ROaR! is a recognized student organization at the University of Wyoming and a student chapter of the American Society of Mining and Reclamation (ASMR). We provide a venue in which undergraduate and graduate students with an interest in reclamation and restoration of disturbed lands can assist local organizations on projects while gaining skills for success in their future careers and networking with others in the field. We are currently in our second year as an ASMR student chapter and continue to remain busy with local projects and meetings. Please visit our website at uwyo.edu/roar for more information.

Service Project in Cactus Canyon

ROaR has an ongoing project on a piece of state land just east of Laramie. The property is called Cactus Canyon. Member Matt Allshouse arranged for ROaR to work on closing off roads that are designated for non-motorized vehicles but currently see use by ATVs and other motor vehicles. In September, we put up signs and cleaned up several truck loads of refuse in that area. The objective of this project is to reclaim some of the two-track trails, to decrease erosion and soil compaction, and to increase plant diversity.

Service Project with Laramie Rivers Conservation District and Other Projects

Our second project this semester involved working with the Laramie Rivers Conservation District (LRCD) on the Laramie River reclamation project. This project entails stream bank stabilization and aquatic habitat restoration along the Greenbelt area in town. ROaR focused on prepping willows for large-scale plantings along the river. Finally, this winter we are planning on starting an annual scholarship to help a student at UW attend an academic conference or other event dealing with reclamation issues. We are also interested in planning a new local reclamation project this for this upcoming spring and summer.

LRCD member Tony Hoch and ROaR member Lisa Cox participated in Willow trimmings this fall.

ROaR members Megan Taylor, Amber Mason, Kyle Lilly, Aspen, and Matt Allshouse helped collect refuse in Cactus Canyon near Laramie.
Cally Driessen Completes Master's Degree in Reclamation

Cally Driessen collects soil samples for her Master’s project.

Former ROaR member Cally Driessen, recently finished her M.S. in soil science with a graduate certificate in land reclamation in the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management at UW. She is the first student in Dr. Jay Norton’s lab to complete a graduate degree working on a reclamation project. Cally is currently employed by K.C. Harvey Environmental Services and is working on land reclamation projects in the gas fields of Wyoming and Montana. She is living in Bozeman, MT with her husband Luke.

ROaR Members Work with BP to ID Effective Reclamation Practices

Two ROaR members are compiling and sifting through a database from BP of more than 1,000 gas well pads to glean the best restoration and reclamation practices in Wyoming’s natural gas fields for their graduate projects.

Benjamin Wolff and Michael Curran, working with the Wyoming Restoration and Reclamation Center (WRRC) and BP, are collaborating with Conservation Seeding and Restoration (CSR), a reclamation contractor for BP, to identify effective and timely reclamation practices.

Gary Austin, BP America’s regional regulatory adviser, and CSR restoration ecologist Steve Paulsen, who have worked together on gasfield reclamation in western Wyoming for several years, initiated the project. They met with Steve Williams, a professor in the Department of Renewable Resources, who works with the WRRC, Wolff, and Curran.

"I think they could see how much benefit could come from this kind of research - advancing the state of land reclamation in the cold, high deserts of Wyoming, not only for BP and CSR, who will certainly benefit, but for the whole industry and state of Wyoming," said Wolff of Laramie, who took on the project for his thesis.

The database could help identify trends that lead to successful reclamation of sites disturbed by oil and gas drilling, said Curran of Manasquan, N.J., who will also develop his thesis from the project.