

AGM Weekly Update

Hey AGMers!

It would seem that in 2015, April showers bring May showers. The cool wet weather may be delaying the warm season grasses a bit, but it hasn't slowed us down. Summer veg and bird crews, including a few new faces, assembled at CPER to become familiar with Shortgrass Steppe plants and birds. Judging from their eagerness to learn and work together, I think we're going to have another great crew this year.

Highlights of Happenings:

- Despite the gloomy weather that's making *us* a little crabby, the steers seem happy and healthy in the Snow Fence pasture, spare one cattle guard jumping son-of-a-gun. Luckily, our resident cattlemen were on the scene to escort our escapee back to his herd. No health issues to report yet.
- As of today, a total of .74 inches of rain have been measured at CPER headquarters for the week with more on the way. April and May precipitation totals 5.62 inches, so far. This is over 2 inches above the 76 year average for these months.
- VORs in Snow Fence averaged 4.8, telling us the AGM herd should have plenty of forage to keep them happy until patch burn in the Salt Flat pasture reaches its minimum threshold for entry, hopefully next week.

For detailed precipitation data, maps, last year's updates, scientist bios, and AGM documents, see our website: <http://www.ars.usda.gov/Main/docs.htm?docid=24218>. Remember to send your questions, concerns, and ideas my way and I do my best to have them addressed in next week's email

Photos



Above: A newly arrived steer sporting the latest GPS (neck) and pedometer (back leg) hardware.



Above: The AGM herd is driven to the Salt Flat Pasture on Friday to kick off the grazing season.



Above: McCown's Longspur chicks in the Crossroads pasture.

On behalf of the USDA-ARS-Rangeland Resources Research Unit, I thank you all for your continued participation in this project.

Nick Dufek