



**SOUTH DAKOTA
STATE UNIVERSITY**
West River Research and Extension

Masters of Science Assistantship
Department of Natural Resource Management
Restoring riparian function using low-cost beaver dam analogs

Location: Based in Rapid City, SD

Field work: Field work throughout Western South Dakota

Salary: ~\$17,000/yr + tuition waiver

Start Date: Spring 2022

Expected completion: May 2024

Closing Date: Until position is filled

Description: A graduate research assistantship (M.S.) is available within the SDSU Department of Natural Resource Management evaluating the impact of using low-cost, low-tech tools such as beaver dam analogs (BDAs) to help restore critical prairie streams and improve livestock forage production at landscape scales. The overall goal of this project is to improve understanding, awareness, and interest in BDAs that can benefit watershed health at the landscape scale in grassland ecosystems. The primary objective of this study is to **1) Research** BDAs impact on forage production, plant community composition, and soil moisture; **2) Implement** BDAs on cooperating ranches and at a research field station; and **3) Teach** technical experts and producers about BDAs through trainings and workshops. This project will provide critical information to livestock producers on the importance of riparian health and methods to help restore riparian functionality. The student will be part of an inter-disciplinary team and will have opportunities for both collaboration with other graduate students and faculty and professional development.



Preferred qualifications: Candidates must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited university and a valid driver's license. Students with a background in range science, natural resource management, or biology are encouraged to apply. Students with a background in field data collection and experience are preferred. Candidates should have a strong academic background and an interest in grassland ecology. This position will require considerable interaction with NGOs and private livestock producers; candidates with strong knowledge of rangeland systems and experience working with producers will be most competitive.

Interested candidates: Candidates interested in this position should email Dr. Krista Ehlert (krista.ehlert@sdstate.edu) and Dr. Jameson Brennan (Jameson.brennan@sdstate.edu) with the following:

- 1) A cover letter describing your background, qualifications, and career goals
- 2) A resume
- 3) Unofficial transcripts
- 4) Contact information for 3 professional references

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