

Midwest Perennial Forage Working Group

Meeting notes, 9/05/13, 10:00 am

Present on call:

Laura Paine

Terry VanDerPol

Jim Paulson

Cara Carper

Joe Sellers

Bob Olson

GLBW staff: Jane Jewett

Report from Laura on America's Grasslands Conference:

- Laura sent out a link to the conference program.
- There were many good papers presented; mostly academic and agency staff and not a lot of farmers attending. There were about 200 people in attendance.
- The poster session was not very active. About half of the 50 sets of fact sheets were picked up. The information presented on our poster fit in well with the conference themes.
- Keynote panel of ranchers; their average ranch size was 10,000 acres.
- Laura gave two presentations: one about the Grazing Broker project, and one about warm-season pasture research.
- Best speaker was Bill Sproul, a rancher from southern KS who does contract grazing for livestock owners from PA and FL.
- Conference proceedings will be available online.

Contract Grazing Fact Sheets:

- These have been sent to 4 field days so far and the America's Grasslands Conference. Laura Paine will have them at her field day on Sept. 18.
- Jane can send fact sheets out to anyone who needs them for a field day or conference.

Green Lands Blue Waters conference Nov. 20-21 at Coffman Union on the Mpls. Campus of the U of MN

- Overview of agenda and expectations; these are still fluid and Richard is working on a final version of the agenda as well as Working Group expectations and poster specifications.
- Planning to attend: Terry, Jim, Laura. Undecided: Bob, Cara. Partially depends on cost, which is not yet known. Last year was \$40 for registration. **[update: \$140 this year.]**
- This Working Group needs to put together a 15-minute presentation for the opening session which will be presentations by all working groups. Last year Terry and Laura gave the presentation. They would like to have others from the group do it this year.
- We'll need a 1-2 sentence description of the session to be included in handouts to attendees.

- Afternoon on the first day will include a facilitated discussion within Working Groups and some opportunity for cross-talk between groups.
- We should check back on the discussion and outcomes from last year's conference and circle back to plan for this year.
- There will be a poster session and this group can submit posters. We already have the Contract Grazing poster. Other poster possibilities include the Iowa Beef Center's Greenhorn Grazing workshop series; or CDS's work with non-operating landowners.
- GLBW will provide staff time to lay out and print posters if organizations can provide the content.

Laura's idea for a SARE R & E grant

- Laura's draft pre-proposal was circulated to the group. She suggests 5 main areas of effort:
 - 1) Reach out to non-farming landowners; build on conservation ethic
 - 2) Reach out to livestock producers; education
 - 3) Economics of beef production
 - 4) Work with grass-fed beef marketing companies
 - 5) Work with other regional organizations
- Joe Sellers said he likes the idea; thinks there's a need to get in touch with recreational landowners and convince them to allow grazing. Need to try to promote more 3-party contracts where landowner, livestock owner, and grazer are all separate entities.
- Joe noted that there have been incidents with grass-fed beef where graziers got stuck with non-payment. Need to look at legal services, insurance, bonding for guaranteed payment. Non-operating landowners need to have more understanding of liability and legal issues.
- Terry is interested in this grant idea; especially interested in reaching women landowners.
- Joe wants to see inclusion of all types of forage-based production; including harvested forage production systems and backgrounding of feedlot cattle on forage.
- Bob Olson noted that CDS has all its eggs in the basket of landlord management – working with land managers, tools to apply on leased property. Their belief is that reaching the absentee landowner is the key to driving environmental change.
- Laura asked if this grant would be a project of the Working Group. Interest is there, but need to have one organization as lead. U of MN and WI-DATCP are options, but a non-profit may be preferable. Cara Carper is willing to consider SW Badger as the lead organization.
- Pre-proposal is due October 24. Laura will take the lead on writing up a draft that can be shopped to potential partners. Laura stated it's important to do that background work with partners during the pre-proposal stage.
- People willing to help with the pre-proposal: Joe Sellers, Laura Paine, Jim Paulson, Terry VanDerPol, Jane Jewett
- Joe suggested looking at the SARE Farmer-Rancher grant, due Nov. 14th, as an opportunity to cultivate a group of farmers that could put in an application to start a grazing broker group.

Next steps:

- Jane will send out a Doodle poll for another conference call once the GLBW Conference agenda and other details re: the conference are available.
- Needed information for conference planning: final agenda, registration cost, poster specifications, expectations for the 1.5 hour facilitated session
- Jane will send out notes and other information from last year's GLBW Conference
- Laura will work on draft R & E pre-proposal with input from Joe, Jim, Terry, Jane