



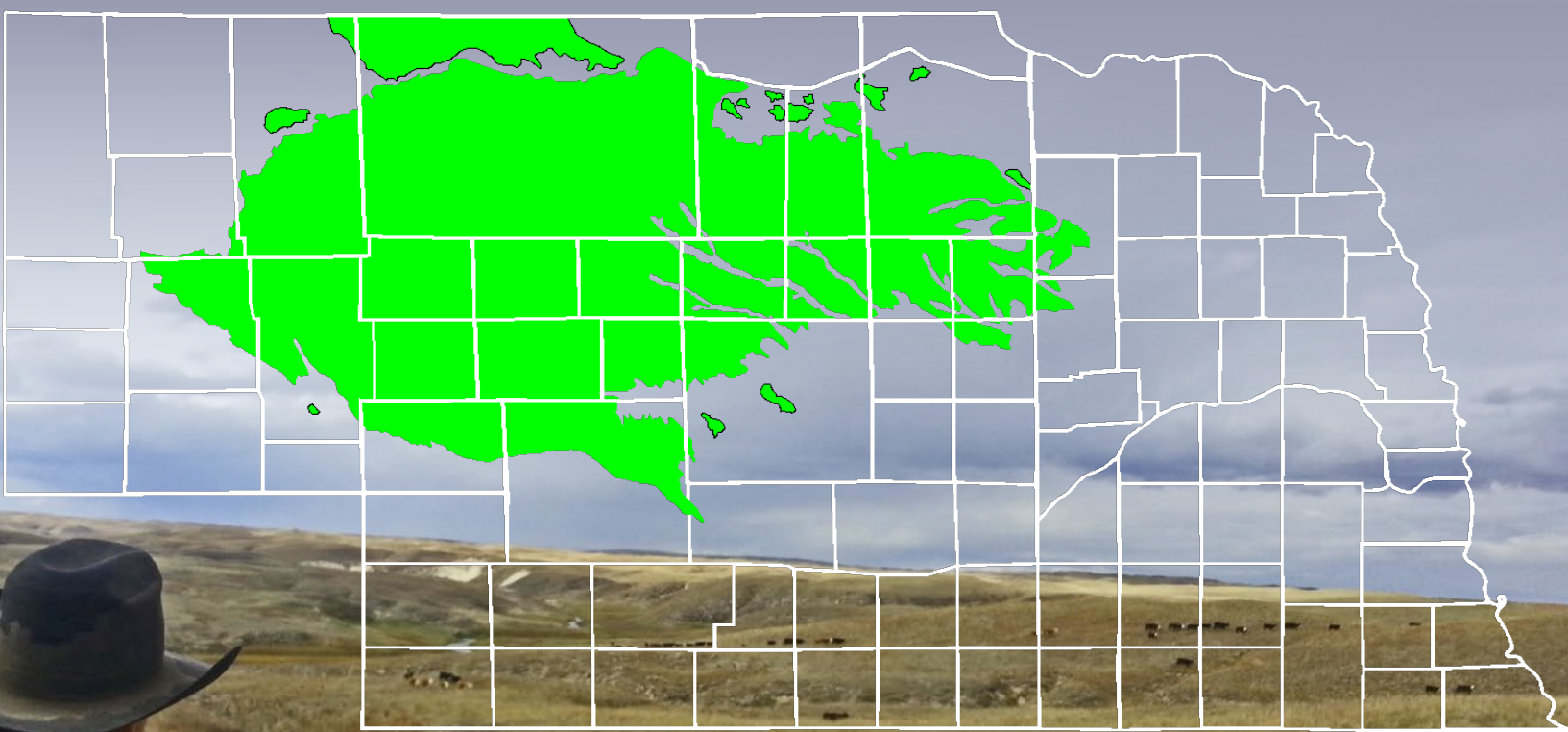
Sandhills Task Force
“Where People and Land are One”

By: Tevyn Pieper
Project Coordinator

Overview

- STF – Who we are
- On-the-ground projects
- Ranch Internships
- Sandhills Stewards





19,600 square miles

Nebraska Sandhills

- Largest contiguous native grassland in the World
- 90% private ownership
- 95% grassland





Sandhills Task Force

“Where People and Land are One”

- Non-profit organization and land trust



STF Employees

Ashley Garrelts
Project Coordinator



Shelly Kelly
Executive Director



Cody Trump
Sandhills Stewards



Tevyn Pieper
Project Coordinator



KyLee Kime
Admin Assistant/Internship Program





Sandhills Task Force

“Where People and Land are One”

- 16 board members
 - 9 Ranchers
 - Representatives from:



Natural Resource District



County Commissioner



Mission Statement

“To partner with ranchers; local communities, groups, and organizations; and local state and federal agencies to identify, prioritize, plan, and implement mutually acceptable projects that benefit private ranching, wildlife and vegetative diversity, and associated water supplies.”

Power of Partnerships

- Ranchers want a healthy landscape
- Conservation agencies and organizations want a healthy landscape
- Ranchers make the land profitable
- Agencies/Organizations help increase conservation measures



Holistic Landscape Strategies

- Restoring hydrology to streams and wetlands
- Designing grazing plans
- Eastern red cedar control
 - Mechanical treatment
 - Prescribed burn
- Invasive carp removal
 - Lake renovations
- Education/Outreach
 - Tours/meetings
 - Hands on burn training
- And more

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STF Project Impact (acres)

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
Cedar	16,891	33,019	43,936
RxBurn	1,206	530	1,617
Grazing	6,947	4,661	34,491
Wetland/Lake	175	43	285
<i>Technical Assistance</i>	<i>52,861</i>	<i>10,291</i>	<i>44,475</i>
Total	90,925	48,544	124,804

3-year total = 264,273 acres

STF Project Costs 2024

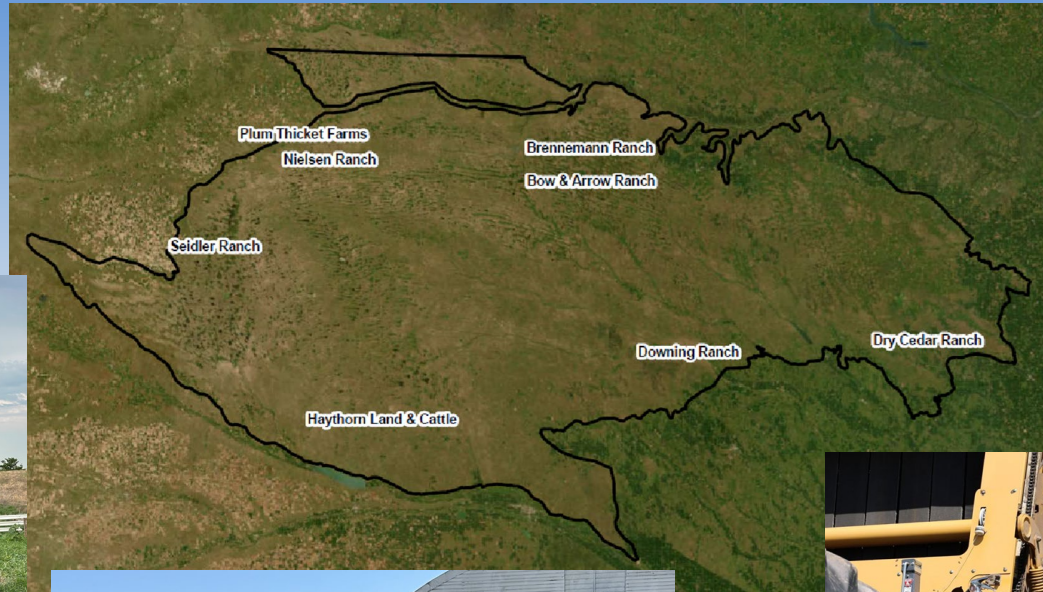
- STF Project Expenses = \$1,059,559.10
- TOTAL Project Expenses = \$2,600,273.55
- 1:2.5 Ratio



Sandhills Ranch Internships

- Open to students, non-students, and Veterans. Must be at least 19 years old.
- 3-month summer internship
- Host Ranches may be open to multiple interns
- Mentor Training
- Intern Orientation
- Periodic Check-ins
- Compensation for monthly stipend
- Host Ranch provides housing (includes utilities)

Sandhills Ranch Internships



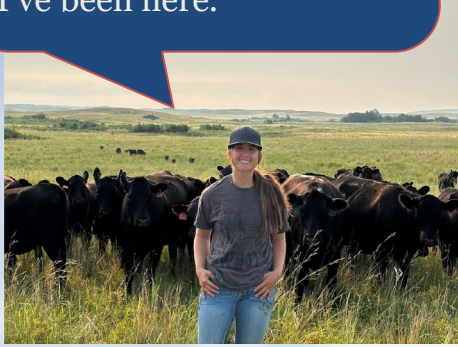
Sandhills Ranch Internships

- 2023 = 5 interns placed
 - 25 Applicants
 - NE, CO, OH, UT, TX, IA, MN
- 2024 = 11 interns placed
 - 82 Applicants
 - NE, KS, CO, WY, VA, OH, FL, IA, KY, GA, WA, MN, IN, ID, MS, TX, BJ, AK, HY, CA
- 2025
 - 117 applications received
 - NE, KS, CO, WY, TX, NC, VA, IA, MI, LA, UT, MN, CA, OK, OH, ND, IL, GA, KY, WA, AZ, TN, IN, MO, MT, NY, SD, MD, NV



Sandhills Ranch Internships

“My roping skills and ability to handle an animal at the end of the tope have improved greatly while I’ve been here.”

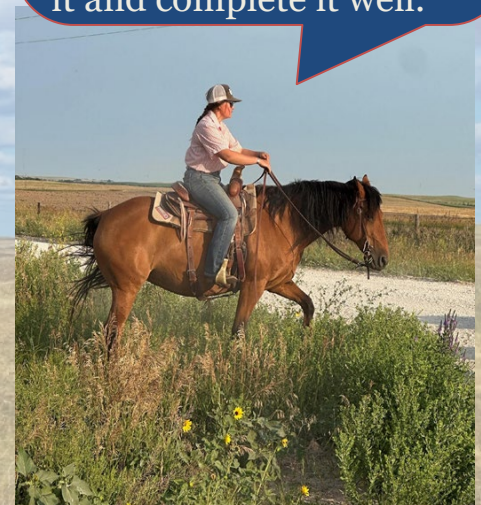


“I’ve grown to love the community in the Sandhills. As soon as we got here, they made us feel like we were one of their own and already part of the group.”



“The most rewarding part of my internship is when my mentors trust me to do a task on my own and I can complete it and complete it well.”

“The internship has reinforced my vision for the future. This is definitely the type of work I want to do full time.”





Nebraska Youth Range Camp

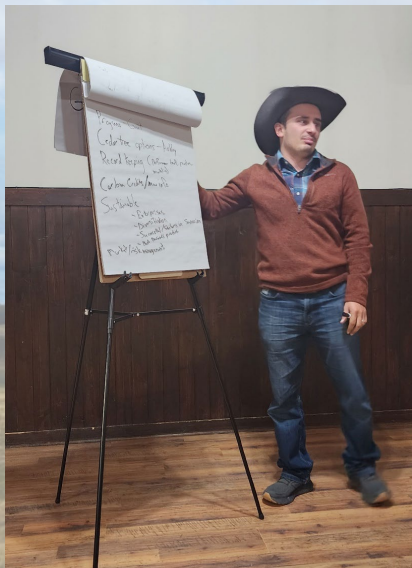
- Open to high school students 14-18 years old
- 4 day camp – June 9-12, 2025 *tentative*
- Location: Chadron State College
- Topics:
 - Natural resource management
 - Plant identification
 - Range judging
 - Leadership
 - Career Opportunities





Sandhills Stewards

- Aimed to improve Stewardship and Profitability
- Sandhills Stories Podcast
- Rancher Gatherings
- Workshops
- 1 on 1 meetings to set goals for improvement



Sandhills Stewards

- Stewards Workshops = 450 attendance
- Rancher Gatherings = 18 meetings
- Sandhills Stories Podcast – 3,088 listens
- 24 1-on-1 meetings, impacting 195,788 ac



Title	Guest
Season 1	
Pilot	Shelly
Buck Buckles A Sandhills Cowboy	Buck Buckles
Mental Health in Ranching	Ryan Sexson
Dailey Angus Ranch	Lemoyne Dailey
John Ravenscroft Three Bars Ranch	John Ravenscroft
Season 2	
Shovel Dot Ranch	Homer Buell
Plum Thicket Farms	Nancy Peterson
A Sandhills Poet	Natalie G'schwind
Switzer Ranch	Sarah Sortum

Task Force
People and Land are One
help you:
p you meet your
goals
Wetland



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Ranchers Night Out

Saturday, Feb. 15

Arnold, Grazers Bar & Grill

\$30 includes drink stub, meal,
three speakers

5:30-9:30 CT
Register by February 13th!


Sandhills Task Force



Outreach

- Ranch Tours
- Informational meetings
- Supporting Nebraska Leopold Conservation Award
- Providing a scholarship for UNL Grazing Livestock Systems major



www.SandhillsTaskForce.org



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HELPING PEOPLE HELP THE LAND

ENHANCING GRASSLAND ECOSYSTEMS WHILE
SUSTAINING PROFITABLE RANCHING

Upcoming Events

Check our website to learn more and keep up with our activities. Find us on Facebook and Instagram!

Thanks for your time!!

Tevyn Pieper
tevyn@sandhillstaskforce.org
308-225-3737

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"Where People and Land are One"