

University of Idaho Rinker Rock Creek Ranch

Request for proposals – Graduate Research Assistantships



Background: Rinker Rock Creek Ranch (RRCR) is a recently-established research station managed by the University of Idaho's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences and College of Natural Resources in collaboration with The Nature Conservancy and Wood River Land Trust. The ranch is approximately 22,000 acres and is located in the Wood River Valley of central Idaho (near Bellevue, ID [43.390470](#), - [114.391891](#)). Approximately half of the acreage is managed by the University of Idaho in collaboration with The Nature Conservancy and the Wood River Land Trust. The other half of the acreage is made up of property managed by the Bureau of Land Management and Idaho Department of Lands. The RRCR includes a research, education, and outreach program focused on sustainable rangeland management. The facility hosts interdisciplinary, collaborative research and management activities addressing challenges impacting ranching and conservation on western rangelands. The RRCR provides opportunities for public access and recreation and serves as a podium for education on Idaho rangelands.

Objective: The intent of this request for proposals is to stimulate new research projects focused on understanding rangeland ecosystem processes. Successful proposals will address one or more of the following research priorities: (1) primary production, (2) trophic structure, (3) organic matter accumulation, (4) inorganic inputs and nutrient cycling, (5) ecological disturbances, or (6) livestock production.

The RRCR seeks collaborative, interdisciplinary proposals from U-Idaho faculty to fund two graduate students conducting research at the ranch. Funding can be requested for up to two years and includes salary (+ fringe), tuition, and fees for a graduate research assistantship. Priority will be given to projects with secured funding for other project components (e.g., travel to the ranch, research supplies and equipment, etc.). Basic and applied research projects are encouraged. All projects should explicitly address one or more research priority. Additionally, successful projects will include a broader impacts component that includes participation in one or more RRCR-hosted event per year, which includes an annual webinar and Sagebrush Saturday outreach events for the public.

How to apply: Submit proposals in electronic format (.pdf or Word) to Tracey Johnson (traceyj@uidaho.edu) and include in the subject line “RRCR Graduate Research Proposal”.

All proposals are due by 5 pm MT on Monday April 24, 2023. Proposals will be reviewed by a committee that includes a UI researcher, livestock producer, extension faculty, and land manager. Awards will be announced by mid-May. Funds will be distributed to awarded projects in summer 2023. The review committee can request additional peer review as necessary.

Resources: Details about the ranch can be found at: <https://www.uidaho.edu/research/entities/rock-creek>. Some previous and ongoing projects are highlighted on the “Research and Restoration” page; helpful resources for proposals can be found on the “For Researchers” page (e.g., species lists, site description). The RRCR Strategic Plan can be found on the “About” page. Contact Tracey Johnson, Director of Research, with questions about proposals.

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Proposals are required to use the template below and meet the following criteria: 1) Maximum of three single-spaced pages, not including Budget and Budget Justification or Literature Cited (please limit Literature Cited to no more than eight highly relevant citations); 2) 12-point Font Size; and 3) one-inch margins.

TITLE: *Please be brief and descriptive*

PERSONNEL: *Identify project leader(s) including faculty and support personnel assigned to the project. Note that graduate students can only apply with a faculty member who supports the project and will hold a UI budget for project funding.*

CONTACT: *Phone number and email address of principal investigator*

BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION: *Present the relevant background, importance of the problem, and the knowledge gap that will be addressed by the work. Indicate how the project meets RRCR research priorities outlined above. Provide specific objectives that will be achieved or hypotheses that will be tested.*

PROCEDURES: *Present the plan of work to be used in achieving objectives.*

BROADER IMPACTS: *Provide a description of broader impacts activities planned for the study.*

TIMELINE: *Provide an expected timeline for each year of the project. Projects will be funded for one fiscal year at a time. Continued funding beyond the initial year is dependent upon adequate progress by the student.*

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION: *Budgets for proposed projects should reflect the various budget categories. Indirect costs are 39% MTDC.*

Please include sources and dollar values of all funds, equipment, study sites and services that directly relate to the proposed project. Include appropriate portion of all faculty and support personnel salaries directed toward the project. Matching funds are not required but a demonstration of commitment of other resources to the project, or a high likelihood of obtaining those resources, will increase a proposal’s rating by the Review Committee.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: APRIL 24, 2023 BY 5:00 PM MT

Item	RRCR Requested Funding	Other Funding (not intended to be committed cost share)	Source of Other Funding	Status of Other Funding (awarded, pending, aspirational)	Total Amount
Salary					
Irregular Help <i>(e.g., additional summer hours)</i>					
Fringe Benefits					
Travel	NA				
Operating Expenses	NA				
Capital Outlay	NA				
Total MTDC					
Tuition and Fees					
Indirect Costs @ 39% MTDC					
Total Costs					

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (Max 1-page):