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The Board of Directors of the South Dakota Grassland Coalition would like to thank you for your continued support. We wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year.



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For more information or other events the **SOUTH DAKOTA GRASSLAND COALITION** is involved with, please contact Kyle Schell or visit the website: <http://www.sdgrass.org>

Automated Weather Station Opportunity

The South Dakota Grassland Coalition is considering development of a project that would help offset the cost of an automated weather station. The weather station would provide reliable information that could be used in the SD Drought Tool. Presently when using the SD Drought Tool you must rely on national weather data sites input of the tool to predict upcoming weather probabilities. Often the National Weather collection sites contain incomplete information on a daily basis that you have to wait for several weeks to complete. Also these predetermine sites are often miles away from your own operation. If the Coalition can secure funding to help offset the cost of a weather station, then those who are interested in using the SD Drought Tool for management decision could have more reliable data reflective of their operation.

The Coalition is considering applying for a grant to help offset these costs. If selected for funding, the Coalition could receive up to 50% of the total project cost. The Coalition would then be required to match the USDA funds awarded on a dollar-for-dollar basis from non-federal sources with cash and in-kind contributions. Of the required match (50%), a minimum of 25% of the total project cost must come from cash sources; the remaining 25% may come from in-kind contributions.

Those interested would be required to provide a minimum of 25% cash match along with collecting, inputting, analyzing, and submitting data for up to 3 years of the project. Technical assistance will be provided to assist the producers in getting started. If this sounds like something that you might be interested in, or if you have any questions regarding this opportunity, please contact either Kelly Stout or Kyle Schell:

Kelly – (605) 224-1818 ext. 6,

Kelly.Stout@sd.usda.gov

Kyle – (605) 688-6623

Kyle.schell@sdstate.edu

Annual Meeting Highlights

The South Dakota Grassland Coalition held its annual meeting entitled “Passing the Profitable Ranch on to the Next Generation: You’re Never too Young to Start” on December 15th at the AmericInn in Chamberlain. There were nearly 50 people there to listen to the speakers: Blake McKibbin, Advanced Markets Consultant with Farm Bureau in Des Moines, and Sherry Vinton, Nebraska Sandhill’s Rancher from Whitman Nebraska. Blake began his presentation by discussing the four obstacles that one encounters when developing a business succession plan: 1) how will taxes impact your succession strategy, 2) how can you plan for future living expenses, 3) how can you successfully transfer your business and still maintain family harmony, and 4) how to work with professional advisors effectively and economically. Blake used case studies and thoroughly explained each of these in an easily understood manner. In the afternoon Sherry Vinton discussed some of her experiences being the fifth generation living on their ranch in the sandhills. She shared some real world experiences as well as some insightful ideas regarding the future of agriculture. Participants were extremely satisfied with both of the speakers. Between the speakers we held a short business meeting where some business was conducted as well as board elections were held. Jim Faulstich and Ellen Reddick were both re-elected. We also summarized all of the events that the coalition was involved in during the year. It was a very productive year with numerous events being held. Some note worthy events include: an Ian Mitchell-Innes Workshop, back-to-back SD Grazing Schools, the debut of the Leopold Conservation Award in SD, and the Coalitions involvement in the Partners for Conservation.

Holistic Management Workshop Recap

The first session “Principles of Success” Introduction to Holistic Management held on December 6-7 was a great success. A few of the topics covered were: The 10 principles of Holistic Management, Defining the Whole, Creating a Holistic goal, and using the seven testing questions to make economical, environmental and socially sound decisions. At the end of the training, the class participants were upbeat and excited about applying the principles they had learned.

Many producers have been through the basic course of Holistic Management; however, many have not attended any advanced courses. The next two workshops (financial and grazing) planning will get into the step-by-step details. You will know how to plan for a profit as well as how to plan and implement a grazing plan by the end of the workshop.

HM Financial Planning will be held on January 4-5.

What to expect to learn:

- Plan to make a healthy profit
- Learn how to create a financial plan
- Learn to monitor your plan
- Make the most of the resources you have available
- Build confidence in your decision making
- Learn how to respond to change and take advantage of opportunities
- Analyze new and existing enterprises for the contribution to the entire operation
- Honor your quality of life and family needs
- Work through various outlined principles with a case study
- The steps necessary to prepare annual financial plan that includes gross profit analysis of enterprises, budgeting, and cash

flow management using the Holistic Management forms.

The HM Grazing Planning will be held on January 6-7

- Holistic Management Grazing Planning gets your animals to the right place at the right time and for the right reasons. It enables you to manage land, animals, and wildlife so that during the growing months the land can produce the maximum amount of high quality forage.

Objectives:

- Complete a grazing chart (open-ended plan) / (closed plan).
- Learn how to calculate standard animal units, animal days per acre available, stocking rate, and stock density.
- Learn grazing, over-grazing, growth rates, and recovery period.
- Learn how to monitor and control the plan.
- Learn how to use the grazing planning software.

The cost to attend these trainings is \$250 per session; however, if you attend three or more sessions, the cost will be \$175 per session. The South Dakota Grassland Coalition will offer a \$50 tuition re-imbursement scholarship to the first 15 SD residents who are SDGC members. Members are eligible to receive this scholarship for each session they attend. Books, training materials and a noon meal will be provided each day. The workshops will be held in Chamberlain at the Zion Lutheran Church (314 S Main St - one block south of McDonalds). Registration begins at 7:30 am and classes are scheduled from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm each day. To obtain additional information, or to register for any of these training sessions, please contact Randy Holmquist at 605-473-5356 or randy@zhvalley.com.



Kyle Schell
Box 2170, ASC 105, SDSU
Brookings, SD 57007

Calendar of events:

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>	<u>Phone No.</u>
HM Trainings – Financial plan	Jan 4-5	Chamberlain, SD	Randy Holmquist	605-473-5356
HM Training – Grazing plan	Jan 6-7	Chamberlain, SD	Randy Holmquist	605-473-5356
HM Training – Land plan	Feb 7-8	Chamberlain, SD	Randy Holmquist	605-473-5356
HM Training – Policy	Feb 24-25	Chamberlain, SD	Randy Holmquist	605-473-5356

Please remit any comments, suggestions, or topics deemed necessary for further review to: Kyle Schell, SDSU Box 2170, Brookings SD 57007, kyle.schell@sdstate.edu, (605) 688-6623