

## Midwest Perennial Forage Working Group

**Date:** June 19, 2013 10am-3:30pm

**Location:** University of Wisconsin—La Crosse, La Crosse, WI

**Attendees:** Grace Wilson, Bob Olson, Vance Haugen, Terry VanDerPol, Jane Jewett, Laura Paine, Brian Loeffelholz

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### **Actions:**

1. **Grasslands and GLBW Conferences:** Poster to be created by Jane & Grace, featuring the Contract Grazing Fact Sheets for the America's Grasslands Conference (Aug. 12-14, Manhattan, KS). Laura Paine to bring poster to the conference. Bob Olson commits to being committee's point person to work with Richard Warner on the 2013 GLBW Conference.
2. **Sample Contracts:** Vance will select 4-5 sample contracts and send them around to the group. These examples will be added to the working group's website (along with a short description)
3. **Profiles of Contract Grazing:** Contract grazing scenarios will be illustrated with 1- to 2-page profiles of people. Each member of the group is responsible for developing one profile. Drafts done by September 2013 so that we can get them finished & online in time for 2013 GLBW Conference. If you were not at the meeting but are able to write a profile, please let Jane know so she can get you on the list of people to pester in September
  - a. Contract heifer raising (Bob Olson)
  - b. Utilizing public lands (Terry Vanderpol)
  - c. Owns land, grazing someone else's cattle (Laura Paine)
  - d. Custom raising someone else's cattle on someone else's land (Laura Paine)
  - e. Grazing own cattle on someone else's land (Jane Jewett)
  - f. Maybe--Someone who owns the land, hires someone else to graze (Jane Jewett)
  - g. Maybe—collaboration in grass-fed beef production (Terry Vanderpol)
4. **Field days & pasture walks:** each committee member should identify one field day for which they could get GLBW added as a co-sponsor.
5. **WG presence at regional conferences:** Jane will look into pricing of transportable, shippable displays
6. **Multi-State Contract Grazing Conference** to be planned for July of 2014. Terry VanDerPol will look into possibility of submitting an RMA grant before the upcoming mid-July deadline for funds to support this.

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### **Topic 1: 2013 Grasslands Conference and GLBW Conference**

#### **Discussion:**

- Grasslands Conference:

- Laura Paine will be presenting her work with the grazing broker project in WI at the 2013 “America’s Grasslands” Conference, held in Manhattan, Kansas August 13-14 2013.
- We were also accepted to present a poster relating to the contract grazing factsheets the group put together earlier this year. Jane and Grace will put together the poster, and Laura will bring it along to the meeting (unless there are other group members who will also be attending the conference who would like to be in charge of presenting the poster)
- GLBW Conference:
  - Green Lands Blue Waters 2013 Conference will be held at the University of Minnesota in November 2013. GLBW would like if the WG would be willing to bring 1-3 posters relating to working group projects, and/or affiliated projects by working group members.
  - GLBW is also looking for a contact person in the working group to help plan a session for the conference

**Action Items:**

- Grace and Jane will work on putting together the poster for the Grasslands Conference
- Group members were willing to bring posters to the meeting in November
- Bob Olson volunteered to be the contact person from the group to work with GLBW on conference planning

**Topic 2: Revisiting the contract grazing project list we created in April 2012.**

**Discussion:**

- 1) Fact sheets on contract grazing: completed in Winter 2013 and have been used by working group members:
  - a. Used as part of grazing brokerage project in WI (Laura Paine)
  - b. Used in Kickapoo Grazing Initiative toolbox on grazing and will be mentioned in an email to 300 landowners in Crawford County WI (Vance Haugen)
  - c. Used at St. Croix forage and grassland meeting (Bob Olson)
- 2) Sample Contract
  - a. April 2012, we had discussed creating a sample contract template. However, several group members pointed out there are several examples of contracts for grazing already in existence currently (examples from Drake University, NC SARE, U WI).
  - b. Rather than creating a new template, we decided to aggregate 4-5 examples of contracts and put them on our website
  - c. We also discussed the possibility of, one day, having a “active contract” where sections of the contract could be expanded or diminished by the farmer depending on what they want to include
- 3) Price Decision Tool

- a. Not sure what initial discussion in April 2012 was referring to with “price decision tool”: Would the price decision tool be a calculation corn vs. grazing on certain parcels of land, or an initial evaluation of grazing land which breaks down the expenses and income with grazing
  - b. Vance’s colleague has put together a price decision tool breaking down grazing expenses and income potential based on land value in the Driftless region
- 4) Case Studies of contract grazing
- a. Rather than putting together a formal “case study,” write-up the stories of people in contract grazing arrangements; stories that get people thinking that grazing could be an option for them
  - b. Try to include some economic information, especially for people who are trying to make a living off of grazing; don’t need detailed numbers
  - c. Stories don’t necessarily need to be all successes
  - d. Stories will be put on group’s website, possibly printed out

**Action Items:**

- 1) Could factsheets be used for LSP Farm Beginnings program? Or used in the beginning dairy group run by Dick Cates?
- 2) Vance will select 4-5 sample contracts and send them around to the group. These examples will be added to the working group’s website (along with a short description)
- 3) Share existing price decision tools
- 4) Each member of the group is responsible for developing a story about a facet of contract grazing. Drafts done by September 2013
  - a. Contract heifer raising (Bob Olson)
  - b. Utilizing public lands (Terry Vanderpol)
  - c. Owns land, grazing someone else’s cattle (Laura Paine)
  - d. Custom raising someone else’s cattle on someone else’s land (Laura Paine)
  - e. Grazing own cattle on someone else’s land (Jane Jewett)
  - f. Maybe--Someone who owns the land, hires someone else to graze (Jane Jewett)
  - g. Maybe—collaboration in grass-fed beef production (Terry Vanderpol)

**Topic 3: Brainstorm Ideas for Future Projects**

**Discussion:**

- 1) WG co-sponsoring field days
  - a. GLBW will co-sponsor field days which WG members are holding. “Co-sponsor” means that GLBW would pay for travel costs for a MPFWG member to attend as a presenter; and would publicize the event through our networks; and would provide printed handouts (e.g. the fact sheets) for the event.
  - b. So far, the group commits to 5 field day co-sponsorships in the 2013 season:

- Terry – 2; Laura – 1; Vance – 1; Jane – 1
- 2) Presence at regional conferences
    - a. WI grazing conference Jan 16-18
    - b. MOSES
    - c. Would necessitate the WG creating a shippable display—possibly a shippable pop-up display?
  - 3) Promoting hay production. The WG decided not to focus on this at this point
  - 4) Provide information to policy makers
    - a. Discussed if a member could put together a statement about the WG’s position relating to certain issues, such as transitioning CRP to grazing
    - b. No one felt qualified or had the time to do such a write up, so the group is unlikely to take a formal position at this time
  - 5) Put on a contract multi-state grazing conference
    - a. Group very interested in putting together a conference to get people involved in contract grazing together
    - b. Possibly have keynote speakers (perhaps Greg Judy?)
    - c. Would need to find a funding source; possibly USDA RMA grant?
    - d. Shoot for an attendance of approx. 30 people
    - e. Possibly held in a central location (Dubuque, IA; La Crosse, WI), or Twin Cities, MN (in order to utilize conference planning services of Bob Olson)
    - f. Timeline: to be held in July 2014

**Action Items:**

1. Field days & pasture walks: each committee member should identify one field day for which they could get GLBW added as a co-sponsor.
2. Presence at regional conferences:
  - a. Look into cost of buying a shippable pop-up display (Jane Jewett)
3. Contract Grazing Conference:
  - a. Group needs to form a conference planning committee with regular conference calls
  - b. Bob Olson will check to see if his conference planner is available to help
  - c. Identify a funding source

**Topic 4: WI Grazing Broker Project**

**Discussion:**

- Brian Loeffelholz from the WI Dept. of Agriculture presented the work he has done on creating a template for a “Landowner Grazing Profile” which helps determine the rental value of property for grazing, and provides a description of the land and forage, infrastructure available, etc.

**Action Items:**