• Don't Get Caught on the Fence, Strategies That May Work for You - <i>David Bauer</i></li> </ul>	1:45 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sleeping with the Boss - Living, Loving and Working with Your Partner - <i>Annie Carlson</i></li> <li>• Retirement Ranching - <i>Brad Sand</i></li> <li>• Don't Get Caught on the Fence, Strategies That May Work for You - <i>David Bauer</i></li> </ul>
10:00 a.m.	Break	2:30 p.m.	Break
10:30 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What Grassland Managers Want to Know about Carbon and Methane - <i>Rebecca (Beckie) Phillips</i></li> <li>• Cattle + Crops = Our Struggles and Successes - <i>Christof Just</i></li> <li>• The Value of Diversity in 2020 - <i>Derrick Dukart</i></li> </ul>	3:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What Grassland Managers Want to Know about Carbon and Methane - <i>Rebecca (Beckie) Phillips</i></li> <li>• Cattle + Crops = Our Struggles and Successes - <i>Christof Just</i></li> <li>• The Value of Diversity in 2020 - <i>Derrick Dukart</i></li> </ul>
11:15 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lender Panel                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Jeff Blee, Dakota Community Bank &amp; Trust</i></li> <li>- <i>Sam Arndorfer, Farm Credit Services of Mandan</i></li> <li>- <i>Don Morgan, Starion Financial</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Partner Panel                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Partner's for Wildlife</i></li> <li>- <i>Bakken Working Lands Program</i></li> <li>- <i>Duck's Unlimited Working Lands Conservation Programs</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Let's Talk Sheep                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Keith, Pete and Thomas Kronberg</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	3:45 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lender Panel                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Jeff Blee, Dakota Community Bank &amp; Trust</i></li> <li>- <i>Sam Arndorfer, Farm Credit Services of Mandan</i></li> <li>- <i>Don Morgan, Starion Financial</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Partner Panel                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Partner's for Wildlife</i></li> <li>- <i>Bakken Working Lands Program</i></li> <li>- <i>Duck's Unlimited Working Lands Conservation Programs</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Let's Talk Sheep                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Keith, Pete and Thomas Kronberg</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
		4:30 p.m.	Wrap Up

REGISTER BY OCT. 21 at [www.NDGLC.com](http://www.NDGLC.com) or by calling NDGLC at 701-355-4458.

\$50 per person/\$30 for members (Tickets include lunch & snacks)

A block of rooms has been held under ND Grazing Lands Coalition at Ramada Hotel. Reservations can be made by calling 701-258-7000 by Oct. 14.

Register Today

## Grasslands Ecology Workshop: Sharing Conservation and Grazing Practices with the Next Generation

Kylie Blanchard

In June, the NDGLC, in partnership with Audubon Dakota, hosted its first Grasslands Ecology Workshop. The workshop provided teachers with information regarding grazing lands and the impact of grazing on ecosystem properties and functions, while also providing higher education credit. The workshop was led by Dr. Rebecca L. Phillips, research leader/science application specialist with Ecological Insights Corporation and biologist with the NDGLC.

She says the workshop was inspired by a similar class offered by the South Dakota Grassland Coalition. "The purpose of the workshop was to encourage high school student science inquiry education for grazing land ecosystems," Phillips says. "This is achieved by demonstrating linkages between science and regenerative livestock management practices."

Topics covered included biodiversity, avian habitat and greenhouse gas exchange. Participants completed five one-hour remote learning sessions, as well as participated in an outdoor field day at the ranch of 2019 Leopold Award Winner Gene Goven.

"In my role as an educator, I like to employ knowledge about the environment in which my student's have a direct relationship," says Baron Blanchard, a Bismarck Public Schools teacher and workshop participant. "My biggest take away was the perceived verses actual outcomes of various types of land management techniques."

At the workshop's field day, Goven educated participants on the use of livestock in

land and conservation enhancement. “I wanted to emphasize livestock as a tool to achieve a desired result, whether it be soil health, birding, wildlife or water quality,” he says. “I wanted to tie it all to how it is related to our health.”

“Many times, it is difficult for students to understand how science affects their lives,” adds Phillips. “By understanding how science can be applied to the outdoors and managing lands, there may be greater interest in learning by students.”

The Grasslands Ecology Workshop was developed as a pilot for 2020, but Phillips says there are plans to improve and build upon what was learned in its first year. She says outreach will continue throughout the school year to educators and high-school students, with support from the North Dakota Natural Resources Trust.

“The youth will be the future stewards of the Earth,” says Blanchard. “The more they understand about conservation efforts and the positive and negative effects they can have on the ecosystem this will hopefully provide them with the data they need to make a positive future impact.”

“The youth are the future and it is important to share this with them,” adds Goven. “The ripple effects of this sharing will continue to extend outwards.”

For more information on the Grasslands Ecology Workshop or teacher and classroom outreach, email Phillips at [Ecolnsights@protonmail.com](mailto:Ecolnsights@protonmail.com).

## The Pros and Cons of Prescribed Burning

*Trish Feiring*

Prairie fires are a part of North Dakota’s history. While some were caused by lightning, others were caused by the careless acts of humans. Native Americans would also set fires to burn off small acreages. This was done to entice wild game to come in close and graze, as well as remove dense cover to hunt more easily.

Later in the summer and early fall, the grasses would dry out and become fuel for fires. These fires would drive bison and other wildlife out of the area. Due to little moisture, the grass would not grow back, and the bison herds would move on to other areas where there was grass.

Bison numbers steadily decreased in the early nineteenth century, which meant more fuel to burn when there was a prairie fire. Over time, the number of prairie fires was reduced due to roads and conversion of grassland to cropland.

### Pros

- Encourages native grasses to thrive when the old thatch is burned.
- Creates potential positive, long-term effects on wildlife habitat.
- Reduces invasive species, such as noxious weeds or cedar trees.
- Positively impacts the species composition on native rangeland.
- Improves palatability of undesirable species.

### Cons

- Creates danger for wild and domesticated animals and potential hardship to those who depended on them to survive.
- Risks destroying farmsteads and infrastructure.
- Establishes a liability risk.
- Accelerates the effects of drought by removing all the cover on the soil.
- Creates a negative, short-term effect on wildlife habitat.
- Promotes the loss of carbon into the atmosphere rather than carbon sequestration through the plant.
- Causes short-term loss of food, shelter and habitat for wildlife.
- Not a revenue generating tool, such as grazing.

Prescribed burning should be considered a tool, and not used as a management practice on a regular basis. Having the proper crew, timing the burn and taking into

consideration the soil, plants and animals in the area will help ensure positive results are achieved. Producers considering a prescribed burn should contact the local NRCS office for additional training and resources.

## Black Leg Ranch Inducted into the ND Cowboy Hall of Fame

*Nicci Johnson*

published by: [KXNET.com](http://KXNET.com)

Black Leg Ranch was inducted into the North Dakota Cowboy Hall of fame last week, along with several other inductees. This is the 25th year the North Dakota Cowboy Hall of Fame has been recognizing individuals and groups who have made significant contributions to North Dakota's western heritage and lifestyle.

We spoke to the owner and his sons to see how they're doing back at the ranch.

"We're just tickled pink you know. The heritage in the North Dakota West is huge and we need to preserve it and not only preserve it. We need to promote it," said Jerry Doan, Owner at Black Leg Ranch.

And that's what they do at Black Leg Ranch. Homesteaded in 1882, the ranch is located 25 miles southeast of Bismarck and is home to more than 17,000 acres. It all started when his great-grandfather came to the U.S. from England to find a better way of life.

[Read More](#)

## Congratulations to the Leopold Award Finalists

*Becky Thorp*

The Sand County Foundation, along with the North Dakota Grazing Lands Coalition, North Dakota Association of Soil Conservation Districts and North Dakota Stockmen's Association, recently announced the Dockter-Jensen Ranch in Denhoff, Johnson Family Ranch in Wolford and Paul Ranch in southcentral Grant County as the 2020 North Dakota Leopold Conservation Award finalists. The winner will be awarded \$10,000 and will be announced soon.

"It is an honor to present the finalists for this esteemed award. Each operation has shown outstanding achievement in implementation of voluntary conservation, inspiration of other landowners by example, and outreach on the role private landowners play in conservation," said Jerry Doan, NDGLC president.

## Field Representative Update: Findings from the Field

*Trish Feiring*

Summer has come and gone, and now fall is upon us. The summer was spent meeting with producers to assist them with grazing strategies, fence planning and water development strategies. I am in the middle of planning with multiple producers on some projects for next summer. In working over the summer, one thing became apparent to me: we all need to do a better job documenting what is going on in our pastures. Pictures are worth a thousand words! Here are a few tips on when and where to take your photos:

1. Take a photo when you place your salt/mineral feeder in the middle of a buckbrush patch, and then come back in the fall to take another photo to see what is happening. Follow up the next summer with one more to see how the location is progressing.

2. Take a photo when moving cattle into a pasture and then again when taking them out of the same pasture. Find a landmark to use in the background. Take one photo of the landscape and one looking at the ground.

Please contact me if you are interested in learning more about the conservation programs that are available in your area. I will do my best to help you find the best fit for your operation.

## Women Caring for the Land

*Trish Feiring*

Women Caring for the Land brought about 40 women to the Rider's Ranch and the Feiring's Ranch this summer to give women landowners the opportunity to connect with one another, discuss conservation and view the innovative practices employed by both the Feirings and the Riders.



## NDGLC Summer Tour Pictures

*Kyle Martin*

This year's Leopold Conservation Award and NDGLC Summer Tour, held on July 31 at the Goven Ranch, brought more than 70 people together to learn about grassland management and conservation from the 2019 Leopold Award winners Gene and Christine Goven. Kyle Martin, an employee of NDGLC through Clearwater Communications, captured [videos](#) and [pictures](#) from the day.

## Upcoming Events

### **Mentor Guided Workshop - Oct. 28**

A Mentor Guided Workshop will be held in Bismarck on Oct. 28 from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Ramada Hotel in Bismarck. Farmers and ranchers interested in regenerative land management are invited to hear from NDGLC mentors and partners promoting grassland habitat while improving resiliency to their operations. This year's sessions will focus on the importance of managing grassland health through different management practices and financial assistance. Hotel reservations can be made at

the Ramada in Bismarck by calling 701-258-7000 through Oct. 14. [Register today.](#)

NDGLC will be selling caps at the Mentor Guided Workshop for \$15. They are available for pre-order during registration and will also be available for purchase at the workshop registration table.



### **2021 Winter Conference - Jan. 12-13**

The NDGLC Winter Conference will be held in Dickinson at the Grand Hotel on Jan. 12-13. Registration will open soon.

## **NDGLC Membership**

The mission of the NDGLC is to promote the health and regeneration of North Dakota's grasslands. Farmers and ranchers can become members of the NDGLC for annual dues of \$30. Members will receive newsletters, plus email notifications of pertinent events, legislation and other opportunities, on a regular basis. Members may also attend field days and other workshops at a discounted rate. [Join today.](#)

## **Your News**

[Contact the NDGLC office](#) regarding inclusion in future newsletters.

North Dakota Grazing Lands Coalition  
[www.ndglc.com](http://www.ndglc.com)  
701-355-4458

