



U.S. SHEEP EXPERIMENT STATION (USSES)

In FY 2024 and beyond, Congress must preserve USSES to ensure that valuable livestock, rangeland and wildlife research efforts and an irreplaceable field laboratory are not lost forever. The station must be funded at \$4.141 million.

The 100-year-old research station has demonstrated an impact on all of agriculture, especially the nation's sheep industry. Its 48,000 acres of land provides a unique location and is exclusively positioned for collaborative large-scale integrated livestock, wildlife and rangeland research.

The USSES present state and strengths include:

- A large, high quality, intact, landscape-scale field laboratory;
- Historical and on-going high-quality research and long-term data;
- Significant potential for future research to benefit numerous wildlife species including those considered for listing under the Endangered Species Act;
- Location in rural areas and positive local economic impact;
- Veterinary medicine intern program nationally known and respected; and
- A model for production and management practices, including infectious diseases, for university extension and industry to utilize.

The USSES unique opportunities and needs for the future:

- An expanded mission, focus, landholdings and budget that tie into other western/national priorities like fire mitigation, climate change and interactive livestock/wildlife grazing and disease issues.

Over the past 6 years, collaboration with the U.S. Sheep Experiment Station has created and supported new research positions at: University of Idaho, Montana State University, University of Wyoming, the University of Nebraska, North Dakota State University, and Virginia Tech. This research also has an international educational impact.

- Science-based rangeland management solutions once flowed abundantly from the USSES rangeland research program. Many publications authored by former USSES scientists are currently used by USFS and BLM to propose long-term rangeland management strategies to restore sage grouse habitat, mitigate catastrophic wildfire risk and manage livestock grazing.
- Because USSES still maintains monitoring integrity of several of these former scientists' experiments there is opportunity long term follow-up evaluation. Use of this information in developing sound long-term management plans will be important in understanding and predicting the effects of climate change, accurately determining net carbon flux (release and sequestration) of livestock grazing, and solving livestock-wildlife conflict issues.

For more information, please visit the ASI website at www.sheepusa.org.
Please contact Jim Richards at jrichards@cgagroup.com or (202) 448-9509 for more information.



Appropriations Bill

Agriculture

Agency

Agricultural Research Service

Account

Salaries and Expenses

FY2024 Requested Amount

\$4.141 million

Description

ARS is the principal in house research agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Congress first authorized federally supported agricultural research in the Organic Act of 1862, which established what is now USDA. That statute directed the Commissioner of Agriculture “to acquire and preserve in his department all information he can obtain by means of books and correspondence, and by practical and scientific experiments.” The scope of USDA’s agricultural research programs has been expanded and extended more than 60 times since the Department was created.

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The mission of the USDA, ARS, Range Sheep Production Efficiency Research Unit, U.S. Sheep Experiment Station is to develop integrated methods for increasing production efficiency of sheep and to simultaneously improve the sustainability of rangeland ecosystems.

Proposed FY2024 Report Language

The Committee recognizes that the U.S. Sheep Experiment Station is a valuable asset for grazing lands and sheep industry genetic research, and the repository of over five decades of sage grouse research and data. The station is not only valuable for the domestic livestock industry, but also the Western region’s wildlife interface. The Committee provides an additional \$2 million for research in sheep health and grazing management to mitigate wildlife-conflict risk and urges ARS to continue engaging collaborators to ensure the station functions as an agricultural research facility while also evaluating opportunities through a domestic livestock / wildlife collaboration.

Authorization

The Agricultural Research Service (ARS) was established on November 2, 1953, pursuant to authority vested in the Secretary of Agriculture by 5 U.S.C. 301 and Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1953, and other authorities.

President’s FY 2024 Budget Request

TBD