

**Principal Investigator**

Stephen Bramwell

**PI Email**

bramwell@wsu.edu

**PI Position Title**

Associate Professor

**PI Department**

Extension ANR

**PI College**

CAHNRS

**PI Campus**

Extension

**Co-PI 1**

N/A

**Co-PI 1 Email**

N/A

**Co-PI 1 Department**

N/A

**Co-PI 2**

N/A

**Co-PI 2 Email**

N/A

**Co-PI 2 Department**

N/A

**Co-PI 3**

N/A

**Co-PI 3 Email**

N/A

**Co-PI 3 Department**

N/A

**Additional Co-PIs**

N/A

**Proposal Title**

Ecological Grazing Knowledge Transfer

**Proposal Description**

For this Travel with Purpose application, I am developing collaborations with grassland researchers and land managers in Scotland, France, and Germany. These regions have temperate, moist growing conditions similar to western Washington where I work for WSU. Grasslands are increasingly recognized as critical ecosystems that impact climate regulation, exhibit greater vascular plant biodiversity than any other ecosystem in the world (#/1m<sup>2</sup> patch), and provide ecosystem services. In western Washington as in NW Europe, semi-natural grasslands are home to threatened grassland species (forbs, mammals, invertebrates) at the interface of agriculture and natural ecosystems.

The purpose of this travel is to study how grazing animals are used to manage grasslands for both commercial livestock production and habitat conservation. I have made early contact with individuals active in this field, including: Dr. Michel Meuret at the National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food

and the Environment in France; Clare Toner, Reserve Manager East Central Scotland; Gill Smart, Reserves Manager South West Scotland; and Peter Gilbert with Scottish Wildlife Trust. I am reaching out to Dr. Sylvain Plantureux with the University of Lorraine in France, and Dr. Arno Krause with the Centre for Grassland Studies in Germany.

The reason to look to NW Europe as a study geography for habitat protection in grazing lands are twofold: first is the long history of domestic livestock in these “Old World” landscapes; second is the climatic comparability between the Oceanic/Warm Mediterranean climate gradients in both regions. In Europe, biodiversity rich grasslands are often referred to as “high nature value” (HNV) grasslands. In many instances these botanically rich meadows and prairies co-evolved alongside traditional grazing cultures for millennia, providing insights into their long-standing co-management for livestock products (meat, milk, fiber) and habitat.

My course of overseas study will include interviews, botanical surveys, and immersion experiences with volunteer groups and farming communities. I will study conservation grazing plans, with a goal of documenting and transferring methods that work from these ancient European grazing habitats to the grasslands and grazing land managers of Washington State. This will help develop grazing plans on western Washington grasslands that host ESA-listed endangered species, including the Taylors Checkerspot butterfly and Streak horned lark. This travel will help me provide quality trainings to farmers and technical service providers.

The network I have connected to with the Scottish Wildlife Trust reserves have agreed to write letters of support, connect me with farmers to interview and farming communities to connect with, and opportunity to work with their monitoring team and conservation reserve volunteers. In France I am connected to several farms in a “Le groupement agricole d’exploitation en commun,” or civil society based joint-farming group. These farms include Les Clarines, Alpage de Bise; Ferme de la Lanche; Plein Air; le Mont Chauffé, Ferme Girard, and; Ferme des Chalets d’Oche in the Chablais region. I am developing connections in northern France and Germany.

Results from my travel will be a multi-media conservation grazing curriculum applicable for use with local farmers, technical service providers, and K-12 audiences. The work will also be utilized for outreach for the 2026 International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists.

### **Budget**

Flight: Seatac to London. \$1,260

Justification: this will allow transit to and from Europe

Train travel within Europe (4 legs: London/Paris; Paris/Geneva (near Chablais); Geneva/Lorraine; Lorraine/Dusseldorf. \$650

Justification: this will allow transit within Europe to study sites.

Lodging. 1-mo. \$1,090.

Justification: These are estimated costs based on economy hostel accommodations (35-50 euro/night)

Total cost. \$3,000

(food: borne by researcher)

**Certified Budget Administrator**  
Stephen Bramwell

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bramwell@wsu.edu