



Meet the Southern Plains Climate Hub's outreach coordinator in this month's Staff Corner

Over the course of the last few issues of the newsletter we wanted to introduce all of you to our hub team. We have highlighted all of our current team except for yours truly--Clay Pope, the Southern Plains Climate Hub outreach contractor.

The longest serving member of the team, Clay has been with the USDA Southern Plains Climate Hub since its inception in 2014. During this time, Clay has worked under an agreement between NRCS and the Hub to help facilitate outreach efforts, build partnerships and assist in meetings development and other activities.

Prior to his service with the Hub, Clay spent 10 years as

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- New study looks at conserving grasslands
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Hub helps host conserving tribal lands with fire workshop

As part of their ongoing commitment to help production agriculture in Oklahoma and the Southern Plains region of the United States, the USDA Southern Plains Climate Hub (Climate Hub), in partnership with the Great Plains Fire Science Exchange, Kansas State University (KSU), Oklahoma State University (OSU), the Indian Nations Conservation Alliance (INCA) and the Indian Country Agricultural Resources Development Services (ICARD) helped sponsor the "Conserving Tribal Lands With Fire" prescribed burning workshop on August 21-23 in Ft Cobb, OK.

According to Carolyn Baldwin, Principal Investigator and Project Coordinator for the Great Plains Fire Science Exchange, the meeting was a great opportunity to discuss the role of fire on tribal land and how tribal nations with limited resources can better apply prescribed fire on the ground.

"Historically fire has played an important role in how tribal nations managed the land," Baldwin said. "Unfortunately, over time the use of fire has been discouraged due to fears of wildfire. Meetings like this give us the opportunity to help tribal land managers understand the value of utilizing prescribed fire and how they can incorporate this important tool into their management practices."

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Staff Corner Continued-

The Executive Director of the Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts (OACD). In this role he managed the day-to-day operations of the organization, oversaw special projects such as the Oklahoma Carbon Credit Program, advocated for both State and Federal policy and handled media relations for the group.

Before working for OACD, Clay was elected five times as a Oklahoma State Representative. During this service, Clay was recognized for his work on conservation and agriculture policy both on the state and federal level.

Prior to running for office, Clay spent two years in Washington, D.C. as the ag and natural resource legislative assistant to Congressman Glenn English.

A 1992 graduate of the College of Agriculture at Oklahoma State University, Clay is a life-long Oklahoman with deep ties to the agriculture industry of the Southern Plains. When not working for the Hub, he is involved in his family's farming and ranching operation at Loyal Oklahoma, where he lives on his family's land with his wife Sarah and the three youngest of their five kids.

Clay can be reached at 405-699-2087 or claygpope@gmail.com

fire workshop continued:

Participants in the meeting heard presentations from various speakers including John Weir, Extension Fire Ecology Specialist at Oklahoma State University; Melinda Adams, Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography and Atmospheric Science and Indigenous Studies at The University of Kansas; Sheena Parsons, Kansas University Field Station Manager; Alicia Nevaquoyah with the Indian Country Agricultural Resources Development Services; and Phillip Daw with the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes of Oklahoma.

Those in attendance also had the chance to examine burn equipment including different types of trucks, water pumps, hoses, turnout and safety gear, and sprayers as well as hearing presentations on available resources to help tribal governments, their members and local prescribed burn associations get equipment and training.

According to Andres Cibils, Director of the USDA Southern Plains Climate Hub, meetings such as this are extremely important in helping spread useful information about the application of prescribed fire, both as an ecological management tool as and as a means of adapting to climate change.

"More and more we are seeing how our changing climate is impacting the growth of vegetation and with it an increase in fuel loads for wildfires," Cibils said. "It's important that we use every tool at our disposal to help battle this growing problem. The use of prescribed fire can help reduce these wildfire fuel sources while at the same time helping improve pasture quality and overall health of the ecosystem. It's definitely an important part of our strategy to help adapt to the challenges created by our changing climate."

According to Baldwin, the hope is that this meeting will be just one of many efforts to help encourage additional use of prescribed fire in the region, not just by tribal nations and tribal members, but by all land managers.

"The more we can get landowners in the Southern Plains region utilizing prescribed fire, the better," Baldwin said. "We are excited that we had the chance to get this meeting together and hope that we can continue this effort into the future."

The next event the group will be hosting is a patch burning workshop in Auburn, Kansas on September 6th and 7th. Anyone interested in attending this event should contact Lori Bammerlin at (785) 477-3695 or go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/patch-burn-grazing-working-group-meeting-2023-tickets-664893613697> for more information.



New study looks at questions of importance to the conservation of grasslands in a changing climate

What should we be asking when we are looking at the impact of climate change on the grasslands of Northern and Central Great Plains? What challenges should we be trying to address through research to ensure we can protect these resources and conserve them for the future? That's the question a team of researchers set out to answer through a review of over 180 grassland-relevant management documents.

The answers they came up with can be found in the new research paper "Seventy questions of importance to the conservation of the North Central grasslands of the United States in a changing climate" recently published in the journal "Conservation Science and Practice."

The team, led by Dr. Christine D. Miller Hesed of the North Central Climate Adaptation Science Center, Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences, at the University of Colorado in Boulder, and funded by a grant from the U.S. Geological Survey, reviewed and synthesized grassland management-related documents to identify broadly shared questions that, if answered, would help to support collective conservation of the grasslands in the northern Great Plains of the United States in a changing climate.

Through this effort, the team identified 70 questions that generally fall under 15 topics: land conversion; restoration; disturbance regimes; woody encroachment; herbaceous invasives; grazing; water quality, quantity, and availability; animal species; private land; public understanding; legal and policy changes; economic incentives; coordination across management entities; accessibility of science and tools; and novel ways of thinking.

The hope is that these proposed questions will inform a research agenda for those who are looking to conduct actionable science in the Great Plains grassland ecosystems.

You can find a complete copy of the report here:

<https://conbio.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/csp2.12998>

WANT MORE INFORMATION ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND AGRICULTURE?

CHECK OUT OUR BLOGS, PODCASTS AND VIDEOS AT:

<https://www.climatehubs.usda.gov/hubs/southern-plains/topic/latest-podcasts-and-public-service-announcements>

OR

<https://southernplainsperspective.wordpress.com/>

Southern Plains Climate Hub participates in Tulsa Tribal events as part of outreach efforts

The USDA Southern Plains Climate Hub (Hub) spent several days on "Tulsa Time" this month as part of their ongoing work on tribal outreach.

The first event of the month was the USDA Nation-to-Nation event hosted by the USDA/NRCS on August 8. The Hub was asked to make a presentation on our ongoing outreach efforts as well as our rainwater harvesting partnership with the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Jacob Shaffer, Texas NRCS detailee with the Hub and acting Tribal Liaison, spoke to the group about the various meetings held this year including a series of drought workshops, rainwater harvesting seminars, and a riparian medicinal plant event in Texas. Jacob also gave the group an update on the many water harvesting projects that are currently being planned on tribal land in Oklahoma and Texas.

The next "Tulsa event" was the Inter-Tribal Emergency Management Coalition Meeting on August 17 and 18 where Jacob again discussed rainwater harvesting and how it can be used to supplement existing water supplies, not only for gardening and livestock watering, but also for fire suppression and drought relief.

Beyond their excursions to Tulsa, the Hub participated in the Texas Plant Conservation Conference in Fort Worth, attended conferences in Kansas and New Mexico and began planning future outreach efforts throughout the region.

UPCOMING EVENTS

2023 BRESSNER PASTURE

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 6, 2023

REGISTRATION 8:30 AM
LUNCH INCLUDED WITH RSVP

ACROSS ROAD FROM
1043 100TH RD YATES CENTER, KS

Previous & Progress
Research Proceedings

TOPICS INCLUDE

5-year results on cattle and pasture

March vs April burn and essential oils for fly control

Historical Research completed at the unit

Patch-burning

1/2 vs 3/4 season grazing

Sheep for *Serecia lespeza* control

Fall Grazing Native Range

Technology and Future of Stockers

Usage of drones in production

Remote water monitoring

Weather forecasting and Animal Comfort

Technology tools to capture data

To RSVP contact
by August 30



Southwind Extension District -

Woodson Co. Office

620-625-8620

or via QR code or online at

https://kstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ehtc4hu46007ke



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Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service
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UPCOMING EVENTS

Virtual Fencing: A tool for resilient rangeland beef systems

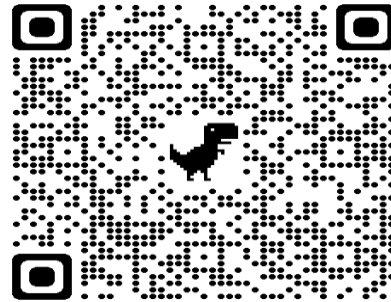
Tuesday, September 26, 2023

NMSU Clayton Livestock Research Center and Windsong Ranch, NM
Sedan, New Mexico

The use of virtual fencing (VF) to manage cattle grazing after a wildfire, during a drought, near waterways, or upon converting irrigated cropland to permanent pasture is rapidly increasing across the Great Plains and the West. A hands-on workshop to demonstrate commercially available VF systems currently used in Oklahoma, New Mexico, and elsewhere will be held at Windsong Ranch NM this fall. Ranchers, researchers, USDA NRCS staff and VF company reps from Vence™ and No-Fence™, will be on site to conduct demonstrations and answer questions about operation, cost, and use of this precision technology in conservation plans. Brief presentations by a panel of experts will be followed by hands-on demonstrations; from App configuration, to collar deployment, to data display and livestock management.

For more information- access the QR code or contact

Susan Eisenhour at
susan.eisenhour@usda.gov



Urgency and Resilience
Cultivate a Thriving Future

Kansas Rural Center Food and Farm Conference: Urgency and Resilience: Cultivate a Thriving Future

November 10 – November 11

Join Kansas Rural Center this November 10th and 11th in Topeka, KS, for our Annual Food and Farm Conference. This year's theme is "Urgency and Resilience: Cultivating a Thriving Future."

Hotel Topeka at City Center

1717 SW Topeka Blvd

Topeka, Kansas

For more information contact: info@kansasruralcenter.org or call (866) 579-5469

UPCOMING EVENTS

HOSTED BY:
PAWNEE CO. CONS. DIST
& KACD

FARMER 2 FARMER COVER CROP BUS TOUR

Friday, Sept. 8th

- **Cover Crop Bus Tour**

2:00 - Meet us at:

Jed Fleske's Farm

2074 120th Ave. Larned

We will be visiting several farm locations - exhibiting different cover crops.

- **Jed Fleske's Farm**

Following the Ag Tour we will return to Jed's Farm. Dinner

will be provided. Michael

Thompson will provide education on Cover Crops and soil health.



Featuring Michael Thompson

Michael Thompson - from Almena, Kansas was the recipient of the 2022 Leopold Conservation Award.

This award recognizes those who inspire others with their dedication to the land, water, wildlife resources in their care.

Sponsors

**Kauffman**
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**KACD**
Kansas Association of Conservation Districts



www.agriculture.ks.gov

sandra.herrman@ks.nacdnet.net

UPCOMING EVENTS

Climate Adaptation for Land Trusts – Short Course

(Oct. 25, Nov. 1 and Nov. 15 |2-3:30 p.m. Eastern)

Virtual-participants can register here:

<https://landtrustalliance.org/resources/learn/explore/climate-adaptation-for-land-trusts-short-course-SC> **CALT 23**

This online course is designed for land trusts actively working on stewardship projects in forests, suburban and urban forests, forested watersheds and wetland systems. It will be held over four weeks requiring 4.5 hours of virtual live classes, a self-guided field session and assignments. Instructors will provide guidance, weekly check-ins and coaching.

Course Goals (Oct. 25, Nov. 1 and Nov. 15 |2-3:30 p.m. Eastern)

Identify locally important climate change impacts and vulnerabilities.

Understand a step-by-step process for considering climate change and carbon in land stewardship and management.

Develop management actions to help your project or natural area adapt to changing conditions.

Communicate with stakeholders and rights holders about climate impacts and adaptation responses.

Self-guided field session (Nov. 8)

Participants will be asked to visit a property or natural area of their choosing and think about real-world applications of the course material.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Patch Burn Grazing Working Group Meeting 2023

Details of the schedule will be updated as events and speakers are secured. Meeting will consist of presentations related to patch burn grazing research

September 6 and 7

Auburn Community Center

121 W 11th St Auburn, KS 66402

The meeting will consist of presentations related to research and practice of using patch burn grazing, producer panels, and tours. We are happy to say that our main tour will be Tallgrass Bison (picture above is of thief bison on a newly burned pasture)

There is a block of rooms at the Holiday Inn Express (901 SW Robinson Avenue, Topeka, KS) Please mention "Patch Burn Grazing" when registering to receive the room block rate of \$98. Block expires Aug 23

Ticket Sales will be available online until Aug 23 at noon. Registration after Aug 23 will be at-the-door and \$50 (cash only) If ordering tickets for a group, please be sure to list the name of all of those attending, to insure accurate name tags.

To register or for more information go to:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/patch-burn-grazing-working-group-meeting-2023-tickets-664893613697>

or call Lori Bammerlin at (785) 477-3695

UPCOMING EVENTS

SAVE THE DATE

OKA' CON

2023

UNITING FOR WATER:

A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO
INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

NOVEMBER
8TH - 9TH



Mark your calendars for this year's water sustainability conference, OKA' CON! Registration and agenda will be available soon, but participants can expect more of last year's successful format with a focus on Integrated Water Resource Management. Oka' is thrilled to announce an upcoming collaboration with Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology and East Central University. We will be hosting the 4th Annual International Short Course on Integrated Water Resource Management and Food Security alongside OKA' CON, a development that will significantly enhance our partnership efforts.

Sponsorship opportunities are currently available, please contact our office.

Texas Urban Agriculture Conservation Forum 2023

September 6, 2023

9:00 am - 3:00 pm

San Antonio Food Bank,

5200 Historic Old Highway 90,

San Antonio, TX

NRCS Texas in partnership with Prairie View A&M University Small Farm Institute and the San Antonio Food Bank are hosting an Urban Agriculture Forum on Wednesday, September 6, 2023, beginning at 9:00 am. The forum is free and open to the public, but registration in advance is required.

For more information contact:

Wilma Tichelaar at (254) 500-6483 or by email at wilma.tichelaar@USDA.Gov

Texas Riparian and Stream Ecosystem Workshop

September 12, 2023

8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Meridian Civic Center,
309 West River Street, Meridian, TX

This workshop is being co-hosted by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas Water Resources Institute. The training will focus on the nature and function of stream and riparian zones and the benefits and direct impacts from healthy riparian zones.

For more information contact:

Alexander Neat at (979) 314-2351 or by email at Alexander.Neal@ag.tamu.edu

OSU Peanut and Cotton Field Day

SEPTEMBER 14

5 – 8 P.M.

Caddo Research Station
28054 County Street 2540
Ft. Cobb, Oklahoma

OSU Agriculture Field Days are educational events presented by OSU Ag Research and Extension to share research-based information and resources with Oklahomans. Field days showcase current agricultural research and relevant best practices through presentations, tours, hands-on workshops and discussion at no cost.

Register for the event by Sept. 7 at https://okstatecasnr.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_a3JEWn6MfUzFvBI to be entered into a prize drawing!

For more information contact Bobby Weidenmaier at (405) 643-2501 or by email at bobby.weidenmaier@okstate.edu

UPCOMING EVENTS

NEW IN-PERSON, HANDS-ON COURSE

ESSENTIALS OF

REGENERATIVE RANCHING

Get the tools you need to monitor and improve the health of your land, livestock and livelihood.

Oct. 17-18

G. Rollie White Visitor Center, College Station, TX

Oct. 31-Nov. 1

Noble Research Institute, Ardmore, OK

Nov. 7-8

Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Center, Kingsville, TX



REGISTER FOR A COURSE AT
noble.org/essentials