

Big Hole Watershed Rangeland and Pasture Meeting Dillon, MT June 3-4, 2014

The Forage and Range Research Laboratory partnered with the Big Hole Watershed Committee, the Dillon NRCS Field Office, and the Montana State University Extension Service to host a workshop entitled, "Forage Problem Solving Seminar" in Dillon Montana on June 3-4. The indoor educational session was attended by local producers, state-wide representatives of the NRCS, and private companies and banking organizations. After the formal educational session and lunch served by the Big Hole Conservation District, problem-solving tours (3) were held on June 3, where FRRL scientists (7), workshop participants, and producers considered rangeland site problems at the Hagenbarth Ranch near Dillon. On June 4, FRRL scientists accompanied producers (3) to their ranches to discuss appropriate plant materials that might be considered for rehabilitation of degraded rangeland and pasture sites.



Discussions among workshop participants on the Hagenbarth Ranch near Dillon, MT, where the emergence and persistence of plant materials was discussed on cooperative FRRL research plots (Jim Hagenbarth in the center with tan hat).



Show and tell regarding a "drag" built by Jim Hagenbarth to reduce cactus encroachment on rangelands on his ranch near Dillon, MT.



Forage and Range Research Laboratory scientists engage in conversation with a local Dillon, MT rancher, Bob Van Deren, regarding the renovation of his pasture lands that has become inundated with foxtail grass.

MEETING AGENDA

Big Hole Watershed Rangeland and Pasture Meeting
June 3-4, 2014
4-H Building
Dillon Montana

Meeting Organizers: Big Hole Watershed Committee, NRCS, Montana State University Extension Service

June 3

10 am Welcome by Meeting Organizers

10:05 Introduction: Dr. Jack Staub, Research Leader

Rangeland Presentations

10:20 Plant Materials Development of native grasses and forbs: Dr. Thomas Jones
Seed production of native plants is often difficult because of low germinability, plant habit, and seed shattering characteristics. Experimentation has determined the critical issues limiting seed production and methodologies have been developed to evaluate wildland populations, hybridization among closely related species, and effective trait selection. These methodological improvements increase the number and type of species that can be economically used in a diverse array of agro-ecosystems.

10:50 Plant Materials for Disturbed Rangelands: Dr. Kevin Jensen
It has been estimated that cheatgrass has displaced approximately 10 million ha of perennial vegetation within the Great Basin. The control of cheatgrass without replacement by desirable perennial species with the ability to establish, persist, and compete with annual invasive grasses, results in the reestablishment of annual grasses and/or other noxious weeds on disturbed rangeland. Methodologies have been developed to improve rapid seedling establishment and persistence, which is key to successful rangeland revegetation.

11:20 Plant Materials to Extend Grazing Season: Dr. Blair Waldron
Winter feeding costs limit the sustainability of livestock production in the western U.S., and most plant materials are inadequate (yield, protein, and energy) for fall/winter grazing. Early maturing, cold tolerant, and nutritious plant materials have been developed that extend the grazing season. For instance, highly palatable, high protein, tall-statured forage kochia extends late season grazing and can increase rangeland livestock carrying capacity six-fold, increase cattle body condition, and reduce winter feed costs (up to 25%). Grass/kochia combinations decrease winter-feed costs and improve production sustainability.

11:50 Assessing Management Practices for Shrubland Restoration: Dr. Thomas Monaco
There is an incomplete understanding of land management for optimizing herbaceous/shrub composition in sagebrush step ecosystems. A comprehensive assessment of both published research and available monitoring data could be used to more precisely characterize the outcome of various restoration methodologies. Such an assessment will improve predictability of shrubland restoration for specific ecological sites and threatened wildlife species, and more broadly identify plant material needs to enhance restoration efforts.

12:20 pm Lunch and Seed Raffle

Pasture Presentations

- 1:00 Plant Materials for Improved Pasture Production: Dr. Joseph Robins
The selection of appropriate plant materials for the area of production and selected management practices determines the production potential of the pasture. Thus, assessing the agronomic potential of grass and legume species for various pasture management situations is critical. Likewise, the development of novel management strategies for maximizing production under different growing conditions requires an understanding of species compatibility.
- 1:30 Grass/Legume Mixtures Improve Pasture Production: Dr. Michael Peel
Most pastures and grazing lands in the intermountain region of the Western US do not meet their full production potential. Choosing and using the right plant materials in the right combinations increases forage production and nutritive feed value. Experimentation has identified grass-legume and other mixtures that increase forage production and nutritive value that reduce production costs and improve sustainability.
- 2:00-3:00 Open Question Period
- 3:00 -6:00 Field Tours (Hagenbarth Ranch-rangelands)

June 3

- 8 am Visit to two ranches for problem-solving sessions on pasture and rangelands
- 1 pm Field Day End

FORAGE PROBLEM SOLVING SEMINAR

*Using Improved Plant Materials and Management Alternatives To
Enhance Stewardship of Sustainable Rangelands, Pastures and Turf In the Western U.S.*

Tuesday June 3rd, 10AM-3PM

BVHD Co. Fairgrounds 4-H Building

FREE

Seed Raffle

Lunch Provided

Field Trips Available on Wednesday June 4th for Interested Parties

Presenting Staff from the USDA/ARS Forage and Range Research Laboratory (FRRL)

Logan, Utah

Topics

Reasons Why FRRL Scientists are doing their research: Dr. Jack Staub

Plant Materials Development of native grasses and forbs: Dr. Thomas Jones

Plant Materials for Disturbed Rangelands: Dr. Kevin Jensen

Plant Materials to Extend Grazing Season: Dr. Blair Walden

Assessing Management Practices for Shrubland Restoration: Dr. Thomas Monaco

Plant Materials for Improved Pasture Production: Dr. Joseph Robins

Grass/Legume Mixtures Improve Pasture Production: Dr. Michael Peel

This Seminar presents a unique opportunity for land managers to become familiar with FRRL research and services that can enhance our ability to become more productive and sustainable resource managers.

Please RSVP Jim Hagenbarth at 406 490-2121 or email hagenbarthj@msn.com by May 23rd for a lunch count.

Thanks for your interest and see you there

Sponsored by

The Big Hole Watershed Committee - Dillon NRCS Field Office - MSU Cooperative Extension Service