



Managing IANR Prairies

Impacts At-A-Glance



Prescribed fire is a tool used to manage Nine-Mile Prairie and Dalbey Prairie.

“In a sense, the University prairies are demonstrations of conservation on working grasslands.”

— Dave Wedin, Director, Nine-Mile Prairie and Dalbey Prairie

The Center for Grassland Studies is responsible for managing two tallgrass prairies, Nine-Mile Prairie near Lincoln and Dalbey Prairie in Gage County, owned by the University of Nebraska Foundation. The Center hosted an open house in September 2021 at the newly-recognized Dalbey Prairie. The Center is also a principal collaborator with the Center for Resilience in Agricultural Working Landscapes (CRAWL) and Eastern Nebraska Research, Extension, and Education Center in managing the Barta Brothers Ranch, 5,400 acres of Sandhills prairie in Rock and Brown Counties.

The Center in collaboration with Platte Basin Timelapse produced a video on *Nebraska’s Grassland Legacy* at grassland.unl.edu.

The 2020 Nine-Mile Prairie Environs Master Plan provides input for development of the Lincoln and Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan.

The Center collaborates with CRAWL in developing and securing nearly \$1 million in funding for the Collaborative Adaptive Management Project at the Barta Brothers Ranch.



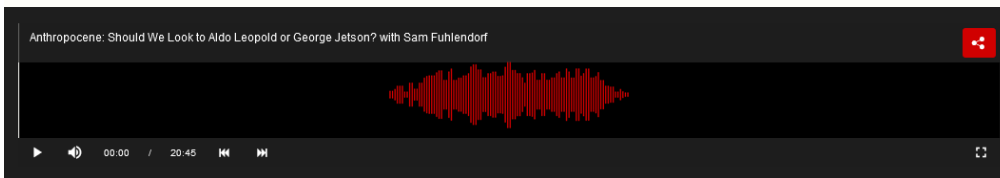
Podcast Episodes

Impacts At-A-Glance



“The 10- to 15-minute podcast episodes are excellent previews of upcoming presentations in the Fall Seminar Series (FSS).”

*— Student, GRAS 495
Grassland Seminar*



The Center for Grassland Studies developed a podcast series in 2020 to support its efforts in providing current and relevant information to a diverse audience interested in grasslands. Podcast episodes are interviews of Center affiliates addressing stakeholder questions and of speakers presenting at the Nebraska Grazing Conference and the Fall Seminar Series. The podcast interviews can be found at <https://mediahub.unl.edu/channels/25356>.

25-35 interviews are posted annually to the Center for Grassland Studies channel.

There are nearly 500 hits on the Center’s channel annually.

Grassland specialists from across the country, from Idaho to Oklahoma to North Dakota, are interviewed.



Nebraska Grazing Conference

Impacts At-A-Glance

www.grassland.unl.edu
grassland@unl.edu



Field tours are the highlight of the Nebraska Grazing Conference for many attendees.

“Topics were great! I like how you included speakers that actually implement different grazing techniques in their own operations.”

*— Attendee, 2020
Nebraska Grazing Conference*

The Nebraska Grazing Conference (NGC), held annually since 2001 in Kearney, Nebraska, continues to serve ranchers, farmers, wildlife managers, conservation groups, and advisers who want to learn about managing grazing lands for multiple ecosystem services, including livestock production, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, and recreation. The two-day conference includes a half-day field tour. Each year the diverse membership of the NGC Planning Committee reviews conference evaluations to consider new conference themes, topics, and speakers that are of importance to our audience.

Average attendance at the NGC is 200 people from across the state and nation.

Producers compose the largest percentage of speakers (38%) then researchers (28%), other (15%), agency (11%), and extension (8%).

Program value to ranch owners, managers, and advisers averages \$720,000 annually.



Grassland Systems

Impacts At-A-Glance



Students are challenged to think critically, make decisions, and communicate in capstone courses (NRES 438, AGRO 445, and ASCI 451). Here students evaluate a diet sample for use in developing a grazing management plan.

“The capstone course (AGRO 445 / ASCI 451) challenged me to think holistically and to pull together different aspects of ranch management into a plan.”

— Student, Grazing Livestock Systems

Grassland Systems provides students with an interdisciplinary, holistic approach to the study of grasslands. Grasslands support a diversity of ecotypes, plant and animal communities, livestock production enterprises, recreational activities, and many other uses. Students learn to integrate their knowledge of soil, water, and vegetation attributes as well as economics and policy considerations into grassland management. Grassland Systems has two options which provide students with the opportunity to focus on cattle management on grasslands (Grazing Livestock Systems) or to study more broadly the multiple ecosystem services on grasslands (Grassland Ecology and Management).

41 students enrolled in Grassland Systems as a major or minor in 2021.

100% placement of graduates in grassland-related jobs.

15 internships completed by Grassland Systems students in 2021.



Fall Seminar Series

Impacts At-A-Glance



**MARK A.
LIEBIG**

**CLIMATE MITIGATION
SERVICES FROM
NORTHERN PLAINS
GRASSLANDS**

“The rate of C sequestration in semi-arid grasslands is fairly low at 300-350 pounds of C/acre annually, but C stocks are huge at 60 tons/acre in the top two feet of soil.”

— Mark Liebig, Research Soil Scientist, USDA Agricultural Research Service

Since 1995, the Center for Grassland Studies has offered a fall semester seminar series. The Fall Seminar Series (FSS) features presentations from experts in grassland ecology and management on Monday afternoons each week. The highlight of each FSS is a presentation from a Frank and Margaret Leu Distinguished Lecturer who is nationally recognized for expertise in some aspect of grasslands. Students may register to take the series for academic credit as GRAS 495 Grassland Seminar.

13 presentations annually with 40+ individuals attending in-person or via livestream.

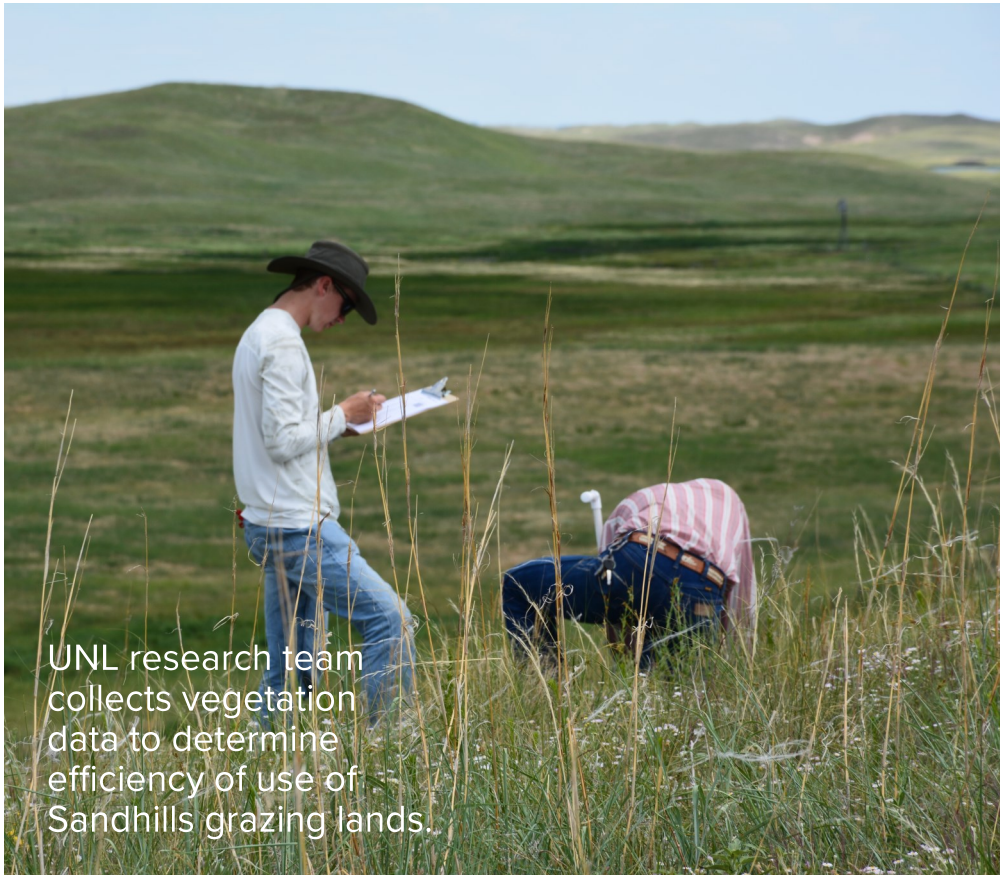
Podcast interview of each speaker is posted on the Center’s podcast channel with over 400 plays annually.

700 downloads annually of recorded Fall Seminar Series presentations.



Beef Systems Initiative

Impacts At-A-Glance



UNL research team collects vegetation data to determine efficiency of use of Sandhills grazing lands.

“Measures of harvest efficiency by grazing livestock are critical to the evaluation of strategic grazing management systems.”

— Mitch Stephenson, Range and Forage Management Specialist, UNL

The Center for Grassland Studies provides an administrative platform for transdisciplinary integrated beef systems research, extension, and education. The goal of the Beef Systems Initiative (BSI) is to develop and support implementation of beef production systems through efficient management of perennial grasslands and systems of integrated crop and beef cattle production. Research scientists and extension specialists from the Departments of Agronomy and Horticulture, Animal Science, and Agricultural Economics, and the ARS Meat Animal Research Center collaborate on this project.

A 2021 BSI workshop was attended by 72 people to discuss improving beef production systems in Nebraska.

The BSI team has leveraged support from ARD by acquiring \$1.5 million of USDA funding.

BSI serves as a basis for the development of the Nebraska Integrated Beef Systems Hub.