



March 2025

A note from Jenny

Jenny Pluhar, Executive Director



It's been a whirlwind for TXGLC since the beginning of FY2025. Our regional coalitions are hosting events and engaging land stewards. We have kicked off our Resilient Ranches Network with partners Center for Grazinglands and Ranch Management and Texas A&M AgriLife, funded by the Walmart Foundation. We have put the finishing touches on our web based curriculum version of Principles B4 Practices, also in conjunction with Texas A&M AgriLife and Center for Grazinglands and Ranch Management. Follow up field workshops to last years' popular PB4P workshops are being scheduled by several regional coalitions.

Our technical assistance specialists are scheduling field visits and meeting with producers in the field to create custom assistance.

All of our efforts and success in growing Texas Grazing Land Coalition's reach and influence across our state is because of the close relationship and funding we receive from USDA-NRCS. Their support allows us to attract private investment and expand our capacity and value to land stewards across Texas. Don't let anyone fool you - USDA-NRCS helps us

stretch a dollar until it screams! Our volunteers and outreach efforts totaled 5,248 hours in just the first four months of FY2025. That is 131 weeks of full time activity. Equivalent to two full time employees for a year! Not all that happens in the federal government is "waste, fraud & abuse!" Thank you to NRCS for being our partner and supporter in our shared mission to help Texas land stewards make the most of their operations and thrive in tough times!

See y'all in Fort Worth!

Launched: Resilient Ranch Network!



Texas Grazing Land Coalition, along with our partners Texas A&M Center for Grazinglands and Ranch Management and Texas A&M AgriLife is off and running. Walmart Foundation is supporting this project which spans 66 counties across north central Texas. Our work has been enabled by USDA-NRCS in Texas for years. That strong partnership is the reason we were able to collaborate with Walmart Foundation and attract private funding to help ranchers in Texas. Truly an example of a successful public – private partnership to further the conservation conversation in Texas.

Forty ranches are participating and will receive technical assistance and monitoring tailored uniquely to each ranch's goals. Shiner Webb will be primarily providing that technical assistance with back up from the entire TXGLC and TAMU CGRM and TAMU AgriLife teams as well. Those ranches will be attending a two-day Ranching for Profit school and they will have the opportunity to participate in "feedback forums," with their opinions and ideas to be shared with industry. Likewise, industry sustainability leaders will convene and provide feedback on what is important to their businesses and supply chains. Hopefully we will identify some common ground and strengthen the relationship between private industry and producers in Texas.

We had an overwhelming response to the project roll-out and were blessed to have more ranches interested than we could ultimately involve. We hope the project grows and we can loop in more ranches in

the near future. We will provide all interested with technical assistance and monitoring as part of our ongoing efforts in that area through our agreement with USDA-NRCS.

What attracted Walmart Foundation to Texas Grazing Land Coalition? Our regional coalitions! Get involved with your regional coalition and be in a position to answer the door when opportunity knocks. Private investments in conservation are increasing across the plains and Rocky Mountain states. Our strong "grassroots" network helps us create opportunity for producers across Texas.

Find us in Fort Worth!

Be sure to come find us at the TSCRA convention and trade show in Fort Worth April - we will be in booth 1421!

Our technical assistance specialists will be on hand to discuss your needs and schedule a visit. Bring a map of your ranch and we'll get started right there!

We will have information on our Principles Before Practices web based curriculum, Resilient Ranch Network, and other upcoming events and programs.



What we've been up to lately!

The warm weather across Texas has our regional coalitions getting together. The opportunity to see other land steward's operations, share ideas and tackle challenges common to your local area can be incredibly valuable! Contact info can be found on our website or in this newsletter. Reach out and get involved! You will be glad you did!



Our technical assistance specialists, like Ryan, thrive out in the field teaching and helping producers come up with grazing plans that work! (above)



Dr. Jeff Goodwin speaking at our Albany Resilient Ranch Network recruiting meeting.



Shiner Webb and Ryan Walser, two of our technical assistance specialists, speaking at our Resilient Ranch Network recruitment meeting.



Luckenbach rancher, Garrett Kunz, speaking at our Resilient Ranch Network recruitment meeting.



Always fun to share land stewardship techniques with the next generation!



One of our technical specialists, Kason Haby, using our rainfall simulator to demonstrate how rainfall acts when it falls on various ground cover types.

Coastal Prairie GLC internship program

Coastal Prairie GLC is gearing up for its seventh internship season. Our goal is simple: expose students who are on track to become future ranch managers to the ranching businesses on the Gulf Coast of Texas. Each year, we select 3-4 ranch management students to live and work with a viable, large scale cattle operation with one of our cooperating GLC Ranches. As an intern they are expected to work a full day learning the ins and outs of the ranch, and be especially exposed to the operations and business side of running a ranch. Additionally, each week offer an afternoon seminar to expose our interns to land management related topics in a small group atmosphere. Topics in the past have included range and quail management, herd health, brush management, intensive grazing, ranch business lending, marketing, and mineral resource with surface use considerations. Interns are expected to be engaged and always ask questions to aid in their development.

Over the course of the summer, they also work on a ranch management plan and budget on a mock ranch that is representative of the area. They start with 10,000 acres, 650 cows, and a balance sheet. We then discuss drought, changing markets, and other natural resource variables that will impact the plan. We then implement one or more of these variables to learn how to plan around challenges. Interns in the past have chosen to cull livestock or enhance forage production through brush management, others improve forage capture through fencing and water development, while others choose adding value through a pre-conditioning program. Each intern displays their own unique plan to improve the profitability of their operation. This is also shared with other interns and the cooperating ranches for everyone's development. This is truly a unique opportunity for our interns to see if ranching on the Gulf Coast is the right fit for them. Additionally, ranches involved in the program have an opportunity to expand their applicant pool for future employment. For more information and to learn how to apply for this exciting opportunity, [please click here](#).

Six months - six soil health principles

Sometimes you may ask, why do we focus so much on soil health? Because it is the foundation for healthy rangelands, that's why! For the next six months, we will feature one soil health principle.

Know your context.



Healthy soils and healthy forages are inextricably linked. You cannot have one without the other. They form the tapestry on which healthy herds, well-functioning ecosystem services, and your family exist and thrive. Understanding your situation, what conditions exist, and which variables are most important will go a long way in helping you to understand your context.

Successful producers consider variables like weather, climate, geography, topography, resources, family dynamics, trends, goals, and others when making decisions. Understanding what works in your favor and applying

soil health principles in ways that align with your resources enables you to make the most of your land resource, benefitting forage production and profitability.

2025 Youth Range Workshop

Do you know a high school student between the ages of 14 and 18 who's interested in learning more about range management? Make sure to tell them about the Texas Section Society for Range Management Youth Range Workshop!

TSSRM Youth Range Workshop will be held this summer June 8 - 13, 2025 at the Texas Tech University Center in Junction. It provides the opportunity for Texas high school students from across the state to learn about range ecology and natural resource management. Any high school student who is interested in learning more about natural resources management is eligible to attend.

The purpose of YRW is to prepare students to be knowledgeable leaders in their communities regarding the value of rangelands, the services and products they provide, and the importance of stewardship of our natural resources. Our emphasis is on stewardship, leadership and management of natural resources. These lessons will serve participants well in the future regardless of what career path they choose or where they live.

YRW participants are taught by a diverse group of volunteer instructors including ranchers, educators, scientists, conservationists, university professors, young professionals, consultants, certified prescribed burning professionals, and even a couple of grizzled old veterans of range management. The directors and instructors represent a wide range of age, experience, interests, and areas of specialization, but they are all dedicated to the management of Texas rangelands and working with younger generations to help them understand and appreciate the value of our soil, water, plant, and animal resources.

The students spend six days of intense activity in the field and classroom immersed in activities including:

- plant identification and plant collection
- studying species composition and plant community dynamics
- conducting forage inventories
- learning the grazing and browsing habits of livestock and wildlife
- learning habitat management principles and techniques for various species of wildlife
- conducting field tests to determine the benefits of vegetation on

infiltration and runoff rates as well as soil erosion

- learning about soil health
- assisting with a prescribed burn on a local ranch
- and learning how all of these things are tied together

Hands-on learning is the focus, whether it is collecting plants, assisting with an actual prescribed burn, clipping and weighing vegetation, measuring soil temperature, participating in the operation of a rainfall simulator, or learning to use the latest phone app for range management. To learn more, please visit the [TSSRM YRW website](#) or follow them on [Facebook!](#)





Are you in need of technical assistance?

Ryan Walser (Albany area) and Kason Haby (Hondo area) are now joined by a new specialist, Shiner Webb (Abilene area, Resilient Ranch Project), and are our Technical Assistance Specialists here at the Texas Grazing Land Coalition. They have had full careers in rangeland and grazing management and we are incredibly fortunate to have them on our team. You will likely see them at some of our outreach events and they are available to assist with conservation planning on your property. Their contact information is listed here and at the bottom of the newsletter. If you need technical assistance and do not live near them, please call us. We also collaborate with [Wildlife Habitat Federation](#) in matching technical assistance specialists to meet your unique needs. We can make arrangements to help you make the most out of the land you love!



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The answer is KNOW!

In order to speak the language, one must know the words. Similarly, on rangelands knowing which plants are growing in your pastures and how to manipulate them to meet your forage goals is crucial. Every month we will explore a new plant in our newsletter.



Woolly devil

Ovicula biradiata

Here's a plant most of us will never see. It's incredibly cool, though! For a variety of reasons. It is a gorgeous little thing. But, most importantly, it was just discovered in Big Bend National Park. Genetic analysis revealed it is not only a new species, but a new genus as well. Researchers named it *Ovicula biradiata*, nicknamed the "woolly devil." The last time a previously unknown plant was discovered in a US National Park was in Death Valley

in 1976.

So, who cares? Why does this matter?

Well, it illustrates that there's actually quite a bit we don't know about the plant world. There are estimated to be somewhere between 5,000 and 6,000 different plant species in Texas. Plants like the woolly devil have probably remained undetected because they require specific conditions before they show up! Ask any old timer who has been ranching a while and you will hear things like "we don't see annual broomweed (or almost any other weed) unless it rains the second week in February followed by a hard cold spell" or some such weather phenomena. Most of us will not live long enough to get a handle on the many variations in climate and the vegetational oddities that follow.

Just last spring, I observed a total lack of yucca blooms across the Texas Panhandle. And we have more yucca plants than the federal government has debt dollars. The preceding two winters were unusually dry, which I blamed for the absence of our "reliable" bloom of yucca. At the same time, the Rolling Plains, also dry the previous few winters, had an unusual bloom of ephedra plants. The mysteries of the plant world are many, to say the least.

I tell ranchers all the time that you cannot manage what you don't know. This may seem daunting with the facts presented here - 5000+ different plants. New ones popping up. No two years moisture and temperature regimes ever the same. How on earth can you KNOW all the plants? Here's the good news. You probably would be light years ahead of most ranchers if you knew 25 plants on your property. The good, the bad and the ugly 25 that impact your management, forage production, stocking rates, all the things. Now, that's not so hard is it? I have seen ranchers with mounted plants stapled to the office or barn walls so they see them often and become familiar. We have given out plant mounts in sets at various programs. You can buy mounted plants custom for your area. Let us know where you are and we will put a list together and connect you with a source. Of course there are plant ID apps on your phone, but those have mixed reviews. I prefer good old-fashioned books and mounts. There are 4-H and FFA plant identification teams that compete in regional and state contests as well as at stock shows.

Let's take comfort that there's things out there on the rangeland that we don't know and maybe even some things no one anywhere knows. Helps me remember we are guided by a God we cannot even comprehend. So, welcome little WOOLY DEVIL!

**Being tough
sometimes
means asking
for help.**

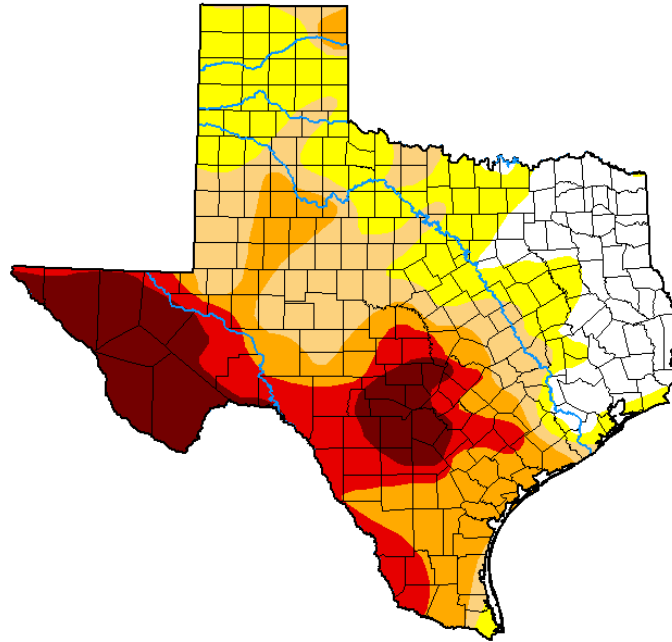
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U.S. Drought Monitor



Intensity:

-  None
-  D0 Abnormally Dry
-  D1 Moderate Drought
-  D2 Severe Drought
-  D3 Extreme Drought
-  D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

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U. S. Department of Agriculture



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

Summary - Southern U.S.

Dire conditions have developed in recent days across the southern Plains, where any benefit from last November's record-setting rainfall is quickly diminishing. During major dust storms on March 14 and 18, wind gusts in Lubbock, Texas, were clocked to 82 and 78 mph, respectively. The March 14 gust was a spring (March-May) record for Lubbock—and marked the highest non-convective gust on record in that location. As the dust blew on March 14, numerous wildfires raged in Oklahoma, as well as neighboring areas in southern Kansas and the northern panhandle of Texas. The dusty scene was repeated on March 18, with visibilities as low as one-quarter to one-half mile widespread across western Texas. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, statewide topsoil moisture in Texas was rated 71% very short to short on March 16, while 71% of the rangeland and pastures were rated in very poor to poor condition. For the week ending March 18, broad expansion of all drought categories was noted in Oklahoma and Texas. Farther east, however, heavy rain led to large reductions in the coverage of dryness and drought in much of Tennessee.

[Click here to visit and view the U.S. Drought Monitor site.](https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu)

Upcoming events and opportunities

Eitel Valley Farms Field Day
Big Sandy, TX | March 28, 2025

[More information here.](#)

Cross Timbers GLC Spring Meeting

Decatur, TX | April 10, 2025

[More information here.](#)

2025 TSCRA Cattle Raisers Convention & Expo

Fort Worth, TX | April 11 - 13, 2025

[More information here.](#)

Planning for Habitat in Regenerative Agriculture

Spicewood, TX | April 12, 2025

[More information here.](#)

Diverse Solutions in Livestock Production

Luling, TX | April 18, 2025

[More information here.](#)

The Nuts, Bolts, and Benefits of Good Grazing

Waller, TX | April 25-26, 2025

[More information here.](#)

Regen Ag School

Decatur, TX | April 28 - May 3, 2025

[More information here.](#)

Hemphill County Beef Conference

Canadian, TX | April 29, 2025

[More information here.](#)

Youth Range Workshop

Junction, TX | June 8 - 13, 2025

[More information here.](#)

Pacific Pastures: NatGLC Summer Bus Tour

Richland, WA | June 10 - 13, 2025

[More information here.](#)

America's Grassland Conference

Kearney, NE | June 24 - 26, 2025

[More information here.](#)

TWA WildLife Convention 2025

San Antonio, TX | July 10 - 13, 2025

[More information here.](#)

NCBA CattleCon

New Orleans, LA | February 3 - 5, 2026

[More information here.](#)

Love the Land - A Texas GLC Podcast

Did you know Texas GLC has a podcast? It's called [Love the Land](#), and you can find it wherever you get your podcasts.

If you have never listened to or subscribed to a podcast, they're like an on-demand radio show. Here's a "how to" tutorial:

1. Download a podcast app on your phone. If you have an iPhone, there is already one downloaded on your phone.
2. Open app. Use the search tool to find specific podcasts like "Love the Land" or categories like "agriculture."
3. Listen to a single podcast or subscribe and get new episodes added to your library any time they are released.
4. Love the Land podcasts are 30-45 minutes.



Regional Coalitions



CONNECT WITH TXGLC



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