Restoration is the process by which we attempt to re-build habitat after it has been lost to agriculture, urbanization, or other forms of degradation. In grassland systems in particular we have lost significant amounts of native habitat to land conversion (e.g. less than 0.01% of native grassland exists in Iowa and Minnesota), thus we rely heavily on restoration projects to mitigate this loss. Unfortunately, restored grasslands tend to have less diversity than their remnant (or never-been-plowed) counterparts, and tend to lose this diversity through time. One source of this discrepancy in diversity could be from changes to natural seed rain and seed dispersal patterns. In my research, I attempt to understand how seed dispersal can be a source of diversity in plant systems. In my talk, I will explore two general topics. The first examines how herbivores can alter seed production and dispersal of populations of native plants and the consequences of these changes for native species invasions. The second examines how well plant species move between isolated grassland fragments, and what this means for landscape-level connectivity. I use both experimental and theoretical systems to explore both of these questions.

If you would like to visit with Dr. Lauren Sullivan, Please contact Dr. John Blair at jblair@ksu.edu.

Coffee & cookies served preceding the seminar in Ackert Hall, Room 225