

Alabama Bulletin No. AL 190-16-2

Subject: ECS – Grazing Lands Ecology Training

Purpose: To notify employees and partners of an upcoming training event

Date: February 26, 2016

Expiration Date: December 30, 2016

Deadline: March 11, 2016

Background: Alabama NRCS is partnering with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System to bring grazing lands ecology training to Alabama. A similar course has been offered to NRCS employees through the NEDC training. Several of our staff have attended and have provided favorable comments for this course. This is a great opportunity to bring high level grazing lands training to our staff.

The course being offered in Alabama will be held during two separate events and at two locations. The first training will be March 23, 24 and 25, 2016 at the E.V. Smith Research Center located between Auburn and Montgomery. The second training session is being scheduled for late November or early December at the Blackbelt Research Center near Marion Junction, AL.

The NRCS class cap is 20 students. It is likely several ACES employees will also be part of the training. Each ASTC-FO and State Office Section is asked to provide a list of attendees from your area to [Stacey Riggins](#), with a copy to Eddie Jolley, by COB on **March 11, 2016**.

NRCS employees who have grazing land training needs identified in their IDP are encouraged to attend the Training. Attending employees will receive 20 hours of education credit towards recertification as a Certified Conservation Planner.

Employees who wish to attend the training should obtain their supervisor's approval. Normal procedures for travel authorization will be followed. As part of the partnership agreement, tuition and lunch expenses will be paid for those NRCS and S&WCD Partner employees whose names are submitted by NRCS.

Additional information on the training can be found in the attached brochure.

Contact Eddie Jolley, 334-887-4564, eddie.jolley@al.usda.gov, with any questions.

/s/

Shannon K. Weaver
Assistant State Conservationist – Technology

Attachment

Alabama Ecology of Grazing Land Systems Short Course

March 23 – 25, 2016

EV Smith Research Center, Shorter, AL

Educational Objectives:

- 1) To understand basics of forage growth, physiology, plant identification and adaptation to the Southeast
- 2) To demonstrate sustainable grazing management practices and methods
- 3) To understand animal nutrient requirements and forage demand in beef cattle operations.

Spring Training

Day 1 – March 23

8:30 am – 9:00 am – Registration at EV Smith Classroom, Group Assignments

9:00 am – 9:30 am – Welcome, Introduction, and Course Objectives – Dr. Kim Mullenix

9:30 am – 10:00 am – Pre-Test

10:00 am – 10:15 am – Travel to Field

10:15 am – 12:30 pm – Training on forage mass estimates, then teams ($n = 2$) will go to their respective animal units and allocate forage to be grazed for the designated period.

Team Leaders: Josh Elmore and Kent Stanford

12:30 pm -12:45 pm – Travel to Classroom for Lunch

12:45 pm – 1:30 pm - Lunch

1:30 – 2:15 pm Understanding Plant Growth and Implications for Grazing Management – Josh Elmore and Kent Stanford

2:15 pm – 3:00 pm – Grazing Systems: Management Concepts and Methods – Josh Elmore and Kent Stanford

3:00 pm – 3:15 pm - Break

3:15 pm – 4:30 pm – Grazing Systems: Math and Forage Measurements – Group Activity



Group Activity Leaders – Johnny Gladney, Gerry Thompson, Josh Elmore, and Kent Stanford

4:30 pm – Wrap-Up, Plan for Tomorrow, and Adjourn

Day 2 - March 24

8:30 am – Meet at EV Smith Classroom

8:30 – 8:45 am – Travel to EV Smith Beef Unit

8:45 am – 9:30 am – Go with group leaders to pasture area, allocate forage to be grazed for the next 24 hours, review from yesterday

9:30 am – 11:00 am – Field Demonstrations

- *Station 1:* Monitoring Techniques for Grazing Lands – Dry Weight Rank, Clipping, Using a Grazing Stick – Group Leader: Johnny Gladney
- *Station 2:* Monitoring Techniques for Grazing Lands – Botanical Separations, Visual Pasture Assessment – Ground Cover and Weed Frequency – Group Leader: Gerry Thompson
- *Station 3:* Monitoring Techniques – Plant ID, Weed Control – Timing Demo with Dr. Steve Li

11:00 am - 11:15 am – Travel back to EV Smith Classroom

11:15 am – 12:15 pm – Group Discussion and Review of Field Concepts

12:15 pm – 1:00 pm – Lunch

1:00 pm – 2:30 pm – Forage Balance Worksheet and Group Activity– Eddie Jolley
Group Discussion Leaders: Josh Elmore, Johnny Gladney, Kim Mullenix, Gerry Thompson

2:45 pm – 3:00 pm – Break/ Travel back to field

3:00 pm – 4:30 pm – Field Demonstrations

Sustainable Grazing Management Systems

Animal perspectives – Body Condition Scoring – Josh Elmore

Animal perspectives – Animal nutrient requirements (quantity and quality) - Kim

4:30 pm – Travel back to classroom, Adjourn for day

Day 3 - March 25

Producer Field Day and Wrap-Up Session

8:00 – 8:30 am – Registration

8:30 – 8:45 am – Travel to field demonstrations

8:45 AM – 11:00 am – Field demonstrations

- Grazing Scenarios (n = 2) – led by NRCS and ACES personnel
- Body Condition Scoring Beef Cattle
- Animal Nutrient Requirements
- Weed Control
- Record Keeping and Management

11:00 am – 11:15 am – Travel to EV Smith Classroom

11:15 am – 11:25 am – Break

11:25 am – 12:15 pm – Graduate Student Research Update

12:15 pm – Lunch (Farmers adjourned after lunch)

1:15 pm – Wrap-Up Discussion on Concepts from Training and Topics for Future Trainings – Dr. Kim Mullenix

1:30 pm – Post-Test and Follow-Up Survey

2:00 pm – Adjourn

Additional Information

Physical Address: 4725 County Road 40, Shorter, AL 36075

Directions – From I-85, take Exit #26 towards Tallassee. Turn right onto County Road 40 just before you reach the railroad tracks. Follow until you reach the metal buildings. The conference room is located in the building facing the N/S direction.

Lodging and Area Amenities:

There are several hotels and restaurants located at Exit 9 and Exit 11 in Montgomery, Alabama. State/government lodging rates range from \$75 to \$130 per night.