

Kevin Sedivec, Interim Director Central Grasslands Research Extension Center, North Dakota State University

Testimony for the 68th Legislative Assembly – HB 1020 Appropriations

January 16, 2023

Chair Monson, House Appropriation Committee Members. For the record, my name Kevin Sedivec, Interim Director for Central Grasslands Research Extension Center.

I want to thank the committee for the opportunity to provide testimony today. For those who do not know me, I am a native of North Dakota, born and raised in the Mandan area. The Central Grasslands Research Extension Center is located near Streeter. It is a little over an hour from Bismarck and 40 minutes from Jamestown.

The center's overall mission is to conduct research and Extension programming on Grazing and Forage Management to increase the economic value to the ranching community and ecological function for conservation within the Missouri Coteau Region.

- Our research has developed grazing strategies that increases the economic value to grazing lands by 25 to 35 percent, while increasing livestock performance and enhancing breeding bird populations and pollinator habitat
- We've studied numerous annual forage crops to help ranchers better select which species to grow for forage production and quality
- We have accessed late-season grazing and forage options that have shown to increase economic efficiency through reduced fossil fuel use, labor, and depreciation to equipment while adding value to the land

I would like to thank the 67th ND Legislative Assembly for funding new capital projects at the Central Grasslands Research Extension Center.

Two projects were funded within SB2020: a director's residence and pasture working facilities.

- The pasture working facilities will be completed by the end of the fiscal year under-budget
- The director's residence project was bid out with no bids received

A livestock research laboratory and replicated feeding facility was funded within SB2345 (ARPA funds).

- Although we did receive bids for this project, the bids were not accepted due to a shortfall of \$400,000 in funds needed to complete this project. The costs of material and labor were much higher than what we budgeted when we submitted the project in 2021

Our needs for the 2023-2025 budget year include:

- A request for an extension of the funds for the director's residence. Although we are not asking for additional state funds, we are requesting additional special fund authorization of \$175,000.
- We are also requesting an extension of the funds for the livestock research laboratory and replicated feeding facility; and a one-time request for an additional \$400,000 to complete the project.
- Finally, we are asking for a competitive salary package for our staff. Building attractive compensation packages for employees will be crucial in the recruitment and retainment of top talent.

We truly appreciate your support and time! I would gladly take any questions at this time.