

Wide Constituency Guides Early Activities and Research at Rogers Research Site

NORTH LARAMIE MOUNTAINS, WYOMING

By Robert W. Waggener



ROGERS RESEARCH SITE BULLETIN 2: Wide Constituency Guides Early Activities and Research at Rogers Research Site, north Laramie Mountains, Wyoming

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University of Wyoming College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Wyoming Agricultural Experiment Station

This is Bulletin 2 in an ongoing series focusing on research, teaching, extension, and other activities at the University of Wyoming's Rogers Research Site (RRS) in the Laramie Mountains, north Albany County, Wyoming. The approximate 320-acre site was bequeathed to UW in 2002 by Colonel William Catesby Rogers.

Colonel Rogers spent much of his retirement time at the mountainous, remote property, which he called the Triple R Ranch. UW renamed the property "Rogers Research Site" in memory of Colonel Rogers, who passed away in 2003 at age 96.

The February 16, 2002, amended living trust of Colonel Rogers states that:

said ranch be used for the public benefit as a center for studies, a retreat for conducting meetings, conducting conferences, or conducting research in connection with the improvement of wildlife and forestry, or to hold as a natural wooded area in its original state with specific instructions that no part of it be subdivided or sold for residential or private business purposes but held as an entire tract. Said restriction is to continue in perpetuity. If violated, said property shall revert to the ownership of the U.S. Forest Service.

Overseeing management of RRS is the Wyoming Agricultural Experiment Station (WAES), UW College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. RRS is placed administratively under one of the WAES research and extension centers, the James C. Hageman Sustainable Agriculture Research and Extension Center (SAREC) near Lingle, Wyoming.

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ON THE COVER

Larry Munn, a professor in the University of Wyoming's Department of Ecosystem Science and Management, obtains Global Positioning System coordinates in 2012 at one of the sites in and adjacent to the Rogers Research Site where soils were being sampled. Munn is now retired, but is compiling his research into a paper for an upcoming RRS bulletin that will detail soil studies in the area following the 2012 Arapaho Fire, which burned nearly 100,000 acres in the Laramie Mountains, including RRS lands. (Photo Steve Williams; cover design by Tanya Engel)

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STANDING ON THE COLONEL'S SHOULDERS

By Robert W. Waggener

“The human soul needs actual beauty more than bread.”

That quote by the English novelist and playwright D. H. Lawrence embodies the simple, yet exuberant, passionate, rather eccentric philosophy of Colonel William Catesby Rogers.

Rogers embraced the writings of Lawrence, and I've also learned that he loved living a basic life to its absolute fullest—whether eating simple meals over intellectual conversations at his remote property in the Laramie Mountains or pinching every penny

possible while traveling to D. H. Lawrence gatherings in Taos, New Mexico, film festivals in Telluride, Colorado, or big-dollar fundraisers in Denver to support the research of Paleo-Indians.

The Colonel, as he was known by friends, cared more about the beauty of life than he did about the bread that many of us rely on for personal comfort. During what became a long, adventurous retirement, Colonel Rogers—in spite of his wealth—was interested in living at the most basic level while relishing life to its fullest.



Figure 1. Colonel William C. Rogers, wearing his customary secondhand, mishmash clothes, poses for a picture at the Triple R Ranch with school teacher and friend Levida Hileman, who spent many weeks each summer visiting The Colonel with her daughter, Colleen Hogan, and later her husband, Brock Hileman. They are next to a sheep wagon that Levida and Colleen spent hours refurbishing; years later, they would find out that their friend, Bill, had willed them his antique, which is still being used to this day. (Photo by Colleen Hogan)

Each fall, when the leaves began to turn on the quaking aspen at his 320-acre Triple R Ranch in the mountains above Wheatland, Wyoming, Colonel Rogers took off for the Telluride Film Festival in the Colorado Rockies, where he conversed with movie stars like Sissy Spacek, immersed himself in lively debates, and, as the Telluride organizers would say, took in an “unabashed carnival of film—viewing, breathing, eating, and talking cinema.”

But each evening, when other film-goers retired to luxury hotel rooms, The Colonel headed to the basement of a church, a church that allowed him to stay free-of-charge after a little coaxing on his part. While packing for one of these trips, Bill enjoyed good conversation with one of the many people who spent a part of each summer on his ranch, school teacher Levida Hileman from Casper, Wyoming (Fig. 1).

“The Colonel was getting ready to put this sleeping bag into the back of his Ford Bronco,” says Levida, who quickly inquired about the funny looking bedroll. “He had gotten this sleeping bag for nearly nothing at a thrift store in Wheatland, and he was going to sleep in

this thing on the floor of a church basement. It was a Smurfs Slumber Bag—a *used* Smurfs Slumber Bag.” But for Colonel Rogers, perhaps there was some practicality behind that fluffy bedroll. “The Colonel did complain once that he felt he had cracked his hip bone sleeping on the church basement floor. Maybe that’s why he got the Smurfs bag,” Levida says.

The folks welcomed by Colonel Rogers to his beautiful piece of land in the Laramie Mountains had no idea their friend was a man of great wealth because practically everything he bought was secondhand—cups and plates, knives and forks, pots and pans; socks, shoes, underwear, pants, shirts, hats; old beds, old windows, and old pot belly stoves for the rustic cabins (Fig. 2); and, yes, even a secondhand Smurfs Slumber Bag for a trip to the Telluride Film Festival in his Ford Bronco.

And imagine Colonel Rogers driving to Denver, Colorado, in a Bronco to attend yet another fundraising cocktail party hosted by one of the many interesting people he would meet and befriend during his life, such as Dr. Hannah Marie Wormington, an American archaeologist who became well known for her field studies and writings on southwestern

Figure 2. This is Colonel William C. Rogers’ rustic, no-nonsense, one-room cabin in the Laramie Mountains. The Colonel either hand-washed his clothes in a bucket and then air-dried them amidst ponderosa pine, or he would wash them in a laundromat in Wheatland, Wyoming. But instead of spending a few bucks drying them at the laundromat, he would take his wet clothes to the Platte County Public Library and spread them on the lawn and over bushes, which gave him reading time in the library. The cabin, along with many other structures at the Triple R Ranch and surrounding lands, were destroyed in the 2012 Arapaho Fire. (Photo by C. Hogan)



and Paleo-Indians archaeology. Though The Colonel lived a frugal life, there were hints that he must have had money because he was not afraid to donate to the causes he believed in, whether it was to support literature-based discovery; the arts, theater, and dance; a foundation that embraces human dignity and diversity; or the studies of Paleoamericans. “He had wide interests and volumes of correspondence, and he would get invited to these fundraising parties that were well out of my league after learning about what kind of donation was expected to attend,” Levida Hileman explains.

As Levida reminisced about her dear friend, I couldn’t help but wonder about that Ford Bronco. Was it, too, a hand-me-down? A beat-up, dented-up, rusted-up jalopy? “Oh, no,” Levida responds. “The Colonel was very tight when it came to personal belongings, but he would buy a brand new Ford Bronco every year.” Like the Smurfs Slumber Bag, was there beauty in owning a new Ford Bronco, or did The Colonel have a practical side when it came to that long dirt-road drive to his remote property—a journey that would test both vehicle and driver with mud, sharp rocks, washboard, potholes, soft shoulders, and deep drifts of crusted snow? It’s not a place where you want to get stuck, breakdown, or wreck, and that’s why he always carried two spare tires in his dependable new rigs.

Each spring, beauty followed Colonel Rogers back from the beaches and hills of Mexico and the flat farmlands of Nebraska, up those dirt roads in the Laramie Mountains, past wildflowers just beginning to bloom and mountain bluebirds competing fiercely over prime nesting sites. “The Colonel would spend his winters in Mexico and would then buy a new Bronco when he got back to Wyoming,” says Colleen Hogan, who enjoyed weeks each summer visiting Colonel Rogers with her mother, Levida Hileman. “You always knew when Bill was back because you could hear him honking the horn in his new Bronco as he drove onto his land.”

For Colonel William C. Rogers, the land represented peace and quiet and solitude, a sure comfort after experiencing the trauma of World War II. But one summer, the beauty

left his land shortly after a young fellow from back east answered an ad in *Mother Earth News* or some other magazine offering cabins for rent in the Wyoming mountains. “That young man, who was maybe in his 20s, had only been there a couple of weeks when The Colonel allowed him to take his Bronco into town,” says longtime Laramie Mountains’ resident Tiny Walker, who, along with husband Duane, became friends with Colonel Rogers. “Well, that young man wrecked the Bronco on a dirt road, and when The Colonel found out he called the sheriff. They took the young man into custody, and he ended up hanging himself in jail. That really got to The Colonel. He never said much, but that incident obviously bothered him.”

Colonel Rogers eventually learned that the kid was running from the law, that he was facing five years in a state penitentiary back east, and that the isolated hills in Wyoming seemed like the perfect place to hide.

The suicide weighed heavily on Colonel Rogers, but the beauty slowly returned. That was certainly evident when he drove on those same dirt roads into Wheatland to wash the mountain topsoil out of his ragged mishmash clothes at the local laundromat. Instead of plugging \$5 worth of quarters into a couple of dryers, however, he would carry his wet socks, underwear, pants, and shirts to the Platte County Public Library where he would spread them across the lawn and over bushes to dry while he went inside to read. “Oh, he was extremely well-read,” says Rebecca Hilliker, a University of Wyoming professor emerita of dramatic literature and acting who became close friends with Colonel Rogers late in his life. “He read a lot of philosophy, history, poetry—those kinds of books. There were von Goethe, Nietzsche, and others.”

That bookish inclination followed him on his many travels across the country and abroad to visit with other well-read people. The Colonel, though, remained a humble man as he quietly welcomed equally educated, equally opinionated, equally interesting people from many walks of life to his rugged, ponderosa pine-covered land in the Wyoming mountains. Over the years, he entertained Zapotec weavers from Mexico, hippies from

California, poets from the East Coast, and writers such as Virginia McCormick Scully (Fig. 3), who authored *A Treasury of Indian Herbs: Their Lore and Their Use for Food, Drugs, and Medicine*, and co-authored, with husband Michael Freeman Scully, *A Motorist's Guide to Mexico*. At the same time, Levida Hileman emphasizes: "The Colonel got along very well with the local 'mountain' people up there."

Among them were Duane and Tiny Walker, who were riding the mountain trails one day when they decided to pay their friend a visit. Colonel Rogers loved people, and on this particular day he was hosting one of his writer friends from back east. They were in Bill's no-nonsense, one-room cabin putting up fresh peaches over a pot belly stove, perhaps conversing about the Tarahumara Indians, Calamity Jane, or the Paleo-Indians. Or maybe Oscar Wilde, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Friedrich Nietzsche, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, or D. H. Lawrence. Or maybe Bill's fascination with Union Pacific locomotives and Wyoming windmills.

"My wife, Tiny, and I were traveling through the trails over there near The Colonel's property that day. Colonel Rogers seemed to be awfully busy so we decided we better stop by and pester him a little. He welcomed us right in, like he would always do. He invited us into his little cabin where he was canning peaches with one of his lady friends who helped him write stories," Duane says. "The Colonel went down underneath his cabin to get some more canning jars. He rinsed them a little bit in a bucket of spring water, which kind of tickled us a little bit because this isn't how you typically clean canning jars. He then put the jars in some hot water and then started dipping peach halves into the jars."

Duane pauses, and then starts laughing.

"Well, The Colonel dropped a half of peach on the floor, and it wasn't exactly a very clean floor. He just reached down and scooped up that peach half with his fingers and put it into a jar—and then went right on canning."

William Catesby Rogers didn't mind a dirty peach in his jar, but he needed to fill his soul with beauty, whether that beauty was discussing the works of D. H. Lawrence with an intellect from the East Coast or sitting

around campfires watching shooting stars, debating ponderosa pine management and bark beetle damage, and joking about Smurfs Slumber Bags with the locals.

"I really wish I could have met Colonel Rogers," I tell Duane Walker. "He sounded like a most interesting man."

Duane responds, "You missed out by not, that's for dang sure. You don't forget a guy like that. He had quite a sense of humor, always had people laughing. And he could talk with most anyone who wanted to stop in."

Levida Hileman, who stopped in on a regular basis with her daughter, Colleen, and later her husband, Brock Hileman, has equally fond memories of Colonel Rogers. "He was a warm, caring person, and he loved for others to enjoy The Ranch. That's what he called his place," she says. "He loved it so much up there in the mountains and always wanted to share it with others. He loved the land and the forest and the wildlife, and we appreciated being able to share all of those beautiful things with the man we grew to know as *The Colonel*."

As old age crept in and his health began to decline, Colonel Rogers sought to ensure that the beauty of discovery would continue at his Triple R Ranch, and that's why he willed his beloved ranch to the University of Wyoming for such things as forestry and wildlife research. Discovery is why he went to D. H. Lawrence fêtes, the Telluride Film Festival, and talks by famous archaeologists, and discovery is why he invited local mountain folks, scholars from the East Coast, and hippies from California to sit around the campfire at his ranch in the Laramie Mountains. He had an inquiring mind, and it was his hope that his donation would give other inquiring minds—like college students studying wildlife management and rangeland ecology and faculty members researching soil microbial biology and ponderosa pine restoration—the opportunity to discover.

Discovery is exactly what Colleen Hogan did when she traveled to The Colonel's property each summer with her mother, Levida. She would follow the Arapaho Trail, read *Cowgirl Kate and Cocoa* while hanging out at her secret hilltop hideout, and help refinish an old wood floor in one of the rustic cabins.

Colleen didn't have a father or a grandfather in her life at that time, and Colonel Rogers became both. He offered her trust and kind words and predictability, and with *The Colonel* came his many eccentricities, like eating canned peaches from a jar that he found in an old dump while at the same time typing a letter to one of his scholar friends across the world. That's one of the things that Colleen Hogan learned about Colonel Rogers, you can find beauty anywhere you're willing to look.

"One day my mother and I joined *The Colonel* for a drive in his Bronco. We went down a pretty rough four-wheel-drive road to an old dumpsite near Camp Grace. The Colonel did some rummaging and found a bunch of old canning jars. He brought them back to his cabin, washed them out, and then used them for canning," Colleen says. "Bill

then went back to the dump with one of the guys to get a mattress that someone had recently discarded. Imagine Bill driving into his ranch with a guy leaning out the back of his new Ford Bronco trying to hang onto that old, beat-up mattress?"

For Colonel Rogers, the human soul needed actual beauty more than bread, and the way he lived life influenced many people in many different ways. In 2014—a little over a decade after her good friend's ashes sank into the Pacific Ocean—Colleen Hogan moved from Michigan, where she worked as a surgical nurse, back to Wheatland, Wyoming, to be closer to the mountains where she found so much peace and so much beauty. As Colleen says, "Everything about my experiences on *The Colonel's* land is in my heart and soul."



Figure 3. This photo, taken at the Triple R Ranch in the Laramie Mountains, most likely shows journalist and author Virginia McCormick Scully, who became close friends with Colonel Rogers. They both shared a keen interest in Mexico and Latin America, Indian culture, homeopathy and herbs, Calamity Jane, and western history. In the background is *The Colonel's* cabin (left) and toolshed (far right). Ms. Scully, who died in Cheyenne, Wyoming, in 1979, was buried next to her husband, World War II veteran Michael Freeman Scully, in the USS Maine Mast Memorial, Arlington, Virginia. Colonel Rogers was a World War II veteran who chose direct cremation, with his ashes scattered in the Pacific Ocean through the Neptune Society of Northern California. (Photo courtesy University of Wyoming American Heritage Center, Virginia Scully Papers)

WIDE CONSTITUENCY GUIDES EARLY ACTIVITIES AND RESEARCH AT ROGERS RESEARCH SITE, NORTH LARAMIE MOUNTAINS, WYOMING

By Robert W. Waggener¹⁻²

INTRODUCTION

Early research projects and activities at the University of Wyoming's Rogers Research Site (RRS) have been guided by a wide constituency. This has included public input, suggestions by a number of UW, state, and federal employees, work by two ad hoc RRS planning committees, and decision-making by UW officials. Also factoring into the early studies at RRS were particular research interests of faculty, staff, and students in the UW College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Wyoming Agricultural Experiment Station (WAES), and Wyoming Geographic Information Science Center (WyGIS).

The approximate 320-acre (129.5-hectare) site is located in the Laramie Mountains of southeast Wyoming (see RRS Bulletin 1 for location maps). The property, which is near the prominent Laramie Peak northwest of Wheatland (Fig. 1), was bequeathed to UW in 2002 by Colonel William C. Rogers (Williams and Waggener, 2017). (To learn more about Colonel Rogers and his gift to UW and the state of Wyoming, see RRS Bulletin 1.) At the

time, RRS was covered with thick and sparse stands of ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) in various age classes (Fig. 2). In 2012, the lightning-caused Arapaho Fire burned through nearly 100,000 acres in the vicinity of Laramie Peak, including RRS lands (Figs. 1 and 3; Williams and Waggener, 2017).

RRS is under the management of WAES and one of its four research and extension (R&E) centers in Wyoming, the James C. Hageman Sustainable Agriculture R&E Center (SAREC) near Lingle. In 2005, WAES and SAREC, which are part of the UW College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, hosted an open house at RRS. The event attracted approximately 70 people (Figs. 4–5; Appendix A). Fifty attendees filled out a questionnaire, and the results of this survey provided an important stepping stone for early planning efforts, activities, and research at RRS. Leading the effort to construct, conduct, and summarize the survey was then SAREC Director Jim Freeburn,³ who received assistance from Kathleen Bertoncelj,⁴ Jim Jacobs,⁵ and Steve Miller.⁶

KEY WORDS

Colonel William C. Rogers, forestry research, Laramie Mountains, planning, ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), public input, Rogers Research Site, student education, survey analysis, University of Wyoming, wildlife research, Wyoming Agricultural Experiment Station

1 For specific questions about this report (along with driving directions to RRS, information about access, general questions about RRS research projects, etc.) please contact the James C. Hageman Sustainable Agriculture Research and Extension Center (SAREC) at sarec@uwyo.edu; 307-837-2000; or 2753 State Highway 157, Lingle, WY 82223-8543.

2 Laramie, Wyoming-based freelance editor, writer, and photographer covering agriculture and natural resources in Wyoming and the West.

3 Jim Freeburn is now with the Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education.

4 Kathleen Bertoncelj is a former WAES staff assistant who is now retired.

5 Jim Jacobs is a former WAES director and professor in the UW Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics who is now retired.

6 Stephen Miller is a former WAES director and professor in the UW Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics who is now retired.



Figure 1. The 320-acre Rogers Research Site, foreground, is located in a remote section of the Laramie Mountains ~five miles (eight kilometers) southeast of the prominent Laramie Peak (background). This photo was taken in July 2015, about three years after the high-intensity Arapaho Fire burned through the area. (Photo by Michael Curran)



Figure 2. When Colonel William C. Rogers bequeathed his land in the Laramie Mountains to the University of Wyoming in 2002, it was covered with dense and sparse stands of ponderosa pine in various age classifications. This photo was taken in 2010, about two years before the Arapaho Fire burned most of the vegetation at RRS and surrounding lands. (Photo by Steve Williams)

Figure 3. The high-intensity Arapaho Fire burned nearly 100,000 acres in the Laramie Mountains in 2012, killing much of the vegetation.

This photo was taken about one year after the lightning-caused fire, which occurred during an extreme drought. The foreground shows RRS lands while the background reveals the prominent Laramie Peak. (Photo by S. Williams)





Figure 4. Attendees gather around an abandoned cabin during the 2005 open house on land in the Laramie Mountains that Colonel William C. Rogers donated to the University of Wyoming. About 70 people attended the event, and 50 filled out a survey that helped guide early management and research on the approximate 320-acre property, which officially became known as the Rogers Research Site in honor of Colonel Rogers. This particular cabin was dismantled by personnel from SAREC, and residues were burned approximately one year after this photo was taken on May 24, 2005 (S. Williams, personal communication, 2017). The majority of other structures and an old truck burned during the 2012 Arapaho Fire; however, an old sheep wagon survived and is still being used (see RRS Bulletin 1). (Photo by Jim Freeburn)



Figure 5. Beautiful weather and scenery greeted the approximate 70 people who attended the 2005 open house on the Rogers' property, which was donated to UW for research, extension, and teaching. Here, open house attendees tour a small reservoir that was constructed while Colonel Rogers owned the property. (Photo by J. Freeburn)

Figures 6A–C. Paying guests, including a family from Kentucky, along with writers and poets, and later Jim O’Brien, longtime caretaker of the Rogers’ property, lived in this rustic cabin until the structure was destroyed during the 2012 Arapaho Fire. **A,** This photo was taken circa early 1980s (C. Hogan, personal communication, 2017). During this period and through the 1990s, The Colonel spent his summers on the property enjoying manual labor and the company of friends and strangers alike (Williams and Waggener, 2017).



B, This photo, which shows an addition to the cabin as well as much taller ponderosa pine than in the earlier picture, was recorded shortly before the lightning-caused wildfire.



C, This photo was taken on July 11, 2012, less than two weeks after the high-intensity fire burned through the site. Colonel Rogers had names for the cabins on his property—this structure was dubbed “The Ever House” (L. Hileman, personal communication, 2017). Note: the photos were taken from different angles, but the boulders provide a point of reference. (Photos by Colleen Hogan [A] and J. Freeburn [B–C])



Following are (1) a summary of comments submitted by 50 people who attended the May 24, 2005, open house (along with 2017 updates); (2) attendee responses to a question that would help guide future activities and research at RRS; and (3) an update on early research at RRS.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS FROM 2005 OPEN HOUSE (WITH 2017 UPDATES)

Fifty people who attended the 2005 open house at RRS filled out a questionnaire to help determine priorities for the site. About half of those participating in the survey were area ranchers, farmers, cabin owners, and landowners. The other half consisted of UW, state, and federal employees.

Below is a summary of the 2005 open house survey (with 2017 updates):

100% of respondents recommended cleaning up old buildings and other refuse. UPDATE: Much work has been done over the years to clean the site of abandoned vehicles, refuse, materials left in old buildings, etc. Personal papers from Colonel Rogers were destroyed, per instructions in his will (Rogers, 2002). Manuscripts, photographs, and other materials that were not personal in nature were delivered to the UW



Figures 7A–B. The 2012 Arapaho Fire not only burned much of the vegetation at RRS, it also destroyed old structures and this truck. The fire was so hot that it melted glass and aluminum fence posts. **A**, This photo shows the truck before the fire.



B, The high-intensity fire left the truck in ruins. (Photos by S. Williams)

American Heritage Center and are now part of the William C. Rogers Papers (R. Hilliker,⁷ personal communication, 2016; this study). Mother Nature also had a hand in clean-up when the lightning-caused Arapaho Fire swept through the site and surrounding lands in 2012. The fire spared The Colonel’s old sheep wagon, which, by then, had been moved to nearby property in the Laramie Mountains (see RRS Bulletin 1), but unfortunately it consumed usable structures at RRS, including rustic cabins and outbuildings, along with items in those cabins (Figs. 6A–C). It also destroyed an old truck that was used in logging operations (Figs. 7A–B). Some of the debris left behind by the fire remains on-site. Though the majority of this should be removed for safety and aesthetic purposes, the remnants of

⁷ UW Professor Emerita Rebecca Hilliker met Colonel Rogers late in his life, and following his passing she helped others gather boxes of papers, photographs, etc., from his cabin in the Laramie Mountains. Personal papers were destroyed, per the wishes of Colonel Rogers, while other materials were delivered to the UW American Heritage Center, where they can be viewed by the public.

Figure 8. Since the 2012 Arapaho Fire, many dead trees have fallen in the area of Laramie Peak, including RRS lands, at times blocking roads and damaging property, including fences. This photo was taken at RRS in May 2017. (Photo by Steve Paisley)



Figure 9. More than 80 percent of those who filled out a survey at the RRS open house stated that all-terrain vehicles should not be used on the property. Since then, off-road travel has been limited to prescribed timbering activities and occasional ATV use to accommodate research activities. Here, two UW researchers transport grass seed that was planted in 2015 (three years after the Arapaho Fire) to investigate whether seeding a native mixture on the burned site will aid in controlling soil erosion. Results will be presented in an upcoming RRS bulletin. (Photo by S. Williams)



Figure 10. Burned timber was removed from some of the research plots by a contractor as part of a landscape-level experiment to determine appropriate methods for reestablishing ponderosa pine on RRS and similar lands. The photo shows contractor Jim Clyde removing and piling trees taken from the experimental plots. The skidder shown here was the only piece of large machinery used at RRS to date. (Photo by S. Williams)



the truck, an old rock structure (see Page 24), and other items represent a monument to the Arapaho Fire, to The Colonel himself, to the longtime caretaker of the property, Jim O'Brien, and to the many people who were guests of Colonel Rogers. Because of this, it is recommended that the next RRS management committee take deliberate action to determine what should be removed and what should remain in place to preserve a piece of history. The committee's decision should include an action plan to remove the unwanted items.

95% of respondents said that they would attend future educational field days at the Rogers' property. UPDATE:

John Tanaka, director of the James C. Hageman Sustainable Agriculture Research and Extension Center (SAREC), which oversees management of RRS, said in May 2017 that he and others are hoping to host a field day in late summer or early fall 2017 or in 2018, but this will depend on a number of factors, including funding, employee resources, and site conditions. In May 2017, a SAREC faculty member toured the site and reported that numerous ponderosa pine trees that were killed during the 2012 fire had fallen down, and some of these trees were blocking dirt roads at RRS (Fig. 8). Further, dead trees that are still standing pose a danger to those visiting the site or conducting research, so efforts need to be taken to address this issue before a field day is planned. In the meantime, researchers were encouraged to wear hardhats and to not work alone (J. Tanaka, personal communication, 2017.)

92% of respondents recommended the use of an advisory committee for the Rogers' property, either through SAREC or a new, stand-alone committee.

UPDATE: Bret Hess, who was named an associate dean in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources and director of WAES in 2010, created and chaired the Rogers Research Site Management Committee in May 2010. The committee finalized the first planning document for RRS in February 2011. Its recommendations, along with updates, will be presented in RRS Bulletin 3. Another committee, informally called the Rogers Research Site Ad Hoc Committee,

formed in 2012 in response to the Arapaho Fire. Its suggestions (and updates) will also be presented in Bulletin 3. SAREC Director Tanaka stated in early 2017 that a new committee will be formed in the coming months to guide research, teaching, and extension at and relating to RRS. There is more discussion about this below and in RRS Bulletin 3.

88% and 80% of respondents stated that "forestry research" and "wildlife/habitat research," respectively, are the most important activities to be undertaken on the property.

UPDATE: See section below titled Early Research at RRS Focuses on Forestry and Wildlife Resources.

82% of respondents stated that all-terrain vehicles should not be used on the property. UPDATE: Off-road travel on the site has been limited to occasional ATV use to accommodate research activities (Fig. 9). Additionally, prescribed timbering activities have occurred both before and after the 2012 forest fire as part of site maintenance and ongoing research. This activity has resulted in some off-road use of timber skidders (Fig. 10) as well as ATVs. Also, RRS has had considerable, season-long use by ATVs owned and operated by the general public. These incidents of trespass are supported by numerous observations made by UW Professor Steve Williams (now retired), among others.

73% of respondents said that the general public should not have unlimited access to the property.

UPDATE: A decision was made by UW to control public access, in part, to protect ongoing scientific studies, including ponderosa pine and grass restoration, from potential damage (Fig. 11). The decision by UW was also made because to gain legal access to RRS lands via the established dirt road, people must first cross private land. So out of respect for the private landowner, to protect ongoing research, and for safety considerations, access has been limited to those having permission from WAES and SAREC. Researchers and others wanting to access the land should contact SAREC [contact information is listed on the first page of this paper]. It is recommended

Figure 11. More than 70 percent of survey respondents stated that the public should not have unlimited access to the property. Access has been limited, in part to protect research sites and out of respect for a neighboring private landowner; however, there have been sightings of illegal ATV use on RRS lands, and it is recommended that the next management committee address this issue, working in collaboration with neighboring landowners. (Photo by S. Williams)

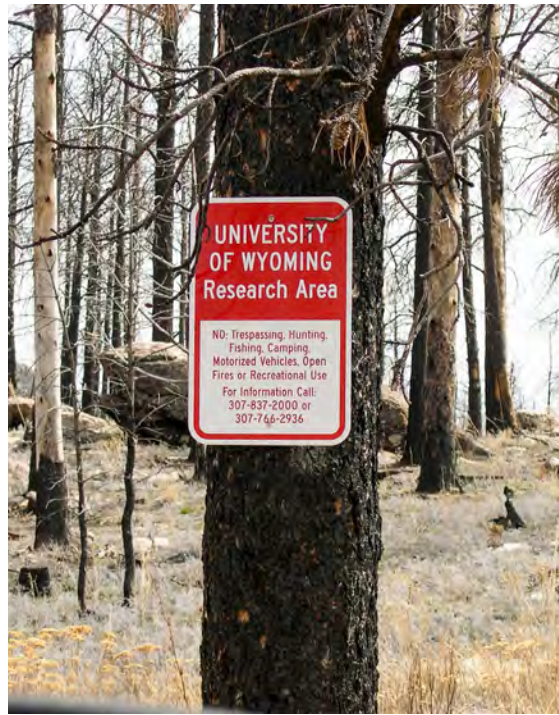
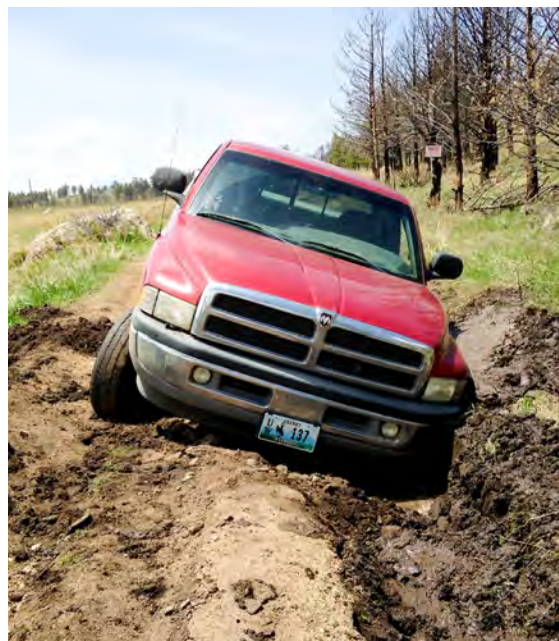


Figure 12. Great care should be taken by those traveling on the unimproved roads at RRS to prevent personal injuries, to protect natural resources and equipment, and to avoid scenes like this. (Photo by Mollie Herget)



that anyone driving into the site be aware of road conditions at all times to avoid personal injuries and to avoid damaging natural resources and vehicles (Fig. 12), especially following precipitation events.

67% of respondents recommended the installation of a weather station.

UPDATE: A weather station with remote

accessibility was installed at RRS in 2013 by then UW Department of Plant Sciences Assistant Professor Axel Garcia y Garcia⁸ and his graduate student, Marcelo Abritta (Fig. 13). The location for the station was selected by Professor Williams working in collaboration with former SAREC Director Jim Freeburn. Employees from SAREC constructed the protective fence and gate. During the station's first year of operation, mice climbed up through a small opening in the bottom of the box that accommodated wiring. The mice evidently spent the winter of 2013–2014 inside the box based on the substantial nest they built, seed they cached, and the number of droppings. During their stay, they caused extensive damage to panel wiring and other electronic equipment. The damage was discovered in spring 2014. More recently, several standing dead trees from the Arapaho Fire fell to the ground and came within feet of destroying the weather station (Fig. 14). It is recommended that the remaining dead trees in the vicinity be removed to avoid additional damage and to also make the area much safer for those involved with maintaining equipment. Vivek Sharma, an irrigation specialist and assistant professor of agronomy who joined the UW Department of Plant Sciences in 2016, plans to get the station up and running in 2017 (V. Sharma, personal communication, 2017). He says that the station will become part of a Wyoming agricultural water management program he is developing. He adds that another goal is to develop a plan to manage the station and to analyze data so that it is beneficial for researchers. It is recommended, too, that the UW College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, WAES, and SAREC work with the National Weather Service (NWS) to become an official cooperative weather observer since data from the site can be collected remotely. This would be through NWS's Cooperative Observer Program.⁹

⁸ Axel Garcia y Garcia is now an assistant professor at the University of Minnesota's Southwest Research and Outreach Center in Lamberton, Minnesota.

⁹ More information about the National Weather Service's Cooperative Observer Program is at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/os/coop/what-is-coop.html>.



Figure 13. A majority of survey respondents recommended the installation of a weather station at RRS. That occurred in 2013, but mice caused extensive damage to the station that winter. Repairs to the station, which has remote accessibility, are planned in 2017 (V. Sharma, personal communication, 2017). It is recommended that those overseeing weather monitoring work toward having the site become an official cooperative weather observer with the National Weather Service. (Photo by S. Williams)

65% of respondents selected a name with “Rogers” included when asked the following: “This newly acquired land needs a name; what is your suggestion?” UPDATE: Though the majority of respondents believed “Rogers” should be part of the name, there was no strong consensus for a specific name. The single most popular was “Rogers Elk Park Research Center,” which received a 27% recommendation. Close behind were “Rogers Research Center” and “Fletcher Park Research Center.” Based on a variety of input—including those who attended the 2005 open house and those who were involved in early planning—the official name became “Rogers Research Site” (RRS). This name was chosen to honor Colonel Rogers and to also help fulfill his wishes that the land be used, in part, for conducting research in connection with the improvement of forestry and wildlife resources on the property and across Wyoming (Fig. 15).

63% of respondents said that UW or a committee composed of UW and others should be responsible for management of the property. UPDATE: After much discussion, SAREC was given this charge. SAREC, located approximately 50 miles east of RRS, is the closest WAES research and extension center to the property. SAREC Director Tanaka says it



Figure 14. The 2012 Arapaho Fire killed the majority of ponderosa pine on RRS and surrounding lands. Several falling trees came within feet of destroying the weather station at RRS in late 2016 or early 2017, and it is recommended that the remaining standing dead trees within the vicinity of the station be removed to protect equipment and to also make the area much safer for workers. This photo, taken on May 17, 2017, shows the deadfall surrounding the weather station, which is visible in the background. (Photo by S. Paisley)

is his goal to have a new RRS management committee in place in the coming months (J. Tanaka, personal communication, 2017). It is recommended that the committee be composed of representatives from UW and the State of Wyoming, U.S. Forest Service, Laramie Peak Fire Zone fire department, nearby landowners, and possibly others (details are presented in RRS Bulletin 3).

Figure 15. Rocky Mountain elk (*Cervus canadensis nelsoni* [syn. *C. elaphus nelsoni*]) are common in some areas of the Laramie Mountains, including Laramie Peak and surrounding lands. In his will, Colonel Rogers stated that wildlife- and forest-related studies were among the activities that could take place on the property he donated to UW. (Photo by Kyle Schmidt)



Figure 16. Fence maintenance is an ongoing issue at RRS, as evidenced by cattle from neighboring lands being able to access the property. Some grazing was allowed prior to the 2012 Arapaho Fire, but grazing has since been stopped to allow vegetation to recover and to protect research sites. Since Wyoming is a “fence-out” state for cattle and domestic bison, landowners (in this case UW) who prefer not to have livestock on their property are responsible for fencing them out. (Photo by S. Williams)

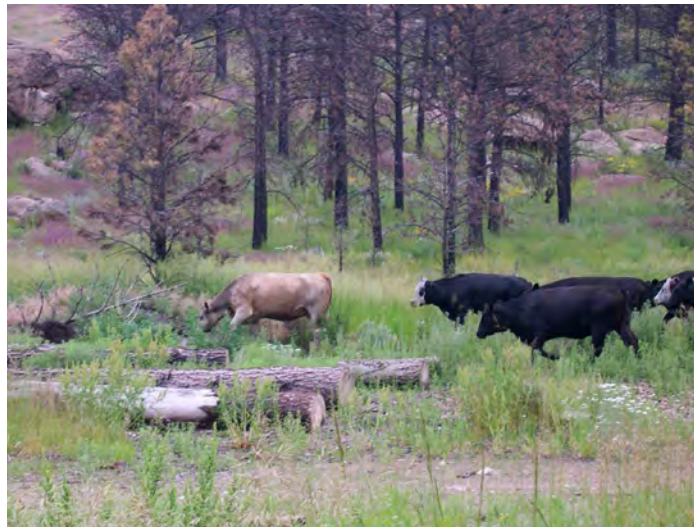


Figure 17. The 2012 Arapaho Fire took a heavy toll on fences at RRS and surrounding lands. RRS fences were repaired or replaced, but since then have been damaged by falling trees and large animals, most likely elk. This photo, taken in May 2017, shows a section of damaged fence as well as fallen and standing dead trees. (Photo by S. Paisley)



49% of respondents felt that the construction of a cabin or dorm for researchers should be a top priority.

UPDATE: This is a potential long-term goal that depends on many factors including funding and on-the-ground oversight and management since RRS is in a remote location of the Laramie Mountains.

36% of respondents identified fences and corrals as a high priority.

UPDATE: Fence repairs and replacement started shortly after UW acquired the property, but all fencing was either destroyed or heavily damaged during the 2012 Arapaho Fire. Since then, fences have been repaired and replaced, but this is an ongoing effort as evidenced by cattle (Fig. 16) from neighboring lands being able to access the property. Additionally, several dead trees from the 2012 Arapaho Fire fell onto sections of fence in late 2016 or early 2017, and additional damage was likely caused by elk or other large animals (Fig. 17). This damage was discovered by a SAREC faculty member during an on-site visit in spring 2017 (S. Paisley, personal communication, 2017). It is recommended that additional steps be taken to remove standing dead trees along roadways, parking areas, and fences.

29% of respondents recommended the establishment of outdoor camp sites.

UPDATE: This is a potential long-term goal that depends on many factors, including funding and on-site management.

29% of respondents recommended the construction of a small lab with a sink and counters. UPDATE: This is a potential long-term goal that depends on funding, on-site management, and other factors.

WHAT ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN ON THE ROGERS' PROPERTY?

One of the most important questions posed in the survey distributed to the approximate 70 people attending the 2005 open house was: "What activities should be undertaken on the Rogers' property?"

Fifty people, or 71 percent of those in attendance, filled out the survey. Concerning this particular question respondents were asked to circle what they believed were the most important activities at RRS from highest priority to lowest (Table 1). Please note that this list is not all-encompassing as other research projects and activities have occurred and could occur at RRS.

Table 1. Results from survey filled out by 50 people who attended 2005 open house at Rogers Research Site, listed from highest priority to lowest.

	Of 50 respondents	
Forestry research	44	88%
Wildlife/habitat research	40	80%
Student education	33	66%
Water and watershed research	32	64%
Weed control and research	31	62%
Adult outdoor education	28	56%
Range ecology research	23	46%
Livestock research/grazing	22	44%

EARLY RESEARCH AT RRS FOCUSES ON FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES

Early studies and other activities at RRS have focused on forestry, vegetation, wildlife, soils, and other natural resources (Fig. 18). Factoring heavily into this decision-making were:

- The wishes of Colonel Rogers (see also RRS Bulletin 1);
- Survey responses from 50 people attending the 2005 open house (detailed in this report);
- Input from those participating in other field days at RRS, including one in 2009 that was attended by UW employees and students as well as representatives from the Laramie Peak Fire Zone, Platte County Weed and Pest Control District, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, and other agencies (Figs. 19–21);
- Input from the 2010–2011 RRS Management Committee (see RRS Bulletin 3);
- Recommendations from the 2011 Wyoming Forestry Best Management Practices Audit Team, which conducted a forestry audit at RRS that year (see RRS Bulletin 3);
- Suggestions from the 2012 RRS Ad Hoc Committee, which formed in response to the Arapaho Fire (see RRS Bulletin 3);
- Discussions by UW officials;
- Particular research interests of UW faculty, staff, and students. Their work will be presented in upcoming RRS bulletins. Following is a brief summary of early research at RRS.

VEGETATION MAPPING PROJECT

One of the first projects to be launched involved the mapping of vegetation at RRS using high-resolution AEROCam photograph. This mapping project, which took place in 2006 and was overseen by the Wyoming Geographic Information Science Center (WyGISC), was designed to help future researchers track how vegetation at RRS and surrounding lands changes over time (both

Figure 18. Early studies and other activities at RRS have focused on forestry, vegetation, wildlife, soils, and other natural resources.

Here, two members of the Wyoming Conservation Corps (WCC) string plot boundaries following the 2012 Arapaho Fire as part of a ponderosa pine reestablishment study. They include Casey Davidson, left, a WCC crew member at the time, and Katie Brose, a WCC crew leader.

Brose is now a music teacher at Tongue River High School in Dayton, Wyoming, and Davidson is currently working at a Steamboat, Colorado, ski area in the winter and continues to serve with conservation corps across the country during the summer field season (P. Harrington,¹⁰ personal communication, 2017). (Photo by S. Williams)



Figure 19. Among those attending the 2009 field day at RRS were representatives from UW Real Estate Operations, from left, Eric Sneesby,¹¹ Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technician; Kendra Hamel,¹² computer-aided design/GIS student employee; Doug Haggerty,¹³ GIS technician; and Josh Decker,¹⁴ assistant manager. (Photo by Kelly Greenwald)



10 Patrick Harrington is program director for the Wyoming Conservation Corps, which is based on the UW campus. Young adults involved with WCC focus their efforts on improving Wyoming's public lands.

11 Eric Sneesby is now a GIS/scientific technician for TREC Inc., in Casper, Wyoming.

12 Kendra Hamel-Heimbuck is now executive director of Habitat for Humanity of the Greater Teton Area in Jackson, Wyoming.

13 Doug Haggerty is currently the manager of GIS engineering systems at BNSF Railway in Fort Worth, Texas.

14 Josh Decker in 2010 was promoted manager of UW Real Estate Operations.



Figure 20. Rain showers and cool temperatures greeted attendees of the 2009 field day at RRS. Among those participating were Kendra Hamel, front, and Josh Decker of UW Real Estate Operations. In the background is a small, spring-fed reservoir that was stocked with trout (and perhaps other fish) when Colonel Rogers owned the land (L. Hileman,¹⁵ personal communication, 2017). Fish and other aquatic insects died three years later following the Arapaho Fire. Post-fire sediment and ash that eroded from burned slopes severely altered the aquatic environment of the pond to the detriment of the aquatic biota living there (S. Williams, personal communication, 2017). The fire, nearly 100,000 acres in size, also consumed the vast majority of vegetation in the area of Laramie Peak. (Photo by K. Greenwald)



Figure 21. Attendees of the 2009 field day at RRS donned rain ponchos, parkas, and warm clothing as they were greeted with rain showers and cool temperatures. Among those participating in the field day were, from left, Martin Hicks, Wyoming Game and Fish Department wildlife biologist; Ryan Amundson, WGFD habitat biologist; Steve Paisley, UW Extension beef specialist; and Bret Hess, then WAES assistant director who was promoted director the following year. (Photo by K. Greenwald)

¹⁵ Levida Hileman and her daughter, Colleen Hogan, became close friends with Colonel Rogers during their many visits to the land between 1977 and about 2000. When Levida began dating Brock Hileman in the mid-1980s, he, too, started enjoying trips to the property. Levida and Brock married and are now enjoying their retirement in Wyoming, where they continue to spend part of their summers in the Laramie Mountains.

short- and long-term). It also provides a guide for management decisions relating to forestry, wildlife, and other natural resources at RRS and lands in the vicinity.

Six years later, the Arapaho Fire burned through nearly 100,000 acres in the Laramie Mountains, including RRS property, consuming most of the ponderosa pine and other vegetation. Fortunately for current and future researchers studying post-fire vegetation at RRS and neighboring lands, they have an outstanding “baseline” data set and vegetation map to work from. Results from the 2006 mapping project, which was led by UW undergraduate student Mathew Seymour and his faculty mentor, Kenneth Driese, will be presented in RRS Bulletin 4: *Vegetation mapping of Rogers Research Site, north Laramie Mountains, Wyoming, using high spatial resolution photography and heads-up digitizing.*

OTHER EARLY RESEARCH AT RRS

Other research at RRS were in the early stages when the Arapaho Fire occurred; however, some of the UW faculty members and students had compiled enough data that they were able to build on their existing work, including studies that focused on pre- and post-fire soil comparisons (Cover; Fig. 22). The majority of projects, however, are now focused on post-fire research, among them (1) restoration of ponderosa pine and grass following high-intensity wildfire (Figs. 23–24); (2) soil amendment and microbial community recovery after fire; and (3) post-fire successional change.

The outcomes of these projects, along with other work at RRS, will be presented in upcoming RRS bulletins.

Figure 22. University of Wyoming student Michael Curran digs a soil pit in 2011 as part of a soil study at RRS. Fortunately, much data had been collected prior to the 2012 Arapaho Fire, which is allowing researchers to examine how soils change following a high-intensity wildfire. The soils research, which was led by Steve Williams and graduate student Claire Wilkin, will be presented in an upcoming RRS bulletin. (Photo by S. Williams)





Figure 23. Summer intern Noah Snider marks one of the locations where a ponderosa pine seedling was planted as part of a post-fire pine and grass restoration project that is continuing at RRS. Leading the early studies were UW graduate student Mollie Herget and Professor Steve Williams (now retired), while UW assistant professors Linda T. A. van Diepen and John Derek Scasta are currently overseeing the research. Findings will be presented in upcoming RRS bulletins. (Photo by M. Herget)



Figure 24. As part of the post-fire restoration study, 2-foot-tall (0.6 m) mesh guards were placed around individual pine seedlings and secured into the ground with two bamboo sticks. In addition to the seedling plantings, other treatments included the planting of ponderosa pine seed and no planting to help determine the best management practices to use following fire. (Photo by M. Herget)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I extend many thanks to University of Wyoming Professor Emeritus Steve Williams, who has been the key figure in early studies at Rogers Research Site (Fig. 25) in addition to taking an active role in developing the initial RRS bulletins (see Bulletin 1 and upcoming bulletins in this series). Bret Hess, director of the Wyoming Agricultural Experiment Station (WAES), and John Tanaka, director of the James C. Hageman Sustainable Agriculture Research and Extension Center (SAREC), have provided valuable direction and support for research at RRS and the development of the bulletin series. Many thanks go to Tanya Engel, UW Extension, for graphic design work. A tip of the hat is extended to those who reviewed this bulletin, Steve Williams, Levida Hileman, a longtime friend of Colonel Rogers, Ryan Amundson, statewide habitat biologist for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department who was involved in early RRS planning, Bryan Anderson, a Wyoming State Forestry Division district forester who was also involved with early RRS planning, and UW assistant professors Linda

T.A. van Diepen and John Derek Scasta, who are now leading research efforts at RRS.

WAES, SAREC, the UW College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, UW Extension, and our RRS bulletin team greatly appreciate the input shared by 50 people who attended the 2005 open house at RRS. Their suggestions and comments in a written survey provided important groundwork for future planning at RRS, including research, extension, and teaching. Credit goes to former SAREC Director Jim Freeburn for constructing, conducting, and summarizing the survey. He received assistance in this endeavor from fellow WAES employees Kathleen Bertoncej, Jim Jacobs, and Stephen Miller, who have since retired. Much appreciation is extended to Jim Freeburn and SAREC administrative associate Kelly Greenwald for providing photographs from the 2005 open house and 2009 field day, in addition to supplying information about the photos. Contributing additional information about the pictures were Kathleen Bertoncej, Bret Hess, Josh Decker (UW Real Estate

Figure 25. UW Professor Steve Williams, who has been at the center of several early research projects at RRS, including pre- and post-fire studies involving soils and post-fire ponderosa pine and grass restoration, climbs a steep slope in July 2015 where one of the restoration plots had been established following the Arapaho Fire. Though Professor Emeritus Williams retired in 2013, he has been instrumental in the publication of the early RRS bulletins, including this one. (Photo by M. Curran)



Operations manager), Jamie Hageman-Phipps (former SAREC summer intern who now works as a Farm Bureau agent in Lusk, Wyoming), and Steve Paisley (associate professor with the UW Department of Animal Science). Patrick Harrington, program director for the Wyoming Conservation Corps, shared information about the photo showing the two WCC members helping a research team at RRS. Also furnishing photos were Steve Paisley, Colleen Hogan, who spent many summers visiting Colonel Rogers on his property, Mollie Herget (Fig. 26), a UW master's degree student who conducted research at RRS, Michael Curran, a Ph.D. student in the UW Program in Ecology, Tim Byer, wildlife biologist for the Douglas Ranger District of the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests (Tim sent us a number of wildlife and plant photos from the Laramie Peak area, including the picture of the elk in this bulletin, which was taken by Kyle Schmidt while he worked for the Douglas Ranger District), UW's American Heritage Center (Virginia Scully Papers), and Steve Williams (Fig. 27). Appreciation goes to Vivek Sharma for

giving an update on the RRS weather station. Several people who became close friends with Colonel Rogers graciously accepted offers to be interviewed; they include Levida and Brock Hileman, Colleen Hogan, Duane and Tiny Walker, Rebecca Hilliker, and Bryan Anderson. Also providing information about The Colonel was a niece, Sarah Stark Serra. Thanks go to Jim Clyde, Greg Dyekman, and Toby Marlatt for sharing their knowledge about Colonel Rogers along with his land and estate. And I extend gratitude to my wife, Leslie, for taking time to visit about these bulletins and the life of Colonel Rogers, and for taking the time to proof the stories about The Colonel.

Finally, I owe a great deal of gratitude to Colonel William Catesby Rogers for his generous gift to the University of Wyoming. For it was this gift that is helping to further the knowledge of UW students, faculty, staff, and others, and the knowledge gained will help others to better manage not only RRS lands, but forestry, wildlife, soil, water, and other natural resources in the Laramie Mountains and beyond.



Figure 26. Visitors to the Rogers Research Site are greeted with a wide variety of plants, including Rocky Mountain iris (*Iris missouriensis*). Those who attended the 2009 field day observed iris, as did researchers conducting studies following the 2012 Arapaho Fire. This photo was taken on June 3, 2015. (Photo by M. Herget)

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Figure 27. Preserving history at Colonel William C. Rogers' Triple R Ranch, including remnants of this old structure, is discussed in this bulletin and in Rogers Research Site Bulletin 3 (in print). Levida Hileman, who spent much time with her husband, Brock, and daughter, Colleen Hogan, visiting The Colonel and his property, was told that this structure was the remains of an old root cellar. While helping Colonel Rogers with chores, guests moved many of the rocks from the structure to help build stone pathways or low retaining walls. This photo was taken in 2015, three years after the Arapaho Fire burned nearly 100,000 acres in the Laramie Mountains. (Photo by S. Williams)



APPENDIX A. NEARLY 70 ATTEND OPEN HOUSE AT NEW UW PROPERTY NEAR WHEATLAND.

By *Jim C. Kearns*

University of Wyoming Media Relations

May 25, 2005

Nearly 70 people attended an open house May 24, 2005, at property in the Laramie Mountains that was recently bequeathed to the University of Wyoming.

“It was a very solid success. In addition to the UW folks, there were representatives from state and federal agencies, ranchers, and landowners,” says Jim Freeburn,¹ director of the UW Torrington Research and Extension Center.²

The 320-acre parcel is 25 miles northwest of Wheatland in an area known as Fletcher Park. It was bequeathed to UW in 2002 by Colonel William C. Rogers,³ a retired Army officer who lived in the Carmel, California, area at the time of his death in 2003.

A friend of the family, Levida Hileman⁴ of Casper, Wyoming, said Rogers purchased the Fletcher Park land in the 1960s. “He really enjoyed spending time up there. He had a definite love of wildlife and nature and wanting to preserve.”

Freeburn says of the property: “I was very pleasantly surprised to see that the U.S. Forest Service wants to do some cooperative work with us on range management, including prescribed fires.”

Also represented at the open house was the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD), which has designated the area as critical habitat for elk, deer, and bighorn sheep. Wild turkeys also inhabit the area.

“WGFD is interested in aspen regeneration research, and they want to be involved in the prescribed burning,” Freeburn said.

He noted that Steve Williams,⁵ a professor in the UW College of Agriculture’s⁶ Department of Renewable Resources,⁷ and Rik Smith,⁸ an assistant professor in the UW Department of Plant Sciences, are planning to research the nitrogen fixing capability of antelope bitterbrush,⁹ one of the important shrub species on the property.

1 Jim Freeburn, Torrington, Wyoming, is now the regional training coordinator for Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education’s Professional Development Program.

2 In 2003, the University of Wyoming Board of Trustees approved the sale of the Torrington and Archer research and extension centers, with proceeds to purchase land near Lingle, Wyoming, for the James C. Hageman Sustainable Agriculture Research and Extension Center (SAREC was dedicated in 2006).

3 The land would later become officially known as the Rogers Research Site (RRS) in memory of Colonel Rogers.

4 Levida Hileman is a retired school teacher. She and her husband, Brock, moved to Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, after retiring, but they relocated back to Wyoming in 2017, and are now living in Cheyenne. Levida and her daughter, Colleen Hogan, spent much time enjoying The Colonel’s property with Colonel Rogers and his guests.

5 Steve Williams, now professor emeritus, has been instrumental in early research at RRS. He was the lead author of RRS Bulletin 1 and will be the lead or co-author of at least three upcoming RRS bulletins. Steve also provided valuable input for this bulletin.

6 In 2009, the UW Board of Trustees approved renaming the college the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

7 In 2011, the UW trustees approved renaming the department the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management.

8 Rik Smith is now an associate professor at Columbia Basin College in Pasco, Washington.

9 The antelope bitterbrush study was just getting underway when the 2012 Arapaho Fire burned the majority of vegetation on nearly 100,000 acres in the Laramie Mountains, including the RRS property.



Instead of building a trophy home and outbuildings for himself and guests, multimillionaire Colonel William C. Rogers maintained the historic nature of the Triple R Ranch. The Colonel gave each cabin or outbuilding a name, such as The North House, The Sauna, The Original House, and The Ever House. The rustic structures were destroyed during the 2012 Arapaho Fire. Colonel Rogers willed his 320-acre ranch in the Laramie Mountains to the University of Wyoming in 2002, and he also bequeathed millions of dollars to causes that he believed in, from social justice and the arts to forestry research and the education of young people. (Photo by Colleen Hogan)