



Ranch Roundup

Greetings from the Farm Advisor,

Nice to see all this snow and rain finally falling in March. I don't have a lot to update you on but wanted to make sure everyone knew about a couple important events coming up. The Modoc Ag Expo is this Friday in Alturas at the Junior Livestock Showgrounds. We have a great lineup of speakers and lunch provided by the Modoc Farm Supply. Bundle up and join us. The Modoc Cattlemen have rescheduled their fall 2020 annual dinner to April 9th at the Brass Rail. The top hand and lifetime achievement awards will be presented as well as a vote on directors and by-law updates.

Ag in the Classroom is also coming up May 10th and we are always in need of booths. This partnership between the Modoc County Cattlewomen, Modoc County Farm Bureau and Cooperative Extension teaches about 350 Modoc County youth each year about agriculture. We were sad to cancel last year but looking forward to a great event this year. Call our office for more information on how you can volunteer.

Check out the next page for research updates and more information on all the upcoming happenings.

Sincerely,

Laura K. Snell



Find us on Facebook:

Devil's Garden Research and
Education—UCCE

UCCE RESEARCH UPDATE

This past year we conducted research and outreach on juniper encroachment, wild horse interactions with wildlife, grazing studies, carcass composting and more. Several updates and blogs are available on our website, devilsgardenucce.org and you can also follow along on our Facebook page. Here is a short update of a couple projects.

Livestock Mortality Composting

In partnership with Chico State University, we have now composted two cows at our research site at the Intermountain Research and Education Center in Tulelake. Chico State has also composted cows and offal from the meat processing lab. This study aims to change current state policies that make livestock mortality composting illegal in California. Composting can be used on-farm to decrease predator interactions at bone piles, and provide safe, economically disposal of materials from small-scale butchering operations. We will continue this project through 2022 but are moving towards focusing on the policy concerns that make these practices currently infeasible.

Public Land Range Monitoring

For the fifth year, we monitored annual range use in the Warner Mountains—part of a statewide effort to compare annual use with long term trend monitoring on United States Forest Service land.

We also completed a second year of data collection in the Emerson allotment and Warner Mountain Wilderness, establishing key areas and assessing vacant allotment conditions and concerns. The Modoc National Forest has some of the lowest numbers of vacant allotments of any forest in the country but these allotments are still sought after for grazing and grass banks.

Wild Horse Management

This past year we completed our first year partnering with the California Department of Wildlife studying wild horse interactions with elk populations. Understanding these interactions will aid in updating the elk management plan for this region. We also published a paper this past year on the *Current Trends and Management of Wild Horses on the Devil's Garden Plateau* which can be found at <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/073803nf>. Several partnerships and much innovation have helped to reduce the wild horse population on the Devil's Garden to half what it was in 2015. With continued perseverance, the appropriate management level (206-402) could be reached in 3-5 years.

Big Valley Groundwater Research

In partnership with the North Cal-Neva RC&D and Modoc County, UCCE Modoc has contributed significantly to data collection supporting the **Big Valley Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP)** development.

We are currently working on chapters 7-9 of the GSP which include sustainable management criteria, monitoring networks, and projects. These chapters allow for a lot of public input. We are hosting a public meeting **March 24th at 5:00pm at the Adin Community Center** to hear more from the public. Thomas Harter, groundwater hydrologist from UC Davis, will give us some background and we will have stations with various topics for public input. Dinner will be provided.

The Big Valley GSP advisory committee continues to meet the first Wednesday of each month at 4pm. Meetings are currently in Adin at the community center while the Bieber Veterans Hall heater is not working.

We continue to monitor the five well clusters in Big Valley monthly. There has been collection for a year now helping to show the cycle of pumping and recharge in the basin. We are also working on installing a new stream gauging site on the Pit River as it flows into the basin. This will give us a better idea of river flows that actually enter Big Valley.

This past month we have started research looking at winter flood recharge on hay fields. Winter recharge is a popular management project throughout California agriculture lands but has never been studied on grass and pasture. Winter recharge aims to capture water during the winter or non-irrigation months to recharge the soil profile to allow producers to irrigate less during the irrigation season and potentially recharge groundwater levels as well.

UCCE Modoc aims to help provide the best science available to be used in the GSP development. The research we are conducting along with a feasibility study we are working on aims to provide options for compliance in Big Valley that are not the typical increased taxes and decreased pumping actions taken by other basins. The unique characteristics of Big Valley provide opportunities for groundwater sustainability and longevity not available in other parts of the state. Please join us on March 24th and let us know your thoughts on BV sustainability.

CATTLEMEN'S ANNUAL DINNER MEETING



MODOC COUNTY CATTLEMEN'S DINNER

Announcing the Modoc Top Hand and Lifetime Achievement.
Auction will be held to support scholarships.

April 9, 2021

Brass Rail | 395 Lake View Dr Alturas, CA 96101
Happy Hour Sponsored by Modoc Auction Yard | 5:30 pm
Dinner | 6:30 pm

Suggested Couple \$100
\$60 Dinner - \$40 Raffle Tickets
** Fee can be paid upon arrival **

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE

WE ARE ON THE WEB
CEMODOC.UCANR.EDU

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Alturas, California
Permit # 22

**COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION**

UCCE Modoc County
202 West 4th Street
Alturas, CA 96101
530-233-6400

Laura Snell
Livestock and Natural Resources Advisor
lksnell@ucanr.edu

It is the policy of the University of California (UC) and the UC Division of Agriculture & Natural Resources not to engage in discrimination against or harassment of any person in any of its programs or activities (Complete nondiscrimination policy statement can be found at <http://ucanr.edu/sites/anrstaff/files/169224.pdf>). Inquiries regarding ANR's nondiscrimination policies may be directed to Linda Marie Manton, Affirmative Action Contact, University of California, Davis, Agriculture and Natural Resources, One Shields Avenue, Davis, CA 95616, (530)752-0495.

FUTURE EVENTS OF INTEREST

Modoc Ag Expo

March 19 11:00-3:00 Junior Livestock Showgrounds, Alturas

Big Valley Groundwater Public Meeting

March 24 5:00-7:30 Adin Community Center

Cattlemen's Annual Dinner

April 9th 5:30-8:30 Brass Rail, Alturas

Ag in the Classroom

May 10 9:30-1 Junior Livestock Showgrounds, Alturas