SILVIES VALLEY RANCH
OSU Multidisciplinary Internship Program

Introduction

Managing a ranching enterprise continues to get more complicated as capital costs increase and agricultural commodities experience tighter and tighter margins. In order to understand or manage a successful ranching enterprise in the future, one will need to possess a great breadth of knowledge in: Animal Science, Wildlife, Crops, Restoration Ecology, Forestry, Fisheries, Range Management, Marketing, Management, Veterinary Medicine, Genetics, Law, and even Guest Services!

The Silvies Valley Ranch Internship Program is designed to help students get exposed to a wide range of disciplines needed to operate a large ranching and guest ranch operation while focusing on a topic of particular interest to the student.

Description of the Ranch

Silvies Valley Ranch is a large (135,000 acres deeded and leased) commercial cattle ranch in Eastern Oregon that was founded in 1883. Located halfway between John Day and Burns at 4600 feet of elevation, it is composed of 6,000 acres of mountain meadows, 14,000 acres of deeded Ponderosa Pine Forest, 15,000 acres of deeded sagebrush steppe, 10,000 acres of BLM sagebrush/pine, and 90,000 acres of leased forest pasture from the Malheur National Forest.

The deeded property contains about 55 miles of river, creeks and streams, five ponds/lakes, and abundant wildlife. There are significant riparian area enhancement projects underway throughout the ranch, as well as projects to enhance fish, bird and wildlife habitat on the ranch.

The commercial cattle operation is developing a “branded” beef program with sales to high-end restaurants through a Portland distributor. The ranch also markets premium “branded” hay directly to high-end horse stables as well as feed stores.

The ranch is developing a guest services offering that may include a golf course, restaurants, wildlife viewing, fishing, timeshares, and other amenities.

The ranch is majority-owned by Scott, Sandy, Tygh and Rand Campbell – all Oregon Staters who live at the ranch about halftime. The full time ranch management team includes Jesse Svejcar, a 2010 graduate of OSU from the La Grande Campus (Ag Business Management) who is the intern advisor, and Robb Foster – both long time Harney County residents.

Description of Internships

Interns will be selected from applicants based on their description of their proposed scientific project to be conducted at the ranch. Projects will be judged on scientific need, originality and relevance to the ranch, among other things.

Silvies Valley Ranch will award up to 10 total student internships per year – with six (6) being the target number of students active in the program at any one time and 8 being the maximum at

any one time. The students may be selected from both undergraduate and graduate applicants.

Successful interns will be expected to be in residence at the ranch for two to 24 months. During their time in residence at the ranch, they will spend up to 40 percent of their time working exclusively on their project. During the remainder of their time, they will work on other projects on the ranch in order to get an introduction to the ranching way of life and to learn about other disciplines necessary for a successful ranching operation. Disciplines may include the following, or additional areas:

- Animal Science
- Construction
- Leadership Mgmt.
- Public Relations
- Fisheries
- Crops Science
- Marketing
- Veterinary Medicine
- Livestock Handling
- Golf Course Design
- Forestry
- Soils
- Restoration Ecology
- Agriculture Economics
- Range Management
- Turf Management
- Wildlife
- Hydrology
- Ecology
- Geology
- Hotel/Restaurant Mgmt
- Ranch Enterprise Mgmt (livestock, forestry, crops, wildlife & guests)

Ranch work projects may include:

Planning, building, or maintenance – everything from vaccinating calves, building trails, planting trees, irrigating, calving heifers, fixing fence – the whole spectrum of ranching!

Silvies' goal is to have interns experience many different aspects of ranching – and still get the work of running a ranch done. Jesse Svejcar will function as the ranch mentor/supervisor to the interns on the ranch. Interns will get together with other students on a least a weekly basis for discussion and sharing of learnings.

What's Provided

The ranch will provide interns with living accommodations – basically a small, furnished 2-bedroom apartment that will be shared between two interns. Interns will be responsible for their own sheets, towels, food and toiletries, as well as travel to and from the ranch. Accommodations can usually be made for spouses/partners.

The ranch will provide interns with a scholarship of $3000 per term, approximately $1000 per month, to help defray other schooling costs like tuition and fees while in residence. The scholarships are paid to Oregon State University who will dispense the funds to the interns university account. Each OSU Department with a student actively enrolled in the program will be awarded $500 per month per student per month by Silvies Valley Ranch to defray departmental expenses.

Beginning in 2012, Silvies Valley Ranch will also award a $2,000 monetary prize for the "Best Undergraduate Internship Project" each year. The Selection Committee will select the prize winners.

Interns are responsible for living within Silvies Valley Ranch rules as outlined in the Ranch Handbook For OSU Interns. Failure to do so can result in the immediate termination of the internship.

Internship Learning Outcomes

All students successfully participating in the Silvies Ranch Internship Program, a collaborative effort between Oregon State University, College of Agricultural Sciences and Silvies Valley Ranch, will be able to:

1. Demonstrate competency and knowledge in the student's field of study
2. Apply and demonstrate critical thinking skills
3. Formulate solutions to ranch management problems through collaboration and teamwork
4. Evaluate the economical and environmental sustainability of a multiple use ranching operation though techniques particular to the student's field of study
5. Demonstrate excellence in oral and written communication skills
6. Identify and appraise the role of this internship experience on their personal and academic, and on their career goal development

Individual students will also develop their own learning outcomes reflecting those above and their selected project

Internship Requirements

1. Internship and Project Report (written).

   Each student's final project report will be a final paper which includes written, scientific and leadership learning objectives and educational goals, as well as the projected benefits to their industry or field of study. The final paper will detail the results of the project completed as part of the Silvies Valley Ranch internship experience. The intern will work with their OSU Internship Supervisor in preparation of the final written report.

2. Internship and Project Presentation.

   Each student will present an oral seminar (~30 minutes in length) to Silvies Valley Ranch associates and again on campus in their respective Department. The presentation should include how their learning and leadership goals were achieved, and how their project could benefit their industry or field of study. The student will develop this presentation with the guidance of their OSU Internship Supervisor.

3. Academic Credits and Grading.

   Internship credits awarded and grading will be consistent with the appropriate Departmental internship guidelines. Two to three month internships will earn up to 6 credits of the appropriate Departmental 410 course. Credit level and appropriate course number for longer term internships will be decided by the selection committee in consultation with the appropriate Department. Final grade will be at the discretion of the OSU Internship Supervisor and will be consistent with Departmental internship policy.

Application and Selection Process

1. **Application**

   The application must be completed by the intern and the intern's OSU Internship Supervisor. It is then submitted to the Silvies Valley Ranch Internship Selection Committee. Interested students and Internship Supervisors will be supplied with a list of potential projects and objectives. The Internship Application should indicate which of the projects that the student is interested in pursuing. The student and their OSU Internship Supervisor should develop a project proposal designed to address the objectives and include the proposed project duration.

2. **Selection Process**

   The Selection Committee will select winning projects and set the beginning date and total time for the project, and will consist of:

   - One Silvies Valley Ranch associate;
   - One Campbell family member, and;
   - Four OSU representatives appointed by the Dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences.

   Internships and Study Programs will be granted by the Selection Committee for terms of two to 24 months. Some projects may be awarded for a two-month summer break and some for two calendar years, or anything in between.

   The Selection Committee will meet in March for Internship selection purposes.

Project Ideas

1. Beaver colony/individual documentation and census

2. Bird identification and census

3. Geology- rock identification and mapping

4. Public Relations planning and activities for the ranch

5. Turf Course planning and irrigation

6. Range Vegetation & Composition
   - Select sites, plant communities, goals, etc.
   - Riparian and dry land: cover density and production data
   - Methods, equipment, training, computer work
   - Permanent and/or temporary transects – consider cages/enclosures?
   - Tracking the impact of various treatments on range sites
   - Working with range professionals (e.g. USFS, BLM, ARS, etc.)

7. Animal Sciences
    - Summer range cattle management
        - Minerals, feeds, breeding, procreation, etc.
        - Nutrition
    - Herd health management
    - Sustainable grazing practices
    - Low-stress cattle handling methods
    - Cattle facility construction

8. Fisheries

9. Hydrology
    - Measuring or assessing the impact of rock weirs in streams

10. Stream Monitoring
    - Fish counts, Beaver counts – riparian monitoring and restoration work, planting, etc.

11. Forestry
    - Thinning areas – future/current
    - Tree counts/measurements
    - Species composition/production of thinned versus un-thinned
    - Establish data on future projects to compare the difference
    - Bugs and parasites

12. Photography
    - Identify areas of interest – streams, restoration projects, disturbed sites, etc.
    - Establish and mark photo points with GPS coordinates
    - Organize photos, data, GPS info on computer

13. Entrepreneurial Development
    - Identification of entrepreneurial opportunities within the student's areas of interest
    - Innovations that add value through the diverse areas of management on the ranch