

Seminar: **Restoration of Sagebrush Grasslands for Greater Sage Grouse Habitat**

Speaker: **Autumn Watkinson**, PhD Land Reclamation and Remediation  
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Date: **Friday Oct 2, 2020 3:00-4:00 pm**

### **Abstract**

Greater Sage-grouse are sagebrush obligates that require adequate sagebrush cover to support mating, nesting, brood-rearing, and winter survival. Anthropogenic activity has significantly reduced sagebrush occupancy and range, causing loss and degradation of grouse habitat and subsequent declines of grouse populations. Although sagebrush habitat restoration could facilitate population recovery, conventional methods have been ineffective. This research was conducted to improve sagebrush restoration by increasing the establishment, growth, and survival of individuals to increase landscape cover. Research was performed in Grasslands National Park (GNP), home to the last populations of grouse in Saskatchewan. Experiments focused on three areas critical to sagebrush restoration success: sagebrush distribution and ecology, effects of land management on conventional restoration methods, and improving container growth of sagebrush to increase outplanted seedling survival.

### **Bio**

Autumn Watkinson is a postdoctoral fellow in the Faculty of Land and Food Systems. She teaches soil reclamation and remediation in the MLWS program and conducts research on reclamation of anthropogenically disturbed ecosystems. She completed a PhD in Land Reclamation from the University of Alberta in June 2020. Autumn started conducting research in land reclamation in 2011 and has since been involved in a number of projects including Anthrosoil development for mine reclamation in boreal and tundra ecosystems; restoration of an industrially damaged watershed (Sudbury, ON), and habitat restoration for endangered prairie species.

