



Rangeland Center News & Updates | September 2025 | rangelandcenter.org

Upcoming Events & Opportunities

October 2-3: Rangeland Center Fall Forum in Salmon

Fall Forum registration closes **Friday, September 26th!** If you're not already registered, now is the time to do so. Join us at the Nancy M. Cummings Research, Extension, and Education Center in Salmon for two days of interactive panel sessions and hands-on learning. This year's event will explore how rangeland stewards are reaching to the future and using new ideas and new technologies to address challenges.

[*View the agenda and register.*](#)

October 23: Restoring Landscapes- From Seeds to Success

Tune in for the final installment of our monthly webinar series. Find recordings of the full series on our [YouTube channel](#).

[*Register for the webinar.*](#)

November 30: David Little Endowment Funding Proposals Due

The Center is accepting proposals from UI faculty and Extension educators for the David Little Livestock Range Management Endowment. The committee will begin reviewing proposals on the first Monday of December and funds will be distributed to awarded projects in early January.

[Learn more about the David Little Endowment.](#)

January 6-8: Range Livestock Symposium

Mark your calendars for the 2026 Range Livestock Symposium. January 6th in Homedale, January 7th in Twin Falls, and January 8th in Grace.

More details to come.

Rangeland Center Research Highlights & Updates

How do Beaver Dams Affect Sage-Grouse Space Use and Brood Survival in a Grazed Landscape?

Graduate student Walker Field is exploring this question as part of his master's project. This summer, he has been capturing and deploying GPS backpacks on greater sage-grouse hens, conducting brood surveys after successful nest hatches to assess chick survival, and censusing waterways on the Rinker Rock Creek Ranch and surrounding public land to quantify all the beaver dams.

In total, 30 sage-grouse hens were captured and fitted with GPS backpacks, combined with the survivors of the 2024 season, for a total sample size of 37 hens. From those hens, 42 nests were confirmed, with 8 successfully hatched. No broods survived to the final survey at 50-days, giving a brood survival rate of 0% for the season. These findings contrast sharply with the 2024 season, which showed a nest success rate of 50% and documented 40% brood survival.

The 2025 field season was the second and final season for this project. Walker plans to defend his thesis by the spring of 2026 and publish at least two peer-reviewed articles from his research. Stay tuned for future results and papers from this project.

Fall Field Trip Season at University of Idaho



The arrival of fall semester means it is field trip season at UI. Two undergraduate range classes, Dr. Launchbaugh's Wildland Plant ID class (REM 2530) and Dr. Karl and Dr. Strand's Integrated Rangeland Field Experiences (REM 4600) classes, embarked on multi-day field trips within the first few weeks of the fall term. Both trips teamed up with Dan Lauritzen and Bill Ebner from College of Southern Idaho to bring students to the range.

The first excursion happened the last week of August, when Karen Launchbaugh & Sarah Turcic (UI) and Dan Lauritzen & Bill Ebner (CSI) brought students in their rangeland plant identification classes together for an immersive range experience. Five days exploring rangelands between Meadows and Gibbonsville, ID offered 18 students a chance to identify plants, describe rangelands, and make new friends. Every day during the trip, students learned about many new plants, and got hands-on experience in soil texturing and using compasses, clinometers, and GPS Units to describe rangeland sites. The class saw and experienced incredible rangelands that included mountain meadows, salt-desert shrublands, sagebrush steppe, and forest grasslands. Evenings at remote sites were filled with Dutch Oven cooking, starry skies, campfires and no cell service.

Next, from September 10-14th, UI instructors Jason Karl, Eva Strand, and Leah Dreesmann took 16 students to Rock Creek Ranch to learn about and practice rangeland monitoring techniques. Dan Lauritzen and Bill Ebner from CSI again graciously gave their time to help make it an amazing trip. The experience culminated with a "science day" when students learned about several of the ranch's ongoing research projects and got to hear from faculty leading those projects. That afternoon, they were able to participate in surveys for Columbia Spotted Frogs in the area of the 2024 Glendale Fire to begin to understand how the fire might affect amphibian populations on the ranch.

Our combined UI and CSI rangeland faculty and instructors are committed to giving students on-the-ground experiences because we believe you can't learn all you need to know about rangelands in a book, on a podcast, or with an app.

University of Idaho's Rangeland Center

Jason Karl, Director (Moscow)

Tim Prather, Sr. Associate Director (Moscow)

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