



# GRASSLANDS ACROSS GENERATIONS

THE SEVENTH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE ON THE CONSERVATION  
OF AMERICA'S GRASSLANDS

JUNE 24–26, 2025 • KEARNEY, NEBRASKA

# Healthy Grasslands Grow Strong Communities.



Top left: © Clay Bolt, Top right: © Thomas Lee / WWF-US



World Wildlife Fund works with Native Nations, ranchers, and many other partners to sustain, expand, and improve grasslands for the benefit of people and wildlife.

[worldwildlife.org/places/great-plains](https://worldwildlife.org/places/great-plains)



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# Conference Agenda

**TUESDAY, JUNE 24**

7:30a–4:30p

## OPTIONAL FULL DAY FIELD TRIPS

*Departing from Younes Conference Center-North*

- **Nebraska Sandhills** hosted by Shelly Kelly, Sandhills Task Force
- **Loess Canyons** hosted by Dirac Twidwell, University of Nebraska, Lincoln

7:30a–1:00p

## OPTIONAL HALF DAY FIELD TRIP

*Departing from Younes Conference Center-North*

- **The Nature Conservancy's Platte River Prairies and The Crane Trust** hosted by staff from the Crane Trust, The Nature Conservancy, National Audubon Society's Rowe Sanctuary, and the University of Nebraska, Lincoln.

3:00p–5:30p

## REGISTRATION

*Younes Conference Center-North*

3:00p–5:00p

## SET UP FOR POSTERS AND EXHIBITORS

*Gold Ballroom*

### Workshop 1: A Bug's View: What Insects Can Tell Us about Grasslands

*Room: Silver 1*

Insects and other invertebrates are some of the most fascinating and abundant organisms in grasslands. They also play crucial, but underappreciated roles that support prairie productivity and function. This workshop will highlight the diversity and importance of grassland invertebrates and discuss ways to incorporate their needs into grazing and other prairie management plans.

- **Moderators: Jennifer Hopwood**, Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation  
**Chris Helzer**, The Nature Conservancy

### Workshop 2: Transition to Regenerative Ranching

*Room: Silver 7*

In 2021, Noble ranches (about 13,500 acres) transitioned entirely to regenerative management across all ranches while monitoring the soils and pastures, livestock production, and economics of each. This workshop will include a demonstration of the holistic process by which the ranches transitioned to regenerative management including how ranchers can begin to make major strides toward a successful transition into regenerative ranch management and greater business success.

- **Moderator: Hugh Aljoe**, Noble Research Institute

5:30p–8:00p

## WELCOME RECEPTION

*Lobby Younes Conference North, Kearney*

- **Julie Sibbing**, National Wildlife Federation
- **T.J. Walker**, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
- **Dave Wedin**, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
- **Leah Peterson**, Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition

Credit: Ethan Freese

**LET'S  
CONNECT  
ON SOCIAL  
MEDIA!**



#AGC25 #ProtectOurPrairie #Grasslands

NWF:  @NWF\_ag

Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition:  @negrazinglands

University of Nebraska-Lincoln:  @unlgrasslandsystems

 @UNL\_IANR @UNL\_Grassland

## WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25

### 7:00a–8:00a **BREAKFAST & REGISTRATION**

*Younes Conference North*

### 8:15a–9:30a **OPENING PLENARY**

*Gold Ballroom*

**Opening** – National Wildlife Federation

**Welcome address from Senator Deb Fischer**

**Welcome message from Sherry Vinton**, Director of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture

**Keynote – Kyle Lybarger**, Native Habitat Project, *Post Oaks: Promoting Local Ecosystems By Posting On Social Media*

**Bethany Johnston**, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, *Importance of Nebraska's Sandhills Prairies & Its People*

**Josephine Marcotty and Dave Hage**, *Sea of Grass: The Conquest, Ruin, and Redemption of Nature on the America Prairie*

**Message from Representative Sharice Davids (D-KS)**, sponsor of the North American Grasslands Conservation Act

### 9:30a–10:10a **BREAK HOSTED BY WORLD WILDLIFE FUND**

*Exhibit Area, Silver Ballroom & Foyer*

### 10:10a–11:50a **FIRST CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

	<b>TRACK 1</b> <b>COLLABORATIVE GRASSLANDS CONSERVATION</b> <i>Room: Gold 7</i> <b>Moderator: Jim Giacomo</b>	<b>TRACK 2</b> <b>GRASSLAND CONSERVATION SOCIAL SCIENCE</b> <i>Room: Silver 1</i> <b>Moderator: Aleta Dam</b>	<b>TRACK 3</b> <b>CONNECTIVITY AND WILDLIFE MOVEMENTS</b> <i>Room: Silver 7</i> <b>Moderator: Kelly Beevers</b>
10:10a	<b>Collaborative Adaptive Rangeland Management: A decade of grazing management on the shortgrass steppe</b> <b>Angela Dwyer</b> , Bird Conservancy of the Rockies	<b>Exploring community-based ecological restoration through participatory network mapping</b> <b>John Canfield</b> , University of Wisconsin-Madison	<b>The Path of Pipit #43535</b> Follow the date-specific path of Pipit #43535 from Mexico to Canada featuring the grazing management of ranchers. Learn how ranching has created a desirable home for this declining bird species.
10:35a	<b>Developing collaborative adaptive management research at the UNL Barta Brothers Ranch</b> <b>Mitch Stephenson</b> , University of Nebraska-Lincoln	<b>Motivations, concerns, and success in accessing private land sites for native seed harvest</b> <b>Rita Cunha</b> , Conservation Blueprint	<b>Sheila Walsh</b> , Rancher in Philips County MT on the Fort Belknap Reservation <b>Matt Bain</b> , The Nature Conservancy <b>Aaron Clausen</b> , World Wildlife Fund
11:00a	<b>Coupling durable protection and stewardship in southern high plains generational grasslands</b> <b>Matthew Bain</b> , The Nature Conservancy	<b>Trends in grasslands management and irrational economic behavior</b> <b>John Pattison-Williams</b> , University of Alberta, Canada	
11:25a	<b>Building state-level collaborations on the foundation of the central grasslands roadmap</b> <b>Laura Kahler</b> , South Dakota Grasslands Initiative <b>Laura Nelson</b> , Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition	<b>Collaboration for grasslands conservation on private lands</b> <b>Kyle Schumacher</b> , Nebraska Game and Parks	

## WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25

11:50a–1:00p

### LUNCH

Gold Ballroom

1:00p–2:40p

### SECOND CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS

	<b>TRACK 1</b> <b>LARGE LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION PLANNING</b> <i>Room: Gold 7</i> <b>Moderator: Catherine Wightman</b>	<b>TRACK 2</b> <b>INNOVATIVE GRASSLAND CONSERVATION TOOLS</b> <i>Room: Silver 1</i> <b>Moderator: Julie Sibbing</b>	<b>TRACK 3</b> <b>INDIGENOUS AND COMMUNITY BASED-STEWARDSHIP</b> <i>Room: Silver 7</i> <b>Moderator: Gloria Tom</b>	<b>TRACK 4</b> <b>HOW CREATIVE AG LENDING SUPPORTS DURABLE GRASSLAND CONSERVATION</b> <i>Room: Gold 1</i> <b>Moderator: Nancy Labbe</b>
1:00p	<b>New strategies for rangeland health</b> <b>Steve Riley</b> , American Bird Conservancy	<b>Term conservation easements in Saskatchewan</b> <b>Mindy Anderson</b> , Saskatchewan Stock Growers Foundation	<b>Buffalo rematriation across generations</b> <b>Bill Snow &amp; Francisco Munoz-Arriola</b> , Indigenous Kinship Circle	<p>This panel will feature bankers and ranchers working together on financially complex generational transfers that are critical to the future of grassland stewardship.</p> <p><b>Ben Gotschall</b>, Holt Creek Jerseys, Nebraska  <b>Ryan Sexson</b>, Sexson Ranch, Nebraska  <b>Jeff Kranger</b>, President First State Bank Nebraska</p>
1:25p	<b>Wildlife and grazing compatibility on Great Plains grasslands</b> <b>Jennifer Prenosil</b> , Nebraska Game & Parks Commission	<b>Realizing the potential of grassland carbon credits: A Montana case study</b> <b>Travis Croft</b> , The Climate Trust	<b>The tribal buffalo lifeways collaboration</b> <b>Monica Rattling Hawk</b> , World Wildlife Fund	
1:50p	<b>Moving from the project boundary to landscape scale monitoring and reporting: engaging partners, tracking metrics, and leveraging funding</b> <b>Patrick Lendrum &amp; Kim Ballare</b> , World Wildlife Fund	<b>Innovative ways to improve land stewardship</b> <b>Shelly Kelly &amp; Cody Trump</b> , Sandhills Task Force	<b>Grassland restoration on the Santee Sioux Nation</b> <b>Mike Crosley</b> , Santee Sioux Nation	
2:15p	<b>The National Bobwhite and Grassland Initiative's Coordinated Implementation Program landscape scale monitoring program: Conservation delivery, land cover, and birds</b> <b>Jared Elmore</b> , Clemson University	<b>Establishing a federal transferable tax credit to accelerate grassland conservation</b> <b>Maggie Hanna</b> , Central Grasslands Roadmap	<b>Empowering tribal grassland stewardship through data</b> <b>Mauryn Morfitt</b> , The Native Lands Advocacy Project	

## WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25

2:40p–3:10p

### BREAK

Exhibit area silver ballroom & foyer

3:10p–4:50p

### THIRD CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS

	<b>TRACK 1</b> <b>STRATEGIC PLANNING/ NOVEL PARTNERSHIPS</b> <i>Room: Gold 7</i> <b>Moderator: Chris Wilson</b>	<b>TRACK 2</b> <b>CONSERVATION STRATEGIES FOR GRASSLAND WILDLIFE</b> <i>Room: Silver 1</i> <b>Moderator: Ann Dvorak</b>	<b>TRACK 3</b> <b>GRASSLANDS POLICY</b> <i>Room: Silver 7</i> <b>Moderator: Brian Brooks</b>
3:10p	<b>Midwest Grasslands Summit: Charting a future for conservation in working landscapes</b> <b>Kelly VanBeek</b> , USFWS <b>Tyler Harms</b> , Iowa DNR	<b>Advancing grassland bird conservation: Recognizing keystone effects of prairie dogs</b> <b>Andrew Dreelein</b> , Northern Illinois University	<b>Opportunities and challenges with the Conservation Reserve Program</b> <b>Duane Hovorka</b> , National Wildlife Federation
3:35p	<b>Sustainable Grazing Network: Conservation and management of the Chihuahuan grasslands</b> <b>Alicia Juárez Pérez</b> , EIRHA	<b>Rangeland can support more milkweeds and monarch butterflies</b> <b>Timothy Dickson</b> , University of Nebraska at Omaha	<b>The North American Grasslands Conservation Act, a bipartisan bill to conserve and restore America's grasslands</b> <b>Aviva Glaser</b> , National Wildlife Federation
4:00p	<b>Expanded opportunities for conserving Nebraska's grasslands and wetlands</b> <b>Andy Bishop</b> , Rainwater Basin Joint Venture	<b>Herds and birds: Quantifying the impacts of Audubon's Conservation Ranching Initiative on grassland birds</b> <b>Nicole Michel</b> , National Audubon Society	<b>Using data to advance grassland conservation legislation</b> <b>Wenfei Tong</b> , Cornell Lab of Ornithology
4:25p	<b>Dream big to save E.O. Wilson's southern grassland biome</b> <b>Dwayne Estes</b> , Southeastern Grasslands Institute	<b>Passing the torch: A legacy in prairie wildlife conservation (black-footed ferret recovery)</b> <b>Max Haverfield</b> , Butte Creek Ranches <b>Chamois Andersen</b> , Defenders of Wildlife	<b>From regulation to reward: An incentive-based approach to conserving America's grasslands</b> <b>Shaleas Harrison</b> , Western Landowners Alliance

5:00p–9:00p

### DINNER AT ROWE SANCTUARY HOSTED BY AUDUBON CONSERVATION RANCHING

Featuring Sandhills Cowboy Poetry and Storytelling, Shelly Kelly, Sandhills Task Force.

**Informal Walk and Introduction to Rowe Sanctuary:** Join a Rowe staff member for a laid back stroll on trails around the Center! Enjoy views of the Platte River and the opportunity to ask questions about conservation work in the Platte River Valley. Visit riparian woodland and adjoining prairie habitat. Approximately 30 minutes in length, no more than a mile walk on paved, gravel, and mowed-grass trails. Meet at the Education pavilion on the West side of the building, at 5:30 and 7:00 pm.

Free shuttles will leave for Rowe Sanctuary from Younes Conference Center North starting at 5:00 pm approximately every 20 minutes. Shuttles will return to the conference center at the end of the event. First bus will begin to bring people back at 8:20 pm and last shuttle will leave at 9:40 pm.

Hooves on the ground are lifting wings  
over Audubon Certified working lands.

**116**

Audubon  
Certified  
Ranches

**2.9**

Million  
Acres

**14**

States

**+63**

Percent  
Increased  
BFI\*



To learn more about Audubon Conservation Ranching, visit  
**[AUDUBON.ORG/RANCHING](https://audubon.org/ranching)**

\*Bird-Friendliness Index on Audubon Certified Land vs Conventionally Managed Land.  
BFI measures bird community, abundance, diversity, and resilience.

## THURSDAY, JUNE 26

6:45a–8:00a

### BREAKFAST

Gold Ballroom

7:00a–8:45a

### NEBRASKA'S GRASSLANDS COFFEE CONNECTION

Room: Bronze 1

Gather to hear an announcement from the Nebraska Grasslands Visioning group. All are welcome.

8:00a–8:40a

### POSTER SESSION

Gold Ballroom

8:40a–10:20a

### FOURTH CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS

**TRACK 1**  
**NOVEL APPROACHES AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES**  
Room: Gold 7  
**Moderator: John Bradley**

**TRACK 2**  
**WOODY PLANT ENCROACHMENT**  
Room: Silver 1  
**Moderator: Mitch Stephenson**

**TRACK 3**  
**PARTNERSHIPS FOR GRASSLANDS CONSERVATION**  
Room: Silver 7  
**Moderator: Seth Gallagher**

8:40a

**Virtual fence as a tool for grassland bird conservation in tallgrass prairies**  
**Theo Michaels**, Kansas State University  
**Anthony Capizzo**, The Nature Conservancy

**Burning through bottlenecks: Building capacity to reduce woody encroachment on private lands in central Nebraska**  
**Nelson Winkel**, Central Platte NRD

**Leave your logo at the door: Cross-organizational team building for conservation collaboration**  
**Jim Giocomo**, American Bird Conservancy

9:05a

**Bringing life back to incised streams: A low-tech restoration approach for the Great Plains**  
**Aaron Deters**, Ducks Unlimited

**Causes and consequences of woody plant encroachment in Great Plains grasslands**  
**Jesse Nippert & Zak Ratajczak**, Kansas State University  
**Chris Helzer**, The Nature Conservancy

**Innovative partnerships for landscape level grassland impacts**  
**Kelsi Wehrman & Ryan Lodge**, Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever

9:30a

**Monitoring grasslands at scale**  
**Nick Ward**, Ward Laboratories  
**Kenny Dhakal**, Enriched Agriculture

**Rethinking grassland management in the era of woody plant encroachment**  
**Jesse Nippert & Zak Ratajczak**, Kansas State University  
**Chris Helzer**, The Nature Conservancy

**Balancing renewable development and grassland conservation: A model partnership**  
**David Bezanson & Brian Obermeyer**, The Nature Conservancy

9:55a

**Reverse auction for grassland restoration in Saskatchewan**  
**Mindy Anderson**, Saskatchewan Stock Growers Foundation

**Managing woody forages without eradicating them**  
**Alex McKiernan**, Robinette Farms

**Catalyzing grassland restoration through partnerships**  
**Josh Lefers**, Audubon Great Plains

10:20a–10:45a

### BREAK AND SECOND POSTER SESSION

Break in Exhibit Area Silver Ballroom & Foyer  
Poster Session in Gold Ballroom

10:45a–11:20p

### ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

#### Discussion 1: National Grasslands Communications Campaign Presentation & Workshop

Room: Gold 1

• The Grasslands Campaign Working Group and BBMG

**Discussion 2: A Changing Federal Policy Landscape and the Impacts on Grasslands**

Room: Gold 7

- **Aviva Glaser**, National Wildlife Federation
- **Julie Hill-Gabriel**, National Audubon Society

11:20a–1:00p

**FIFTH CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSION**

	<b>TRACK 1</b> <b>PERSPECTIVES ON SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS</b> <i>Room: Gold 7</i> <b>Moderator: Laura Nelson</b>	<b>TRACK 2</b> <b>GRASSLAND INVENTORIES, SPATIAL MAPPING</b> <i>Room: Silver 1</i> <b>Moderator: Chamois Andersen</b>	<b>TRACK 3</b> <b>SAVING CRITICAL REMNANT GRASSLANDS</b> <i>Room: Silver 7</i> <b>Moderator: Steve Bender</b>	<b>TRACK 4</b> <b>HARNESSING THE COLLECTIVE POWER OF CENTRAL GRASSLANDS CONSERVATION INITIATIVES</b> <i>Room: Gold 1</i> <b>Moderator: Andy Bishop</b>
11:20a	<b>Monitoring for rancher livelihood and conservation</b> <b>Adam Dixon</b> , World Wildlife Fund	<b>Grassland opportunity maps: leveraging multidisciplinary data to recover grassland birds</b> <b>Chris Latimer</b> , Bird Conservancy of the Rockies	<b>Remnants, restorations, and reconstructions: elevating grassland conservation projects in 40 “southeastern” national parks</b> <b>Jeremy French</b> , Southeastern Grasslands Institute	<b>Building a collaborative conservation framework for the central grasslands biome</b> <b>Maggie Hanna</b> , Central Grasslands Roadmap Initiative
11:45a	<b>When the prairie speaks</b> <b>Kevin Fulton</b> , Clear Creek Land & Livestock	<b>Analyzing nationwide parcel- and property-level data for grasslands conservation</b> <b>Christina Dennis</b> , University of Wisconsin	<b>Vertical grasslands at the gap: Exploring cliffside remnant grasslands at Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, Lee County Virginia</b> <b>Alaina Krakowiak</b> , Southeastern Grasslands Institute	<b>The JV8 business plan and stepping it down for implementation</b> <b>Catherine Wightman</b> , JV8
12:10p	<b>Regenerating a watershed one blade at a time</b> <b>Bill Fox</b> , NatGLC <b>Troy Bishopp &amp; Hadley Owens</b> , Bishopp Family Farm	<b>Mapping intact natural lands across the U.S. to support land use change sustainability commitments</b> <b>Tyler Lark</b> , University of Wisconsin	<b>Restoring and enhancing regal fritillary habitat - planting native violet plugs at key prairie restoration sites in Nebraska</b> <b>Sarah Bailey</b> , Prairie Plains Resource Institute	<b>Ensuring indigenous perspectives in the development of conservation solutions</b> <b>Bill Snow &amp; Francisco Munoz-Arriola</b> , Indigenous Kinship Circle Coordinator
12:35p	<b>From local to global “grazing the wild”</b> <b>Jorge Bildo Saravia Fuentes</b> , Rancho el Ojo	<b>ActGreen: A near-real time integrated mapping and reporting system for re-wilding efforts of American bison</b> <b>Sarah Olimb</b> , World Wildlife Fund	<b>Little Brown Bird screening</b> <b>Wildpath &amp; Cornell Lab of Ornithology</b>	<b>Moderated panel on conservation initiatives across the central grasslands</b>

1:00p–2:00p

**LUNCH**

Gold Ballroom

2:00p–3:30p

**CLOSING PLENARY**

Gold Ballroom

**Panel Discussion: Enhancing America's Grassland Through Generational Transition and the Future of Grasslands Conservation**

Please join us for an interactive conversation exploring themes of generational transfer, passing down of knowledge, and unique challenges facing young and beginning ranchers. The future of ranching and grasslands conservation is subject to uncertainties of economics, demographics, and policy but is critical for our rural economies, our grazing lands and the ranchers that manage them.

- **Moderator: Nancy Labbe**, The Nature Conservancy
- **Bret Riley**, Sand Ranch, Oklahoma
- **Tim Kalkowski**, First State Bank of Nebraska & Kalkowski Family Ranches, Nebraska
- **Shiela Walsh**, Walsh Ranch, Montana/Fort Belknap Reservation
- **AJ Munger**, Eagle Pass Ranch, South Dakota
- **Bildo Saravia**, Rancho el Ojo, Mexico

**Closing Keynote – Ethan Freese**, Platte Basin Timelapse, *Photographing North America's Tallgrass Prairies*

**Door Prize Giveaway!**

**Conference Closing**

**DOOR PRIZE GIVEAWAY!**

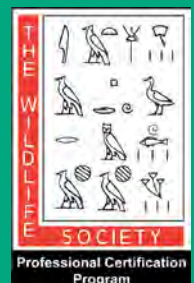
Win one of three unique packages containing an assortment of: gift cards, Ranger Rick magazine subscriptions, Audubon Bird Friendly Ranching certified beef jerky, NWF gifts and more!

**CONTINUING EDUCATION UNITS ARE AVAILABLE AT AMERICA'S GRASSLANDS CONFERENCE!**

The Wildlife Society has pre-approved CEUs for the conference.

Participants can earn up to 17.5 CEUs in Category I of the Certified Wildlife Biologist® Program. One CEU can be earned for every hour of learning, and one CEU can be earned for every 3 hours of a field session. Please log your completed hours on your Renewal application or Professional Development Certificate application.

Please check with registration about additional CEU opportunities available.



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# Keynote Speakers



## KYLE LYBARGER

Kyle Lybarger is a forester, conservationist, and the founder of the Native Habitat Project, which focuses on educating the public about native ecosystems in Alabama and the broader Southeastern United States. Born and raised in

Morgan County, Alabama, Lybarger developed a deep connection to nature from a young age, which led him to pursue a degree in Forestry from Alabama A&M University.

In 2017, Lybarger began documenting and sharing his observations of neglected grassland ecosystems in North Alabama through social media platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook. His engaging content, which highlights the beauty and importance of native plants and wildlife, resonated with a growing audience. This grassroots effort evolved into the Native Habitat Project, allowing Lybarger to expand his conservation work through consultations, land management services, and educational outreach.



## BETHANY JOHNSTON

Bethany Johnston is a Livestock Educator with Nebraska Extension, raised in the heart of the Nebraska Sandhills where her family's Angus cowherd recently celebrated 100 years. With deep roots in ranching, Johnston brings both personal and

professional experience to her work in rangeland management, conservation, and beef production.

In addition to Extension, Johnston has served with the Nature Conservancy, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and the Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition. Her background spans hands-on ranching, collaborative conservation, and

education aimed at sustaining the unique ecological diversity of the Sandhills.

Johnston says "Many people retire to a destination they love and enjoy. But I feel lucky to be born and raised in the Sandhills." One of the few intact grasslands left, the ecological diversity of this 12-million-acre prairie is astounding. For generations, ranchers worked with, not against the Sandhills, steady and consistent, yet adapting to threats to preserve this grassland.

Rangeland management has been her passion since range judging in FFA, and Johnston enjoys helping land stewards to achieve diverse, native prairies, benefiting both cattle production and wildlife habitat.



## JOSEPHINE MARCOTTY & DAVE HAGE

Josephine Marcotty and Dave Hage's new book, *Sea of Grass*, tells the history of how the tall grass prairie was transformed into an agricultural landscape, the environmental consequences we live with today, and the choices we face for a better future in farming, and for protecting what's left of the tall grass prairie and the critically important grasslands in the west.



Marcotty is an award-winning environmental journalist who has spent her life in the Midwest.

She was a reporter for the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, where she covered complex, science-based topics. *Sea of Grass* is a natural expansion of her reporting on the vanishing prairie and the consequences of intensive agriculture. She lives in Minneapolis, MN, with her husband.

Hage oversaw environmental and health reporting at the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* for a dozen years, editing projects that won a Pulitzer Prize and an Edward R. Murrow Award, among other honors. His previous books include *No Retreat, No Surrender: Labor's War at Hormel*, and *Reforming Welfare by Rewarding Work*. His parents grew up on the western prairies of Minnesota, and he now lives in St. Paul, MN, with his wife.

vation storytelling project that utilizes timelapse photography and multimedia to inspire care for our land and water. The project was founded in 2011 by conservation photographer Michael Forsberg and documentary filmmaker Michael Farrell.

Freese has bachelor's degrees in Fisheries and Wildlife and Grassland Ecology and Management, as well as a Master of Applied Science from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL). While pursuing his undergraduate and graduate degrees, he worked on research projects monitoring grassland birds and plants in Nebraska. His masters project, *A Year in the Prairie Corridor*, highlights the biodiversity of a tallgrass prairie habitat corridor in eastern Nebraska.

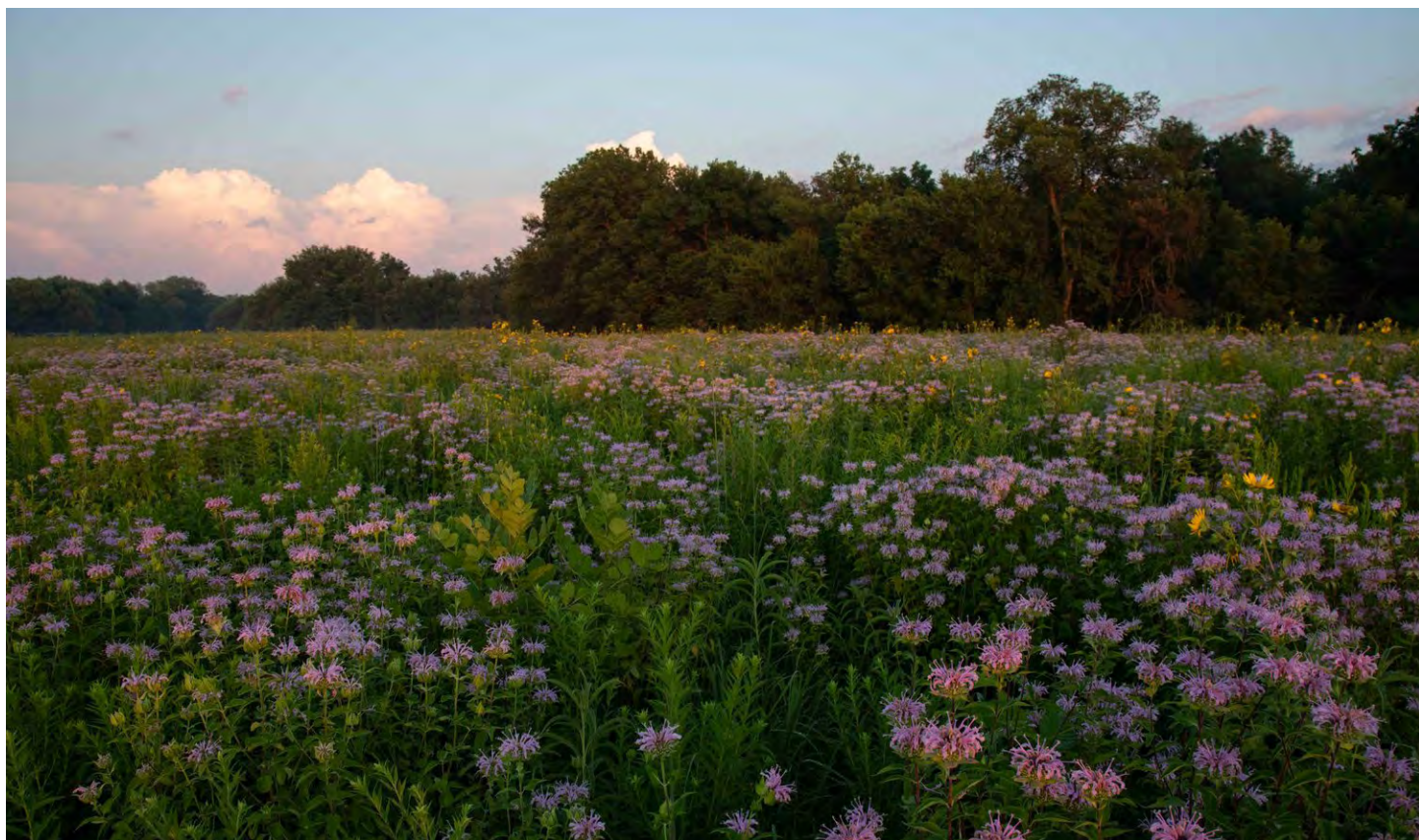
His photos have been featured in *Sierra Magazine* and *Nebraskaland*. In 2023, he was the recipient of a photography mentorship through Vital Impacts. In 2024, he was accepted into the Emerging League of the International League of Conservation Photographers. He is also on the board of the Wachiska Audubon Society, a nonprofit focused on tallgrass prairie conservation.



### ETHAN FREESE

Ethan Freese is a conservation photographer and filmmaker based in his hometown of Lincoln, Nebraska. He is passionate about grassland conservation, and he hopes to use storytelling to show the beauty and importance of grasslands and other undervalued ecosystems.

Currently, Freese is a producer with the Platte Basin Timelapse (PBT) project. PBT is a long-term conser-



Credit: Ethan Freese

# Posters

Posters will be on display throughout the duration of the conference (including after the poster session).

**P1. Rebecca Kern-Lunbery, Ward Laboratories** – *Conservation Reserve Program Hay Quality from Producer Submissions to a Commercial Laboratory in Central Nebraska*

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**P2. Dave Wedin, University of Nebraska-Lincoln** – *Butcher's photos: Documenting the transformation of Nebraska's Grasslands*

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**P3. Klara Stevermer, Kansas State University** – *C4 grass lineages have varied responses to atmospheric drying*

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**P4. Jeff Drahota, Kylie Tierney and Jessica Bolser, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** – *Reed Canary grass response to restoration strategies that remove or all of the soil above the Bt-horizon.*

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**P5. Kelly Williamson, SODCAP Inc.** – *Diverse Landscape-Livestock Interaction (DALLI) approach for promoting multiple desired grassland outcomes in Saskatchewan, Canada.*

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**P6. Tong Wang, South Dakota State University** – *Farmer Adoption of Precision Livestock Farming: Current and Future*

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**P7. Tong Wang, South Dakota State University** – *Benefits and challenges of pasture cropping: Perceptions of grazing producers*

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A NEBRASKA PLAN FOR GRASSLAND ADVOCACY**

**P8. Walter Magero Wafula, South Dakota State University** – *Do Legacies of Long-Term Stocking Rates Influence Carbon Partitioning in a Grassland Prairie*

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**P9. Rachel Rusten, University of Nebraska-Lincoln** – *Has Eastern Redcedar Removal Impacted the Sandhills Grassland Bird Community*

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**P10. Gregory Pec, University of Nebraska at Kearney** – *Soil health and carbon dynamics in U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Waterfowl Production Areas: Assessing resilience in the Rainwater Basin of Nebraska*

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**P11. Clair Widmer, University of Northern Iowa** – *The impact of emergency haying on grassland birds in the Conservation Reserve Program habitat in NW Iowa*

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**P12. Amanda Norton, University of Wyoming** – *Monitoring the nesting success of sagebrush-obligate (*Artemisia* spp.) and ground-nesting songbirds within adaptive rotational cattle grazing system*

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**P13. Lisandro Entio, Texas A&M AgriLife Research** – *Perennial bunchgrasses and legumes for flexible forage/biofuel in Texas: Establishment year*

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**P14. Pepper Kirk, Texas A&M Agrilife Research** – *Nutritive Value and Digestibility of Forage Legume Species that Improve Cattle Production*

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**P36. Jeff Drahota, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** – *Restoration strategies and how they influence plant community resilience, diversity, ponding, and sustainability*

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