

PROGRAM
SOUTHWEST TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION
RECREATIONAL LANDSCAPE CONFERENCE AND EXPO
Ruidoso Convention Center
111 Sierra Blanca Drive, Ruidoso, NM
OCTOBER 7-8, 2025

Education credits:

GCSAA members. points for Tuesday, and points for Wednesday

NMDA: CEUs

Tuesday, October 7th

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| 8:00 to 9:00 am | Registration, Badge pick-up |
| 9:00 to 9:15 am | Introduction (SWTA president) |
| 9:15 to 10:00 am | Welcome Administrators: Dr. Rolando Flores, Dean, Dr. Jon Boren, Associate Dean Dr. Jay Lillywhite, Associate Dean, College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences |
| 10:00 to 11:00 am | Extension & Research Update (Dr. Bernd Leinauer, NMSU) |
| 11: 00 to 12:00 am | <u>Keynote:</u> Big Ideas - innovative, new ideas for managing turfgrass ecosystems (Dr. Mike Richardson, University of Arkansas) |
| 12:00 to 12:45 pm | TRADE SHOW |
| 12:45 to 1:30 pm | LUNCH |
| 1:30 to 2:15 pm | Annual bluegrass control on golf courses and athletic fields – The latest and greatest (Dr. Jim Baird, UC Riverside) |
| 2:15 to 3:00 pm | United States Golf Association Research Update (Dr. Matteo Serena, USGA) |
| 3:00 to 3:30 pm | Break |
| 3:30 to 4:15 pm | New bermudagrasses for cool-season climates (Dr. Jim Baird, UC Riverside) |
| 4:15 to 5:00 pm | How much shade is too much shade? (Dr. Mike Richardson, University of Arkansas) |

Wednesday, October 8th

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| 8:00 to 8:45 am | Fighting flea beetles: Attempts at managing the mystery pest of the intermountain and desert southwest (Dr. Benjamin Mc. Graw, Penn State University) |
| 8:45 to 9:30 am | Fraise mowing and pest control (Dr. Mike Richardson, University of Arkansas) |
| 9:30 to 10:15 am | White grub and billbug management for New Mexico (Dr. Benjamin Mc. Graw, Penn State University) |
| 10:15 to 10:30 am | Break |
| 10:30 to 11:15 pm | Impacts of insecticides on pollinators and non-target Arthropods (Dr. Benjamin Mc. Graw, Penn State University) |
| 11:15 to 12:00 pm | New Mexico Carbon management efforts – Can golf courses help? (Dr. Rajan Ghimire, NMSU) |
| 12:30 to 1:00 pm | TRADE SHOW |
| 1:00 to 1:45 pm | LUNCH |
| 1:45 to 2:30 pm | General weed and bermudagrass control in cool-season turf Dr. Jim Baird |
| 2:30 to 3:15 pm | Insect Update – A Year in Review (Dr. Joanie King, NMSU) |
| 3:15 to 3:30 pm | BREAK |
| 3:30 to 4:15 pm | Principles of Organic Pesticides (Dr. Leslie Beck, NMSU) |
| 4:15 to 5:00 pm | Turfgrass Diseases – A Year in Review (Dr. Phillip Lujan, NMSU) |

Registration and Information: <http://southwestturfgrass.com/>

Bios:

Dr. Jim Baird

Dr. Baird has been the Turfgrass Specialist at the University of California, Riverside (UCR) since 2008. His primary responsibilities include conducting research and providing outreach for the California turfgrass industry. Jim was born and raised in Pueblo, Colorado. He received a B.S. in Landscape Horticulture in 1985 from Colorado State University, a M.S. in Agronomy & Soils in 1989 and a Ph.D. in Botany in 1993, both from Auburn University. Prior to UCR, Jim was an Assistant Professor of Turfgrass Research & Teaching at Oklahoma State and Michigan State Universities, and an Agronomist in the Northeast Region for the United States Golf Association Green Section.

Dr. Leslie Beck

Dr. Beck is the Extension Weed Specialist and Assistant Professor in the Department of Extension Plant Sciences of New Mexico State University. She is housed out of the main campus in Las Cruces. Dr. Beck has a Bachelor of Science in Horticulture and Landscape Architecture and a Master of Science in Agronomy from Tarleton State University; in both degrees she specialized in turfgrass and sports turf management. She earned her Ph.D. in Plant and Soil Science specializing in turfgrass management from Texas Tech University. Before coming to work for the New Mexico Cooperative Extension Service, Leslie had the opportunity to do some post-doctoral research work for Purdue University specializing in turfgrass weed management extension and research.

Dr. Beck's primary responsibilities include progressive statewide educational programming in weed science, including annual and perennial weed management, weed identification, and herbicide application for all cropping systems including agricultural commodities and turf and landscape areas. Her long-term extension and research goal is to help individuals and professionals across multiple plant science disciplines and backgrounds to develop accurate, applicable, and effective weed identification and management strategies to address issues throughout the state of New Mexico.

Dr. Rajan Ghimire

Dr. Ghimire is an associate professor and research director of the National Center for Carbon Management and Soil Health at New Mexico State University. He has developed a multidisciplinary applied research program on soil organic carbon sequestration, nutrient cycling, greenhouse gas emissions, and soil health assessment and management under diverse agricultural systems and management practices. Dr. Ghimire has published >125 refereed journal articles and book chapters, >175 non-refereed articles and meeting abstracts/proceedings, and delivered 21 invited talks and lectures. He has collaborated on numerous successful grant proposals and contracts, totaling over \$58 million in funding, of which more than \$5 million directly supports Ghimire's program. Dr. Ghimire is also involved in various regional, national, and international professional organizations, advisory councils, and editorial boards of journals. He is the 2025 Chair of the Soil and Water Conservation and Management Division of the Soil Science Society of America. Dr. Ghimire is the recipient of several awards, including the Mobly Family Endowed Distinguished Research Award (2024), the Outstanding Associate Editor of Agronomy Journal Award (2021), and the Emerging Scientist Award of the Western Society of Crop Science (2020). He holds a BS in Agriculture and an MS in Soil Science from Tribhuvan University, Nepal, a Ph.D. in Soil Science from the University of Wyoming, and a Postdoctoral Training from Oregon State University.

Dr. Joanie King

Dr. King is an assistant professor and Extension entomologist. She earned a Ph.D. in entomology from Texas A&M University, a M.Sc. in entomology from the University of Georgia, and a B.Sc. in biology from the University of Central Florida. Alongside her Extension and outreach focus, Dr. King's lab focuses on host-parasite interactions, community ecology, and integrated pest management (IPM). In addition to serving the NMSU community through Extension and research, she is active in the Entomological Society of America. Sharing bug science is cool!

Dr. Bernd Leinauer

Dr. Leinauer is a Regent's Professor and Extension Turfgrass Specialist in the Extension Plant Sciences Department at New Mexico State University. His extension and research program focuses on developing water management strategies aimed at reducing the amount of (potable) water used for irrigation. Dr. Leinauer has authored and co-authored a book, two book chapters, nearly 100 scientific peer reviewed research papers, and over 200 reports and abstracts. He was part of a group of NMSU researchers that received the United States Department of Agriculture's Outstanding Integrated Program Water Resources Team Award. In 2012, Dr. Leinauer received the College's Distinguished Research Award and in 2013 he was awarded New Mexico State University's Distinguished Career Award. In 2017 he was named Fellow of the American Society of Agronomy and in 2020 Fellow of the Crop Science Society of America. In 2018 he received New Mexico State University's Regents Professorship, and in 2023 the Crop Science's Society of America Fred V. Grau Turfgrass Research Award.

Dr. Phillip Lujan

Dr. Lujan is assistant professor and Extension Plant Pathologist in the Extension Plant Sciences Department. He received his Ph.D. in Plant and Environmental Science with a focus on Plant Pathology at NMSU. His research focused on the use of pecan byproducts on chile peppers for improved soilborne disease management. Prior to his Ph.D., he was a research technician in the plant pathology and mycology program at NMSU where he gained valuable experience working with local growers helping them to manage their disease problems.

Dr. Ben McGraw

Dr. McGraw is an associate professor of Turfgrass Science and Program Coordinator of online and residential turfgrass academic programs at Penn State University. Ben specializes in insect and earthworm pest management. He obtained a Bachelors of Science from the University of Maine, his Master of Science degree in Entomology from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and a doctorate in Entomology from Rutgers University. Dr. McGraw's appointment at Penn State includes teaching, research, and extension. His research program focuses on understanding pest ecology and behavior to develop sustainable management practices.

Dr. Mike Richardson

Dr. Richardson is a professor in the Department of Horticulture at the University of Arkansas, where his research has focused on cultural practices that impact cool- and warm-season turfgrass production in the transition zone. In addition, he has been actively involved with research to screen and develop new turfgrass for a wide range of turfgrass environments. Dr. Richardson has received numerous awards for his research, including being named a Fellow in both the American Society of Agronomy and the Crop Science Society of America and he was recently awarded the Fred V. Grau Turfgrass Science Award, which is presented in recognition of significant career contributions in turfgrass science. Dr. Richardson has served

as the Editor of Applied Turfgrass Science and an Associate Editor of Crop Science. Dr. Richardson is an active teacher and advisor in the Department of Horticulture and is the primary instructor for Introduction to Turfgrass Management, Golf and Sports Turf Management, and Golf Course Operations. Dr. Richardson has authored over 100 scientific articles on turfgrass management, published 10 book chapters, and delivered over 200 invited lectures on various aspects of turfgrass management around the world.

Dr. Matteo Serena

Dr. Serena joined the United States Golf Association in 2022. As Senior Manager of Irrigation Research and Services he is part of the Green Section research team. Dr. Serena works with superintendents, researchers, allied golf associations, and other stakeholders to advance water conservation on golf courses. Matteo has over two decades of experience researching turfgrass irrigation and water conservation. He received his Bachelor's and Master of Science degrees from the University of Padua in Italy and earned his doctorate in Plant and Environmental Sciences from New Mexico State University. Before joining the USGA, Matteo , worked as a research assistant professor at NMSU and at the University of California Riverside. He currently resides near Los Angeles.