

# Green Lands Blue Waters



## Midwest Perennial Forage Working Group

### Report to GLBW Steering Committee

September 2017

# Green Lands Blue Waters



## Midwest Perennial Forage Working Group

### The Working Group Site

- [Forage Home](#)
- [About Us](#)
- [Beginning Graziers](#)
- [Contract Grazing](#)
- [Forage & Grazing Resources](#)
- [Grazing Educator Webinar](#)

### New Resources

Posted August 28, 2017:



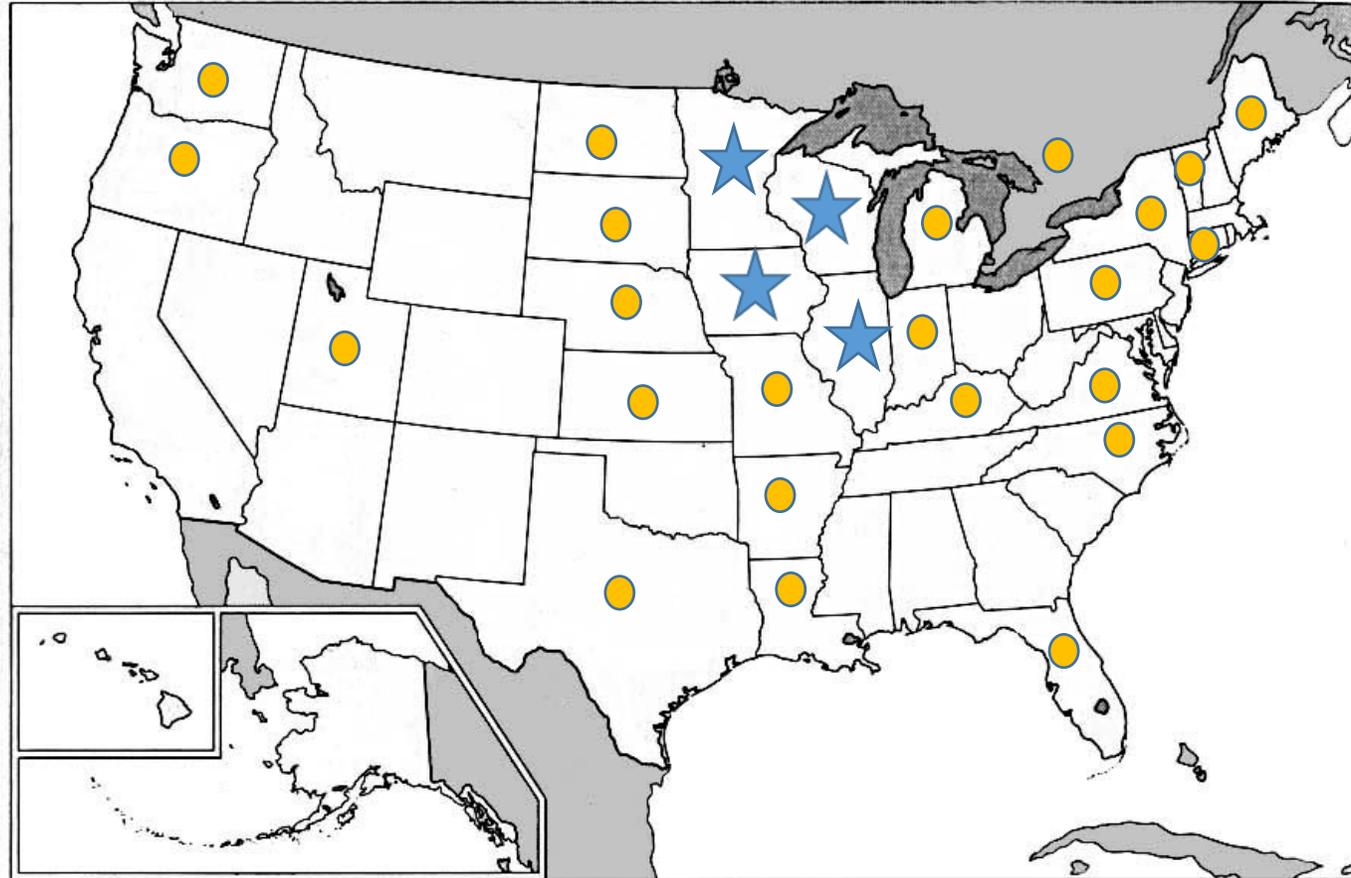
photo credit:  
Richard Cates

### Upcoming Events

**\*\*More Event Listings\*\***

The Midwest Perennial Forage Working Group's mission is to facilitate an increase in land used for pasture and perennial forage production in the Upper Midwest, and to improve the environmental performance of farming systems, while maintaining agricultural production and profitability.

Geographic foci: IA, IL, MN, WI; but our subscriber list for the Updates goes nationwide & a bit beyond:



Puerto Rico  
●

Thematic Focus:

Support for grazing educators

# Green Lands Blue Waters



## Midwest Perennial Forage Working Group

The group formed in 2011 with organizational support from Green Lands Blue Waters, as a way for GLBW to address the perennial forage strategy for CLC.

Membership:

Outer ring is the subscriber list of 238.

Inner is the Core Group, well-established and well-connected grazing educators in the 4-state region. Currently Core Group is at 16 members, with about 8 to 10 actively participating at any given time.

Leadership structure:

Two co-chairs, Laura Paine and Jim Paulson

Staffing:

Jane Jewett, at 10% time.

## Funding:

Green Lands Blue Waters covers staff time as well as travel expenses for group meetings, and some funding for conference session development.

Salary: \$7,000

Fringe: \$2,345

Travel: \$6,000

Operations: \$1,000

Printing, shipping, etc: \$500

*(was \$6k last year – increase is to cover Jane’s time for helping with GLBW website)*

Meetings:

Quarterly, plus a few extra for planning conference sessions.

Three quarterly meetings are via conference call.

We meet in person in April or May.

# Past Projects

## Website Launched in April 2013

# Green Lands Blue Waters










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**New Resources**

Posted August 28, 2017:

Minnesota  
**Grazing School**  
MN GLCA | UMN Extension | USDA NRCS



**Upcoming Events**

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*photo credit:  
Richard Cates*

Year	Pageviews
2013 (Apr – Dec)	553
2014	1,319
2015	3,105
2016	2,516
2017 (Jan-Aug)	1,647

## Midwest Perennial Forage Working Group Contract Grazing

### The Working Group Site

[Forage Home](#)  
[About Us](#)  
[Beginning Graziers](#)  
[Contract Grazing](#)  
[Forage & Grazing Resources](#)  
[Grazing Educator Webinar Series, 2015](#)  
[Related Organizations](#)  
[Sessions at Conferences](#)  
[Slide Library](#)

### Contract Grazing Fact Sheets

*from the Midwest Perennial Forage Working Group*

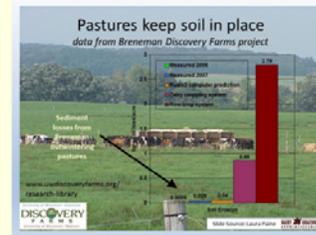


[The Basics of Contract Grazing](#)  
(PDF, 568 kb)



[Evaluating Land Suitability for Grazing Cattle](#)  
(PDF, 808 kb)

### Grazing Educator Slide Library



### Iowa Beef Center Custom Grazing Information

**Iowa Beef Center**  
20 YEARS of working to develop and deliver  
research-based information

April 2013

Contract Grazing fact sheets

These are still very popular and are used by educators across the region as handouts at field days.

3,179 pageviews since launched.

 <p>photo credit: Laura Paine</p>		
<p>Teaching the Basics of Grazing</p>	<h2>Grazing Educator Webinar Series</h2>	
<p>Grass-Based Farm Financials</p>	<p><a href="#">2015 Webinars</a></p>	
<p>Adaptive High Stock Density Grazing</p>	<p><a href="#">Webinar Contacts</a></p>	
<p>Integrating Livestock into Cropping Systems</p>	<p>Are you a grazing specialist, land manager, or grazing educator? Want to be involved in the development of grazing education?</p>	
<p>Grazing for Conservation and Soil Health</p>	<p><b>Join</b> the <a href="#">Midwest Perennial Forage Working Group!</a> We meet approximately quarterly by conference call and once or twice per year in person.</p>	
<p>Teaching Resources Roundtable</p>	<p>Co-Chairs are Laura Paine of <a href="#">Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship</a> and Jim Paulson, grazing consultant.</p>	
<p><b>Midwest Perennial Forage Working</b></p>	<p><b>Contact the co-chairs:</b> Laura Paine, lkpaine@gmail.com, 608-338-9039 Jim Paulson, jpn@umn.edu</p>	

Summer 2015

Grazing Educator Webinar series

Collaboration with Pasture Project

1,493 pageviews since launched

## Archive of Updates

[August 28, 2017](#)

[July 31, 2017](#)

[June 30, 2017](#)

[May 31, 2017](#)

[Apr. 14, 2017](#)

[Mar. 2, 2017](#)

[Jan. 25, 2017](#)

[Dec. 21, 2016](#)

[Nov. 23, 2016](#)

[Oct. 24, 2016](#)

[Sept. 21, 2016](#)

[August 1, 2016](#)

[July 12, 2016](#)

[June 6, 2016](#)



[SARE Cover Crop Image Library](#)



[SARE Soil Health Image Gallery](#)

[Resources Archive](#)

## Event Calendars



[Great River Graziers Pasture Walk Schedule](#)



[GrassWorks Calendar](#)



[Land Stewardship Project Events List](#)



June 2016

Started monthly e-mailed updates to subscriber list.

Currently 238 subscribers.



photo credit: Laura Paine

Teaching the Basics of Grazing

Grass-Based Farm Financials

Adaptive High Stock Density Grazing

Integrating Livestock into Cropping Systems

Grazing for Conservation and Soil Health

Teaching Resources Roundtable

## Green Lands Blue Waters



### Midwest Perennial Forage Working Group

## Grazing Educator Webinar Series Slide Library

**Editors:** *Sadie Schroeder, Jane Grimsbo Jewett*

### **Fair Use of Slides:**

Grazing educators of any kind are welcome to download and use these slides in their own presentations.

- Do not remove logos or slide credits from the slides.
- Acknowledgement of Green Lands Blue Waters and the Midwest Perennial Forage Working Group as the home of the slide library is appreciated.
  - Verbal acknowledgement is fine.

Spring 2017

Slide Library for  
grazing  
educators,  
based on  
webinar series.

997 pageviews  
since launched.



### Perennial Forages

Perennial Forages Working Group Report (PDF, 140 kb)  
prepared by Grace Wilson, Green Lands Blue Waters

Lush, multi-species pasture from Laura Paine Wisconsin DATCP

### Perennial Forages & Grazing Overview

Laura Paine  
Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection



### Processing Methods to Improve the Feed Value of Perennial Grasses

Michael Cecava, Director of Feed Technology Research  
Archer Daniels Midland Company

GLBW Bioenergy and Sustainable Agriculture Workshop: Perennial Biomass Crops for Multiple Benefits November 18-20, 2014, Decatur, Illinois

### Processing Methods to Improve the Feed Value of Perennial Grasses

PDF, 2.5 Mb  
Michael Cecava  
Director of Feed Technology Research  
Archer Daniels Midland Company

9:30 - 10:15 Native Warm Season Grasses for Forage and Bioenergy

Laura Paine, Southwest Badger Resource Conservation & Development Council and Roger Staff, NRCS

### Grazing for Conservation



PDF, 6.4 Mb

### Patch-Burn Grazing to Improve Wildlife Habitat and Control Invasive Plants

Max Alleger,  
Missouri Department of Conservation  
Dusty Schaaf, Missouri Farmer-Collaborator



PDF, 20.1 Mb

### Silvopasture- A Tool to Improve Woodland Grazing, Adapt to Climate Change, Diversify Farm Income and More

Diomy Zamora, UMN-Extension  
Diane Mayerfeld, UW-Extension  
Dusty Walter, University of Missouri  
Tyler Carlson, Producer, Early Boots Farm  
Jim Chamberlin - Happy Dancing Turtle

### Grazing & Perennial Forage

#### Business Dimension

Nudging the Land-use Decision Toward Perennial Pasture (If you're today on beef production)

Jim Munsch  
November 5, 2015

PDF, 1.8 Mb



PDF, 3.2 Mb

### Nudging the Land-use Decision Toward Perennial Pasture

Jim Munsch  
Independent Grazing Consultant

### What are the economics of raising a grazing animal on an integrated crop and livestock farm?

Gene Schriefer  
University of Wisconsin Extension,  
Iowa County, Wisconsin

# 2012 – 2017 MPFWG Session development for GLBW conferences

# Upcoming Projects

RMA grant:

Testing Reduction of Dairy  
Financial Risk through Grazing  
and Insurance

- 1-year grant from 9/30/17 thru 9/29/18
- 7 dairy farms subjected to intensive financial analysis of the effect of grazing on feed costs and effect or potential effect of forage crop insurance on farm finances.
- Development of formulas to allow other dairy farmers to test grazing and crop insurance scenarios for their own farms.
- Field days in summer 2018.

Session development for  
GLBW Conference this fall

**Does the group promote specific conservation practices (EQIP) or enhancements (CSP) for farmer support through NRCS?**

No -- for reasons. Most of the group members work directly with farmers. They have seen perennial forage acres come and go, depending on what NRCS practices were being pushed at the time, and have become convinced that:

**promotion of specific NRCS practices is not a sustainable solution** to having secure perennial forage acres on the landscape.

Either the farmers need to be approached about **personal values and stewardship**, and make a commitment to practices through that route; or (probably *and*)

**the economics of perennial forage have to work for the farmers before, during, and after any conservation payments.**

## **Has the group identified goals related to the next Farm Bill?**

No -- for reasons. Mostly relating to deep skepticism and cynicism about the potential for political action to make a sustainable difference in how farmers make decisions about perennial forage acres, and for concern about unintended consequences.

They have seen **bad ideas elevated to law** and **good ideas swept away** as political bargaining chips.

They know, because they've seen it play out, that **even good ideas aren't going to work on the ground unless part of some comprehensive revision of policy.**

They've seen **unintended consequences**, such as CRP shutting beginning farmers out of farmland access.

The educators in MPFWG generally want to

**spend much more of their time in close to the  
ground work**

with farmers rather than in higher-level policy discussions.

The RMA grant just received will allow the group to collect data on the value of forage crop insurance for dairy operations in IA, IL, MN, and WI.

The value of this insurance for this region is currently unclear to the group.

This project should clarify whether forage crop insurance is a win for dairy farms, and that information could feed into Farm Bill advocacy.

## **How are you measuring progress?**

- Number of subscribers to the monthly Updates
- Number of subscribers to the Slide Library
- Grant funds received

## **Do you monitor and report acres of CLC?**

This gets tracked for certain projects that members are doing.

- Grazing projects LSP is doing in the Chippewa River watershed in western MN – grazed acres are known for that project.
- Minnesota Cropland Grazing Exchange – Acres could be captured



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Password

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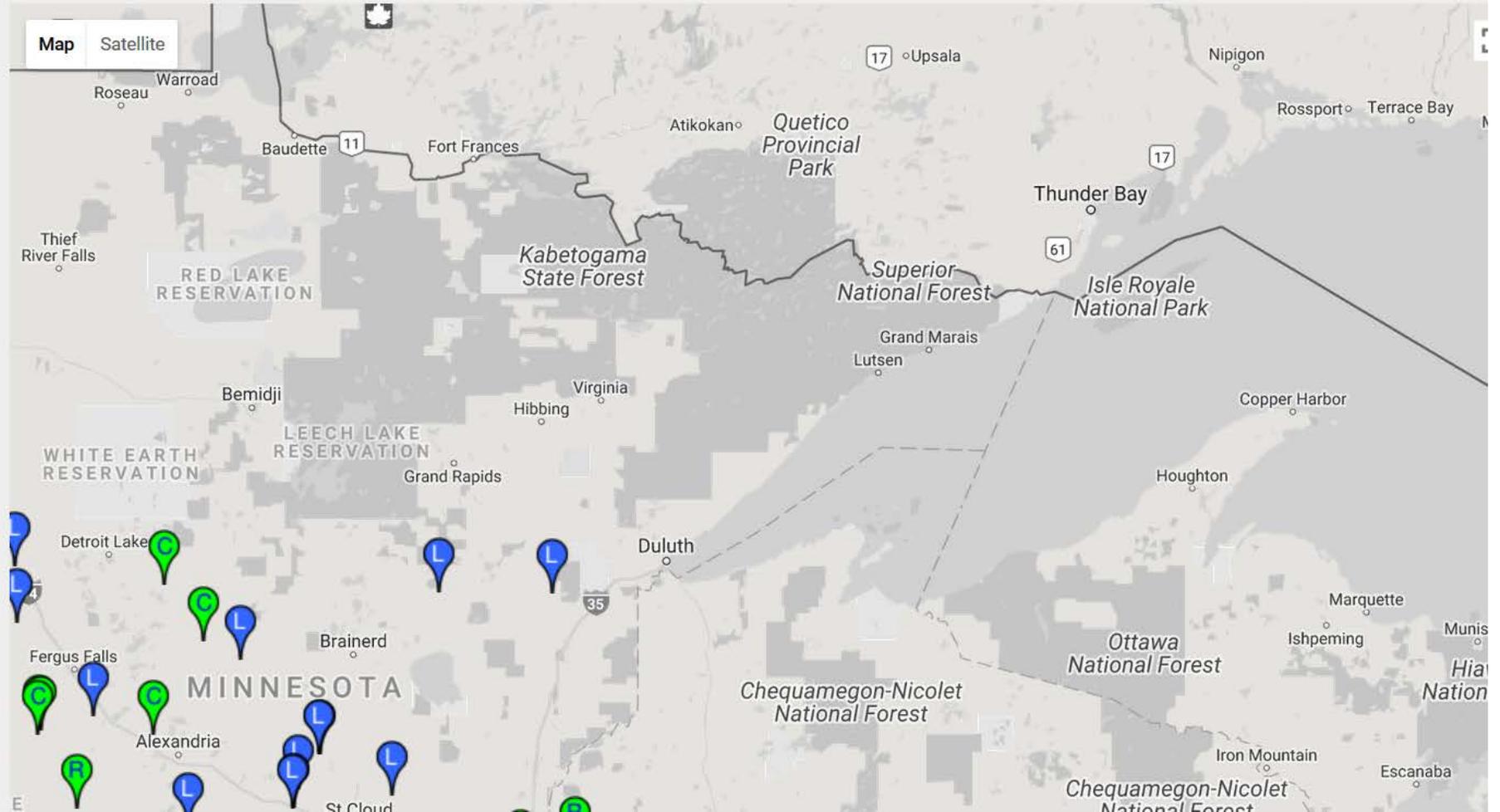
[Sign in](#)

New Users, create an account by clicking the "Enroll" button below. All information is required, however, personal information will only be shared if you choose to list land for grazing or livestock for crop management.

[Enroll](#)

Search

Legend



**Is the group collaborating with other GLBW-affiliated regional groups? How so?**

Yes. The core group of the MPFWG includes folks from:

LSP	University of Wisconsin
PFI	UW-Extension
SFA	Iowa State University
	Southwest Badger RC & D.

# What are the biggest barriers to CLC adoption? What are the missing pieces?

The biggest missing piece to adoption of any CLC practice, as discussed a number of times in MPFWG meetings, is **clear financial benefit for the farmers and landowners**. That's starting to come for cover crops. We have decent data and examples on the benefits of CLC practices for soil health, water quality, long-term resilience, etc. – but not enough, or not enough good, short- and medium-term economic reasons to adopt.

**During our recent discussion of our conference session, Kent Solberg went through a list of reasons people give why grazing of cropland won't work for them:**

No fencing

No watering system

Soil compaction

No one has livestock around here

No one will move cows/water this far

Predators

Pastures too small

I don't have time/ability

Who will take care of hurt/sick animals

No loading facility

I don't want to handle cows anymore

Don't want bulls around

Don't want to be bothered by  
livestock

Not competitive with cropland rents

Nothing in it for me as a landowner

## **What are the biggest opportunities for your group near-term and long-term?**

The RMA grant is a near-term opportunity to gain experience working together on a funded project.

Long-term, we hope to build on that experience with more funding for projects that match up with the programs and needs of the Working Group members.

**What are this working group's most promising potential collaborations with other GLBW-affiliated working groups?**

MPFWG could potentially collaborate well with any of the other working groups, because livestock are an implementation route to all of the CLC strategies.

Currently there are pretty strong ties between grazing and cover crops.

Several of our members are working on projects that integrate livestock into cropping systems with cover crops.

Some of our members are involved in research on grazing of Kernza, so that's a tie to perennial grains.

We are interested in more information about the potential for feeding Kernza grain to livestock.

Agroforestry in the form of silvopasture is another area we pay attention to.

Our 2016 GLBW Conference session included a silvopasture component.

Biomass is an area where we could certainly collaborate.

Many of the grasses used as biofuel can also be grazed.

Also, biofuel-type grasses can be treated to make them more digestible and palatable to livestock, so livestock feeding could be part of the market for these biofuel-type grasses.

## **How can the GLBW Steering Committee and Regional Office best support your work?**

Continued funding for coordination of the WG would be valuable. Funding and facilitating similar coordination of other WGs under the GLBW umbrella would also be helpful. There's a lot of potential and interest in cross-WG collaboration, but there doesn't seem to be a structure or a point person to engage with, outside of the fall conference situation.

# Thank You!

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