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**Darwin Peckham**

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**Get your Registrations in for the  
 2008 SDGC Bus Tour to Bismarck ND!!**

The South Dakota Grassland Coalition is having their annual bus tour on August 12-13. This year the tour will take place in Bismarck, ND where participants will hear from Gabe Brown and Kenny Miller. While we are in Bismarck we will also stop and visit the Burleigh County Soil Conservation District's cover crop test plot. Gabe Brown ranches five miles east of Bismarck and has overcome hardships of ranching, such as drought and hail, by implementing unique management techniques. One of the things Gabe is concerned about on his ranch is the health of his soil. He wants to insure that he feeds the soil to feed his grass to feed his cows. He has increased organic matter in the soil through zero-till and crop rotations to include legumes which benefit the soil health. Gabe has also tried is bale grazing. This is a method where he leaves the bales out in the field and then moves electric fence through the bales, allowing the cattle only enough hay for that rotation. *(Continued on p.2)*

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*Before Bale Grazing*



*After Bale Grazing*

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>

Bale grazing is supposed to be very beneficial to your soil health. We will have the opportunity to see the pastures where he tried bale grazing on and see how they look this time of year.



*Gabe Brown*

Gabe Brown is a truly fascinating individual and he always gives a great presentation. If you would like to learn more about Gabe Brown and his ranch, check out his website at [www.sustainableranching.com](http://www.sustainableranching.com)

Also on this tour we will stop by Kenny Miller's ranch which is located south of Mandan, ND.



*Kenny Miller, District Technician for the Burleigh Co., Soil Con. Dist.*

His ranch is located in the Missouri River breaks where previous owners attempted to farm the area. In doing so, they destroyed the health of this land. Ken has worked diligently for years trying to convert this damaged land back into productive pastureland. He has used rotational grazing systems and it is amazing to see how far he has progressed. He has been involved in the farming/ranching industry for more than 35 years and is known for his expertise in rotation grazing systems. Ken also serves as a District Technician for the Burleigh County Soil Conservation District where he designs grazing systems for other producers as well.

Another place we are planning on stopping at on this tour is the Burleigh County Soil Conservation District's cover crop test plots. Burleigh County Soil Conservation District, along with Gabe Brown, are as knowledgeable about cover crops in the Great Plains as any one in the country.

If you have some interest in cover crops and/or developing a grazing system, and would like to learn more, this tour would be an excellent choice. To register, simply log on to the SD Grassland Coalition's website at [www.sdgrass.org](http://www.sdgrass.org) and click on the Bus Tour Brochure link, print it off and mail it in.

If you like more information, please contact Kyle Schell at [kyle.schell@sdstate.edu](mailto:kyle.schell@sdstate.edu) or (605) 688-6623. We look forward to seeing you on this year's annual Bus Tour.

**Get to Know Your Board Members:  
Darwin Peckham**

Darwin Peckham is the newest member for the South Dakota Grassland Coalition, having joined in March of 2007. You may have read about him in the Aberdeen American News. They recently talked about the SD Grassland Coalition, the Bird Tour and Darwin's views towards the importance of the native grasslands in South Dakota.



*Darwin Peckham, newest board member on the SDGC*

I recently had the opportunity to visit Darwin at his ranch located southwest of Bristol, SD. Darwin became interested in grasslands at a young age and began to read books on how he could improve the quality of his own pastures and cattle. Today he has some of the best native grasslands in eastern South Dakota and possible in the entire state.

Darwin is constantly impressed by what the SD Grassland Coalition is accomplishing on a day-to-day basis. He hosted this year's Bird Tour this spring and was amazed at the interest people had in that area as well as the diversity of birds that were found on his place. In the Aberdeen news article he was quoted as saying, "The goal is not just to teach people, but to get them to think about how important it is that birds, frogs, ducks, geese, people, cows and plants can co-exist and thrive and all live in the same community." That is exactly what the SD Grassland Coalition is trying to accomplish. It is because of these views that Darwin will make an excellent addition to the South Dakota Grassland Coalition Board.

### **Grazing School Update**

The South Dakota Grazing School is fast approaching. This year it is scheduled for September 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup>. An agenda has been finalized and it looks to be a good school again this year. One of the new items we have added this year is an alumni presentation/dinner featuring Ray Banister of Wibaux, MT. This presentation is open to all past Grazing School alumni. During this presentation, there will be short talk on the SD Drought Calculator by NRCS personnel. If you have attended the grazing school in

the past, you should have recently received an invitation to this event. Some of the other instructors this year include Terry Gompert from Center, NE; David Naugle from the University of Montana; Alvaro Garcia from SDSU; Terry Heck and Rick Bednarek, both with the SD NRCS. For more information about this year's grazing school, please visit the SD Grassland Coalition's website at [www.sdgrass.org](http://www.sdgrass.org). You will find the agenda for this year along with a video from last year's tour. As soon as we get the brochure done we will post it there as well.

### **Butte County 4-H Team Wins National Range Judging Contest**

The Butte County 4-H Range Judging Team travelled to Oklahoma where the competed in and won the National Range Judging contest. The team consisted of Sara Brunner from Vale, SD; Sammi Shaykett, from Nisland, SD; Jesse Bauer from Vale, SD; and Gail Gabriel from Sorum, SD. The team was coached by Dave Ollila of Newell and TJ Swan of Belle Fourche. This is the third year in a row that the Butte County 4-H team has won this competition. A SD 4-H team has won the National Range Judging eight of the past 11 times (seven times with the title going to Butte County). There were

170 teams from 35 different states at this competition. The outdoor contest was held May 7 near El Reno, OK. They reportedly had 2.43 inches of rain on the day of the contest which caused an hour delay. However, they still undauntedly competed in the rain and standing water. Besides winning the team competition, Sammi Shaykett placed first in the individual category. As a congratulatory gift, the SD Grassland Coalition will give all the members of Butte County 4-H Range Judging Team a one-year membership to the SDGC. Congratulations! Way to represent the state of South Dakota!



*Butte County 4-H Range Judging Team, for more pictures and judging results, go to [www.rangejudging.com](http://www.rangejudging.com)*

### **Call for Pasture Walks**

The SD Grassland Coalition is interested in hosting some additional pasture walks this year, as we believe we had great success on the walks we've previously hosted to date. If there is an interest in your area and you would like to get an expert such as Terry Gompert to assist, please contact Kyle Schell at [kyle.schell@sdstate.edu](mailto:kyle.schell@sdstate.edu) or at (605) 688-6623.



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>
4 <sup>th</sup> Annual SD Soils Day	June 24-25	Wagner	Charles Mix CD	605-487-7577
SD Rangeland Days	June 24-25	Wagner	Charles Mix CD	605-487-7577
Evening Pasture Walk	June 26	Webster	Darrel DuVall	605-345-4661
SDSU Oak Lake BioBlitz	June 28	White	James Ladonski	605-367-8384
Day County Grazing Tour	July 31	Webster	Darrel DuVall	605-345-4661
Sandborn County Tour	Aug. 6	Woonsocket	Irene Graves	605-796-4380
Bus Tour	Aug.12-13	Bismarck, ND	Kyle Schell	605-688-6623
Evening Pasture Walk	Aug. 14	Waubay	Darrel DuVall	605-345-4661
Grazing School	Sep. 8-10	Oacoma, SD	Kyle Schell	605-688-6623
SD & NE Joint SRM Meeting	Oct 7-8	Valentine, NE	Kyle Schell	605-688-6623

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](mailto:kyle.schell@sdstate.edu), (605) 688-6623