



## Headlines

### **2023 Annual Meeting and Winter Conference**

[Register Before January 9 to Save \\$15](#)

Speakers:

- Glenn Elzinga, Alderspring Ranch, Salmon, Idaho
- Andrea Bowman, NDSU Extension, Bowman
- Riley Kammerer, Piedmont, South Dakota
- Lance Gartner, Spring Valley Ranch, Glen Ullin, 2022 Leopold Conservation Award Winner

### **2023 Leopold Conservation Award Nominees Being Accepted**

Are you a North Dakota rancher, farmer or forestland owner who improves soil health, water quality and wildlife habitat on your working land? Apply for the 2023 North Dakota Leopold Conservation Award<sup>®</sup>.

Sand County Foundation presents the Leopold Conservation Award to private landowners in 25 states for extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation. In North Dakota, the \$10,000 award is presented with national sponsor American Farmland Trust and state partners: North Dakota Grazing Lands Coalition, North Dakota Association of Soil Conservation Districts and the North Dakota Stockmen's Association.

### **NDGrazingExchange.com Goes Live!**

A new tool is now available for those needing resources to graze or those that have resources but no livestock. The [ndgrazingexchange.com](https://ndgrazingexchange.com) website is now live!

1. Create a FREE account
2. Register a pin (This will include the number of animals or acres you have to graze.)
3. View other pins to see what they have to offer



A step-by-step guide to using

**NDGrazingExchange.com**

LET US HELP YOU FIND YOUR GRAZING MATCH!



### Create a FREE account

To become a grazer or to have your land grazed, create your FREE account by visiting NDGrazingExchange.com. Here, you can fill out basic information about yourself.



### Register a Pin

Once you have created your free account, it's time to register a pin. You can do so by entering information about the animals you have available for grazing, or land that you are looking to have grazed.



### Start Grazing!

It is now time to connect with other users in your area! It really is that simple to find your perfect grazing match!



No two grazing operations are the same and determining your grazing need requires thoughtful consideration. This is something NDGLC can help you figure out! For additional support in determining your grazing needs, contact our NDGLC field representative at 701-537-3136 or visit NDGrazingExchange.com.



## Chairman's Message

*Jerry Doan, NDGLC Chairman*

Oh my, Mother Nature needs to calm down! Minus 60 or 70 wind chill, blizzard warnings, heavy snow, freezing rain, closed roads, shutdown schools, closed stores, no mail, power outages, frozen water lines, gelled tractors and trucks, electronics on equipment flashing codes and won't let it work, cattle laying over and giving up, and you can all add your problems and stories to this list! I'm old enough to have been through some bad winters and storms, but this is right up there with the best!

I snuck off the place the night before Christmas Eve to try to buy a couple presents. Thankfully my wife, Renae, had done most of the shopping. I got to the stores and tried to shut my pickup off. It wouldn't shut off and wouldn't go into park. I discovered a huge block of ice frozen underneath so the electronics didn't work. I had to leave the switch in accessory and go do the shopping quick as it was draining the battery. Got back home and did the same thing. In the morning the battery was dead. I was trying to keep the Christmas spirit, but it was challenging!

In the fall newsletter, I talked about plans for winter grazing. Well, Mother Nature had other ideas! Our cover crops are not that good this year and quite short. With this much snow, it makes winter grazing a challenge! We have been burning up a lot of feed, and I know many producers are worried about having enough feed. Hopefully we can graze as we get further into the year toward spring. Time will tell how that works.

The NDGLC helped the Nature Conservancy put out a report on the potential benefit of planned rotational grazing and regenerative agriculture. There is a huge opportunity for agriculture to be a big part of the solution to help our climate while improving our water quality, plant diversity, sequestering carbon, and saving our grasslands for wildlife and the human population. Hopefully these type of partnerships, working to show the vast benefit of the grasslands to the policy makers and the public, will make a difference.

I have had several calls from producers and been involved in many discussions with policy makers on the importance of the grasslands and our livestock industries. Remember, it is the ruminant animals that made the grasslands a vibrant part of our ecosystem. We need an economically sound animal agriculture if we are to keep our grasslands intact! We have taken the grasslands and their existence for granted for far too long. In N.D., we only have some 25% of native prairie left, and I believe, we are losing it at an alarming rate! In my lifetime, I have never seen such an extreme imbalance between crop agriculture and

animal agriculture. Now to make sure I don't alienate every crop producer out there, I do some farming and the crop farmers are my friends, so my goal isn't to take their economic system away. However, if we don't come up with a way to make animal agriculture compete on a more level playing field, we will continue to see grassland conversion to cropland run rapid. I was told by a prominent N.D. banker if I really wanted to bring economic success to our ranch, I would convert the grasslands to row crops! Between crop insurance and government payments the economic model is set in place for success! I have heard from a couple generational ranches that have told me this will be the last generation with cattle on their ranches. The economic pressure is too great to convert it to cropland! That is very sad!

Folks, I have always been a strong optimist and with three boys back on the ranch, and my daughter and her family helping whenever they can, I believe in the opportunity for the next generation! I'm still optimistic there are opportunities out there, we just have to work to find them.

But the time is now to start working together as livestock groups, grassland groups, conservation groups, wildlife groups, policy makers, and the concerned public to tell the story of the grasslands and their benefit to N.D. and our world! Many of you have heard me tell the story of a major ag group calling the grasslands "wastelands" in a hearing at the N.D. Capital. I will never forget that! We must change that perception and narrative! Now is the time! If we don't act, wildlife will become something we only remember and beef, bison and lamb will be a delicacy.

The NDGLC will continue to work hard to tell the story of the importance of the grasslands and work hard to improve them for future generations. We have a great team of people to help you plan or just visit about possibilities. Trish Feiring and our group of mentors are here to help. Please check out the website and use us. Also use the new grazing website to list land to be grazed or find land to graze. A great new tool!

Finally, this will be my last newsletter as your chairman. Some may be thinking, thank the Lord!! It has been a wild ride for three years! So many friendships, so many visits and talks, so many miles, so much fun! I have truly loved every minute of this great honor to serve you all! Even the tense moments! I know we are all mentors, but the board of directors and past directors, Trish, Dana, Jim, Alyssa, and all the Clearwater staff, and so many more like Kenny Miller, actually mentored me more than you will ever know! Also, thanks to all the groups, partnerships, agencies, and all of you that crossed my path. A big thanks to my family, Renae, the boys, and all! They supported me 100%! They also gave me a lot of grief along the way about not another soil health talk or trying to embarrass me on a ranch tour!

The NDGLC is a rebel group working hard to make a difference! That rebel part is what makes it fun and so rewarding, and we make a difference!

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You.

May you all have a Very Blessed New Year!

Jerry

## Field Update

*Trish Feiring, NDGLC Field Representative*

Winter is definitely here to stay! North of Beach, the drifts are deep, and the ground is covered, as I am sure they are most places in the state. 2022 was a roller coaster ride to say the least. From thinking we were headed back into drought to two April blizzards, and from stretches of droughty weather to deep snowbanks scattered on the prairie. As I reflect on 2022, I'm grateful for the moisture received, the green grass, healthy cattle, and healthy humans.

After chores are done, these long, cold winter days are the perfect time to reflect on 2022. What went right, what went wrong, what should stay the same, and what should change for 2023? If you are like us, the end of the year brings bookwork, taxes, budgeting, and planning for the upcoming year. Once you've taken time to complete all those tasks, it's a great time to do some financial planning, grazing planning and even succession planning for your ranch.

Financial Planning - There are several workshops coming up to help you get your mind thinking and challenge yourself for the upcoming year. If you'd like more information, please be sure to reach out.

- Jan 7 – Three Secrets for Increasing Profit – Hettinger, ND
- Jan 9-10 – Ranching for Profit Workshop – Miles City, MT
- Jan 11-12 – Ranching for Profit Workshop – Williston, ND
- Feb 5-7 – Regenerative Seminar – Bismarck, ND
- Feb 7-8 – Ranching for Profit Workshop – Stanley, ND
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Grazing Planning – The NDGLC has a fantastic cadre of speakers lined up for the Winter Workshop in Bismarck on January 19. Please be sure to join us. The next three to four months are also a great time to be planning new fences and water developments that are needed to advance your grazing system. I am available to meet with you in person or via Zoom to discuss your project(s) and work with you to find the right program to fit your needs. We are so fortunate to have so many amazing conservation partners that help to provide cost share on these types of projects. Please reach out for more information.

Succession Planning – I'll be the first to admit our operation needs to commit the time and resources to get a plan in place. We keep saying "next year." As we all know, sometimes next year doesn't come, so it's never too early to start thinking about the succession of your operation. The NDGLC is hosting another Succession School in Bismarck on February 26-28. More information will be shared on the NDGLC website.

I would also encourage you to reach out to one of our 30+ mentors if you'd like another person with which to toss around an idea. Mentor information is listed on the website. You can contact me at 701-872-5888 if you have any questions or would like more information about one of the events listed above.



## Mentor Network

NDGLC has established a grassroots-based network of North Dakota grazing land managers who have agreed to provide guidance and counsel to interested ranchers and agency personnel on grassland management.

[Learn more](#) about NDGLC mentors.

## Event Wrap Up



### **Mentor Training Workshop**

The NDGLC held a Mentor Training October 24-25 at the Blackleg Ranch, near McKenzie. More than 25 mentors and guests attended the training.

Mentor Training, conducted every two years, works to build the capacity of mentors and improve their ability to guide mentees.

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## **Partner News**

### **Pheasants Forever**

#### **Providing Technology Driven Conservation Solutions To Help Turn Red Acres Green**

Precision ag technology is used to make a variety of agronomic management decisions on farms. Increasingly, this technology has become critically important in identifying underperforming acres within farming operations. Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever support agricultural producers by assisting them in understanding how their farm specific data can serve as a guide to identifying areas where management changes and conservation programs can improve the profitability of low-yielding areas. Changes that are implemented as a result of this analysis are beneficial for wildlife habitat, building soil health, increasing water quality, and improving sustainability.

As stewards of the land and business owners, growers need access to all options, including conservation, when analyzing ROI negative acres. Pheasants Forever is your resource to explore those options.

#### **NORTH DAKOTA PRECISION AG & CONSERVATION SPECIALIST**

##### **EMILY SPOYLAR**

COUNTIES COVERED: McKenzie, Dunn, Mercer, Oliver, Morton, Sioux, Grant, Adams, Hettinger, Stark, Slope, Bowman, Golden Valley, Billings

EMAIL: [espolyar@pheasantsforever.org](mailto:espolyar@pheasantsforever.org)

PHONE: (517) 250-2440

##### **AUSTIN LANG**

COUNTIES COVERED: Stutsman, Logan, McIntosh, LaMoure, Dickey, Sargent, Ransom, Richland, Cass, and Barnes

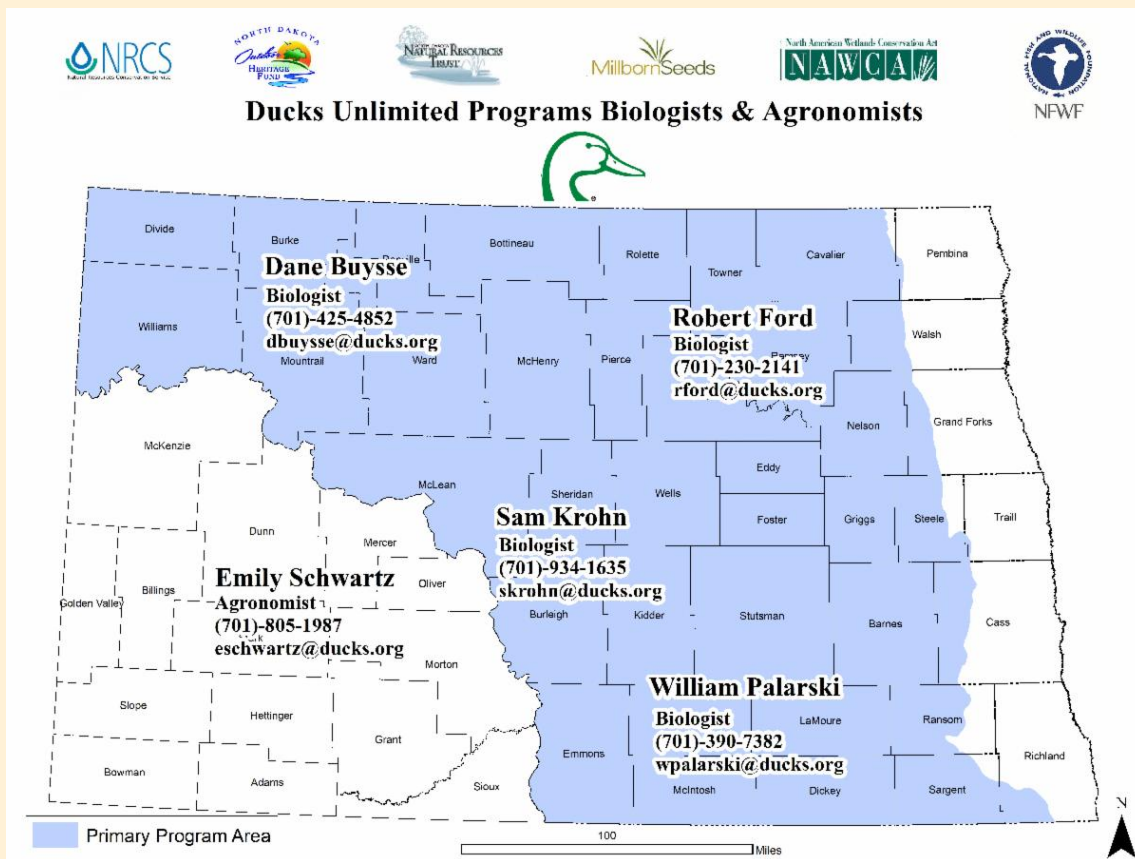
EMAIL: [alang@pheasantsforever.org](mailto:alang@pheasantsforever.org)

PHONE: (701) 840-3062

### **Ducks Unlimited**

Ducks Unlimited's (DU) team of conservation program biologists and agronomists work with farmers and ranchers across North Dakota to help them reach their operational goals through various conservation programs. Its team can help landowners evaluate conservation programs that amplify productive uses for marginal cropland, improve the health and vigor of perennial grasslands, or improve soil health on croplands. DU biologists can also assist landowners with any of the conservation program applications

that will suit their needs.



## Audubon Dakota

### Need Forage? Apply Today!

The North Dakota Conservation Forage Program (CFP) works with producers to establish grasslands on marginal cropland to improve forage availability and quality while nurturing soil health and wildlife habitat. Generous financial and technical support is available. Integration of grazing and haying is encouraged!

### Contact A Range Ecologist To Learn More

North Dakota Central Coteau and Stutsman County Toolbox Projects  
[Charli Kohler](mailto:charlene.kohler@audubon.org) | Range Ecologist [charlene.kohler@audubon.org](mailto:charlene.kohler@audubon.org)

Grand Forks Area Toolbox Projects and Conservation Forage Program  
[Juli Bosmoe](mailto:julianna.bosmoe@audubon.org) | Range Ecologist [julianna.bosmoe@audubon.org](mailto:julianna.bosmoe@audubon.org)



North Dakota Game and Fish Department

## Meadowlark Initiative ... Cattle-centric Grassland Conservation

The vision of the Meadowlark Initiative, named after North Dakota's cherished, yet declining state bird, is "to promote and create healthy, thriving grasslands that provide biodiversity and prosperity for wildlife, pollinators, ranching operations and communities."

The Game and Fish Department, charged with the responsibility of keeping the state's rare and declining wildlife species out of the emergency room, recognized it was going to take "all hands on deck" and "every tool in the toolshed" to enlist, support and assist cooperating private landowners in the monumental task of enhancing, restoring and retaining what's left of North Dakota's native grasslands.

To learn more about the Meadowlark Initiative, visit the Department's website at <https://gf.nd.gov/meadowlark-initiative> or contact Husband at [Heather@naturalresourcestrust.com](mailto:Heather@naturalresourcestrust.com) or 701/223-8501.



The North Dakota Grazing Lands Coalition (NDGLC) is a member-supported nonprofit that relies on your generous donations and memberships to provide peer-to-peer mentoring, conferences and outreach to North Dakota landowners. If you are not yet a member, [consider joining](#). As a NDGLC member, you will receive reduced registration rates for the conference, events and field trips throughout the year. The coalition also produces quarterly newsletters to provide members with ideas, practices and information within the industry.

Join Today!

## Upcoming Events

- **NDGLC Winter Conference:** January 18-19, 2023, Ramada, Bismarck
- **Grazers Road Show:** February - March

## Get Involved

Are you looking for ways to get more involved with NDGLC? Here are a few simple ways to help us out:

### Like us on Facebook

- Liking us on [Facebook](#) and engaging with our posts helps us share our message with a new audience.

### Share your stories with us

- We want to hear from you. Please share your stories with [us](#). Your experience is a great resource.

### Invite people in your network to our events

- NDGLC hosts many [events](#) open to the public. Bring a friend the next time you come.



*NDGLC newsletters are sponsored by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. All programs and services of NDGLC are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap.*

The North Dakota Grazing Lands Coalition | 1605 E. Capital Avenue, Bismarck, ND 58501

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