



University of Idaho

Rangeland Center

RANGELAND CENTER

HIGHLIGHTS 2021

More than half of Idaho is the vast, wide-open grasslands and shrublands known as rangelands. The conservation and management of rangelands is central to Idaho's economic and ecological vitality. The U of I Rangeland Center advances long-term management solutions for rangelands through cross-cutting studies and workshops on key rangeland issues. With 37 researchers and educators across the state, the Center explores integrated land management approaches to support livestock, wildlife, and watersheds throughout Idaho.

RANGELANDS RESEARCH

The Rangeland Center focused on current issues impacting rangelands statewide in 2021 with a wide spectrum of interdisciplinary and cross-cutting research and outreach across the state. Faculty and students engaged in more than 40 projects, focusing on issues including wildfire and fuel management, wildlife management, watershed function, rangeland uses, and invasive plant management.

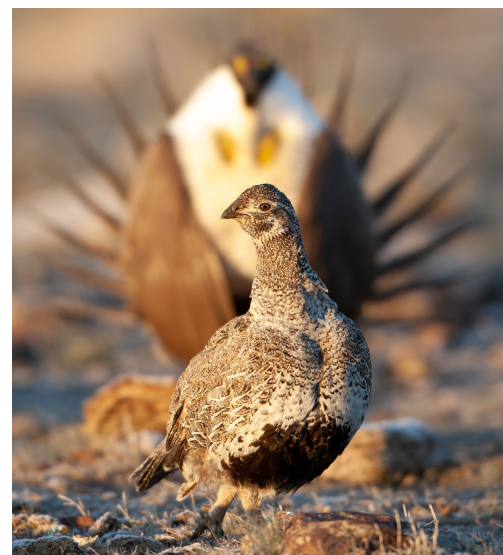
- **Dormant season grazing to reduce cheatgrass and promote perennial grasses**
Working with a local rancher, this study monitors vegetation and conducts spring and fall grazing to assess how grazing affects invasive grasses.
- **Assessing fuel-break performance and methods of wildfire management**
Center members teamed up with land managers to understand the ecology, performance, and economics of fuel breaks and wildland fuels management in southern Idaho rangelands.
- **Effect of cattle grazing on sage-grouse habitat and demographic traits**
Currently in the eighth year, this study occurs on five sites across Idaho. Researchers are working to understand the various aspects of cattle grazing that can influence sage-grouse habitat and livelihood. How grazing methods affect sage grouse brood-rearing habitat in wet meadows was conducted at Rinker Rock Creek Ranch, and revealed that high intensity grazing sustained or enhanced forbes preferred by sage-grouse. In 2021, the research team presented this research and wrote articles to share findings.
- **Evaluating the social, economic, and ecological outcomes of riparian management practices**
This project will help inform land managers on the trade-offs of various practices, and is currently in the early stages of study identifying research sites.
- **Effects of beaver dam analogs on mesic meadows function and carbon cycling**
Data was gathered from sites at Rinker Rock Creek Ranch to determine the effects of beaver dam analogs on carbon sequestration, forage production, and ecosystem function.

uidaho.edu/rangeland-center

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**U of I Rangeland Center
creates knowledge and
fosters understanding for
the stewardship and
management of
rangelands.**



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COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Rangeland Center conducted nearly 30 outreach events in 2021 providing information and resources to local, statewide, national, and international audiences. Outreach projects ranged from workshops and forums, to publications, online databases, and digital resources.

- **Idaho Range Livestock Symposium 2021 - Integrating the Needs of Animals, Rangelands, and People**

This annual symposium, co-hosted with UI Extension, provided valuable information and research to livestock producers throughout Idaho. Topics included production economics, livestock selection, grazing management, and rangeland monitoring

- **Fall Forum: From Drought to Resilience**

Hosted in partnership with the Idaho Rangeland Conservation Partnership and the McClure Center for Public Policy Research, this forum focuses on providing producers and land managers with research on contemporary concerns. This year's forum delved into the impacts of drought on Idaho's rangelands and tools and resources to meet the challenge.

- **Outreach at Rinker Rock Creek Ranch**

Located in central Idaho, the ranch serves as a hub for research and outreach for the Rangeland Center. Activities in 2021 focused on wildlife conservation, range livestock production, rangeland monitoring, riparian restoration, and managing recreation.

- **RangeDocs: National Grazingland Information System**

Rangeland Center faculty helped develop and launched a free, searchable digital library for technical documents and research relating to rangelands. This tool is accessible to rangeland users and managers across the globe. (www.docs.rangelandsgateway.org)

- **Livestock and Climate Change**

Climate Center members worked with the U of I McClure Center for Public Policy Research to summarize potential climate change effects on rangelands in the Idaho Climate-Economy Impacts Assessment (www.uidaho.edu/iceia). The assessment demonstrates that climate change will have an impact on rangelands statewide and the natural resources that support Idaho's economy.

Through partnerships and joint efforts, the Rangeland Center is cutting across challenges and topics to accomplish our mission.

PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION OF RANGELAND MANAGERS & STUDENT EDUCATION

Providing Hands-On Experience for University Students

Students seeking degrees in agriculture and natural resources are an integral part of the Center's work. The Rangeland Center hired and supervised undergraduate interns this year, engaging them in research through data collection and monitoring.

Engaging Youth in Rangelands Career Development and Science

Rangeland Center faculty presented Future Farmers of America (FFA) and 4H programs that engage students in career development and opportunities to learn about rangelands. The Rangeland Center also hosted science education days in Idaho schools, engaging hundreds of students in rangeland, environmental, and natural resources science experiences.



STUDENT PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

The Rangeland Center has worked with university students for several years to conduct the Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) project in Idaho with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). This project provides information to assess the status, condition, and trend of rangeland across the US.

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