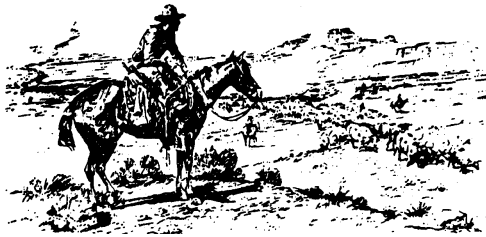


RANGELAND

NEWS



TO FOSTER ADVANCEMENT IN THE
SCIENCE AND ART OF RANGELAND
MANAGEMENT

NEVADA SECTION – SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT

JANUARY 2010

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(see map on last page for zones)

RANGE MANAGERS OF THE YEAR: STAN AND JAN HUNEWILL

PRESIDENT’S PONDERERS

What a summer! Who would have thought a mere nine months ago that we would experience such a fantastic growing season. Everyone in this part of the country that knows something of local history and climatic conditions say the same thing-- last year was one of if not the best growing season they have ever seen. It seems that the conditions were very favorable to grasses. Grass hay tonnage in Diamond Valley and surrounding areas was very high, five ton per acre on first cutting being common. Timely moisture and favorable temperatures coupled with some cyclic phenomena that only God could explain made for perfect growing conditions and unbelievable forage production.

The same can be said of rangeland conditions—unbelievable. I have never seen range cattle in better body condition. I was fortunate to observe the grazing behavior of cattle being moved to the high country, things I haven’t seen in a long time. If I never see happy cows again, I saw them last summer. They were like kids in a candy store, biting one plant and then another, seemingly befuddled at the abundance and diversity of forage that Mother Nature had provided. I think I may have seen a slight spike in the overall death rate because of this. Bloat and poison being likely causes. Additionally, I saw cattle grazing previous year’s forage high on the south slopes where one usually doesn’t see cattle during late spring and early summer. I can only surmise that the current year’s forage was so lush and full of moisture that the cows needed last year’s forage to fulfill their

requirements for dry matter. I tell my kids to remember things like this. We don't see them very often in Nevada.

I believe that it is events like this that provide for the optimism in an industry where there should be none at all. Low cattle prices and high production costs plague the range livestock industry year in and year out. Drought is more common than not. One year like this one, however, gives hope that better times are just around the corner.

One downside to years like this one is the amount of residual forage remaining on the landscape. A hot, dry summer in the near future could rekindle a dangerous fire situation. On the bright side, perhaps cooler summers are in our future. It's kind of nice to experience the type of seasons I remember as a kid—snowy winters, wet springs and pleasant summers.

Is it "climate change"? Perhaps—climates have been changing on earth since time began. Is it man caused? I doubt it. There is nothing scientific about my thoughts, just a belief that man's presence on this planet is not as significant as some would have us believe. I'm always fascinated by the analogy of placing the existence of the earth, from the beginning of time to the present, on a time line of one year from January 1 to December 31. If this is done, the dinosaurs appeared on Christmas Day. Man shows up at two minutes before midnight on New Year's Eve. Actually, it's more humbling than fascinating.

We had a very productive and informative winter meeting. It was great to see everyone who attended. Participation is the key to a vibrant organization. I hope we can all continue to be involved and that we encourage others to do the same. I look forward to seeing everyone in Denver in February. I hope the holidays were good for all and I wish everyone a happy and prosperous New Year. Thanks!

Ken Conley

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!

Steve Foster, UNCE, Lovelock, fosters@unce.unr.edu

Dr. Angela Evenden, National Park Service, Reno, angela_evenden@nps.gov

Casey D. Johnson, USDI-BLM, Winnemucca, caseydjohnson@hotmail.com

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Dr. Teshome M. Shenkoru, UNR, Reno, tshenkoru@yahoo.com

Erin Smith, UNR, Reno, smithe44@unr.nevada.edu

Nevada Section membership stands at 184. Welcome to our new members!

AWARDS

Section awards were presented by Cub Wolfe at the Winter Meeting in Reno in December. He first acknowledged the **Range Camp Trailboss** winner who was present with his family. Alex Werbeckes, whose name you will notice above in the new member list, is from Reno and has volunteered for Safari Club International and Weatherby Foundation activities, loves to hunt and fish, helped NDOW with sagebrush planting and plays football and runs track. Alex will participate in the High School

Youth Forum in Denver. The Range Camp Trailboss runner-up was Austin Piper who we are also sending to the HSYF in Denver. Alex and Austin will submit an article on Range Camp for our *The Progressive Rancher* project in March.

The **Range Manager of the Year** went to producers and long term Section members Stan and Jan Hunewill of the Hunewill Ranch at Bridgeport, CA and Smith Valley, NV. The award was accepted by his son Jeff Hunewill who was present with his wife, Denise, and their children Lesley and Blair. Blair had presented at the GLCI Conference that day. Jeff related the history of the ranch. It was started by Napoleon Bonaparte Hunewill, a prospector in the California gold rush who became a logger to supply the mines at Bodie, cutting Jeffrey Pine in Buckeye Canyon. He needed oxen to haul the timber so he became a rancher. When the railroad came in he quit mining and started ranching at Bridgeport, putting ranches together as time went on until the family now has 3500 private acres at Bridgeport of cool season range with 1000 acres of timber from the Napoleon Bonaparte era and three USFS permits. It is hard to run cows at Bridgeport in the winter so they move them by road down to their 1500 acres at Smith Valley in November and calve there. Harris Ranch Beef Company buys all their calves; they raise Red Angus. Jeff's grandmother started the guest ranch business in the 1930's to get them through the Depression. She moved out of her house for the guests to use. Now they run it four months of the year with Benny Romero educating the 45-55 people that come each time. Ag Tourism works for them but it is not easy, it takes the rest of the year to recover!

When Paul Tueller was presented with the fifth **NV Rangeland Management Sustained Achievement** award he remarked, "If you are around long enough and still walking, you get one of these." Jake Tibbitts of Eureka County was presented with the **Young Range Professional** award, sponsored by Ken Conley. Ken received the **President's Plaque** and thanked all that had helped him. He recognized the help of the UNR Range Club.

Cub presented the **NV Rangeland Professional of the Year** to Rick Orr; Rick stated it has been the Section that supported him and pushed him to be what he is today, that it was not what he learned in school but working with the rangelands and people on the issues in Nevada that taught him. He dedicated his life to sound resource management on the ground and thanked all saying, "you don't know what this means to me."

A **Great Basin** award went to Carol Evans for her riparian work in Elko County with BLM. She went to UNR with Cub, graduating in wildlife biology, and has a phenomenal track record diligently working with ranchers on riparian issues, maintaining what is good for the rancher is good for the landscape and visa versa. Kent McAdoo said she is flexible and dedicated and has filled the gap between the ranching community and PFC work. She was nominated by Gerry Miller and Nevada has lost a great resource as she recently moved to Baker City, OR with USFS.

ELECTIONS

Past President Duane Coombs has provided a slate of candidates for President Elect and Zone Council in Zones I, III, and IV. Voting will be held by email, please send your vote to Maggie at sideoatsg@yahoo.com.

President: **Kevin Piper**

Kevin L. Piper is the Assistant Director, Nevada Agricultural Experiment Station, hired November 2005 to oversee and work with field station staff to manage agricultural production and research projects at five NAES field stations; the Valley Road Property and Main Station Farm (Reno), S bar S Ranch (Wadsworth), J Dow Wetlands Property (Doyle, CA) and the Gund Ranch (Grass Valley). Kevin was the District Manager for the Dayton Valley Conservation District for 11 years and spent six

years as the Ranch Supervisor for the Swanton Pacific Ranch owned and operated by California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. He received an M.S. and B.S. from San Luis Obispo.

Kevin has a variety of interests and hobbies: Dutch Oven Cooking, IDOS Nevada Curlew Chapter, draft horses, Chairman of the Dayton Valley Conservation District (current), NV Section of SRM, Forestry and Range Management, and supporting my son's many interests.
(Range Camp Trailboss Runner-up is Kevin's son, Austin)

Zone I: **Ryan Shane**

As elections approach for the Zone Councilman, I re-evaluate my desire to serve in this capacity as I have for the past two years. I do so by understanding my value to all levels of SRM; Zone, Section, and National. My original commitment to the members was to "seek to provide meaningful coordination, communication, and other services to the Zone I membership". One example of meeting this commitment is the provisioning of monthly or semi-monthly e-mail updates to all Zone 1 members, other Zone Councils, and Section Officers with pertinent event information and dates, publications, and employment opportunities. In addition, I assisted the Section in bringing some of the most important topics to Nevada's rangelands into the national spotlight through National CPED program conferences. In short, I can say that I have and will continue to pursue the application of SRM cornerstones (i.e. a group of well-trained, highly motivated, professional, users and stewards of productive and sustainable rangelands) for Zone and Section members in the Zone 1 Council position. If elected again, I would maintain this level of service to the members at a minimum, as well as identify and implement any improvements that would help make SRM better. Your suggestions, ideas, and proposals for improvement are always welcome. As always, it would be an honor to serve those whom contribute to and enjoy the benefits of our great society.

Zone III: **BJ Raymond**

My name is BJ Raymond. By way of an introduction, I began my Forest Service career on the Carson Ranger District, Toiyabe National Forest, Nevada, in 1975. I fought fire when a lightning strike was a big deal, helped around the campgrounds near Markleeville, California and shod, and rode horses and mules for 10 summers as a backcountry ranger in the Carson-Iceberg Wilderness. I graduated from the University of Nevada, Reno with the help of the SRM Fleming-Robertson scholarship. I had the good fortune to expand my rangelands education by working in Austin, Nevada. In 1992, I moved to Adin, California, which is located in the Modoc physiographic province, where I have my home. I am employed as a range conservationist with the Modoc National Forest. I look forward to the opportunity to represent you on the Zone Council with the SRM Nevada Section and learn about your interests and priorities. Thank you for your consideration.

Zone IV: **Ann Bollinger**

I was born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri. I spent the majority of my time in the city, but experienced some time on the family farms in Missouri and Iowa. I received my B.S. in Parks, Recreation and Tourism from the University of Missouri, Columbia. After graduation, I moved to Vail, Colorado where I lived, worked, and played during the winter seasons and traveled during the summer. After a few years, I began seasonal employment with the U.S. Forest Service, primarily working on restoration projects. In 2001, I moved to northern Nevada and worked one year as an Americorps volunteer. After a few more jobs, I realized the need to receive a Masters Degree and entered the Animal Science program at UNR, with an interest in rangeland ecology and management. During my career as a graduate student, I spent two summers in Humboldt County, Nevada researching trends in vegetation recovery after wildfire. While attending UNR, I participated in the SRM student chapter and coached undergraduate students for the Plant ID contest. Today, I'm employed as the first Natural Resource Specialist for the City of Carson City in the Open Space Program. I was hired during the first year that sheep were used for fuels reduction project along the wildland-urban interface and have managed the

project for the past three years. In addition to fuels treatments, I coordinate weed control, revegetation, and other resource-related projects. My personal interests include camping, hiking, running, and snow-sports; and I volunteer with the Washoe County CERT (Citizens Emergency Response Team) and as a pacer/mentor with a local running group.

TREASURER

Many thanks to Erica Freese of Reno for assuming the duties of treasurer for the Section when Denise Adkins moved to Idaho. Great thanks and kudos to Brad Schultz for his outstanding 10 years of service to the Nevada Section as treasurer and source of good ideas.

RANGE CAMP by Austin Piper

Not Your Run-of-The-Mill Camp

Nevada Youth Range Camp gives high school youth knowledge about plants, wildlife, water, and rangeland management. The camp assigns kids a resource problem and has them find a management plan so multiple groups of people can use the land evenly. This week long camp gives kids the perspective to understand rangeland resources.

The Nevada Section of the Society for Range Management sponsors range camp with additional assistance provided by US Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife, Cooperative Extension, BLM, UNR, and Great Basin Community College.

I personally enjoy range camp for the knowledge and opportunity it has given me these past two summers in learning about Nevada rangelands and plants, which I hope to pursue after high school. Two friends of mine that both attended this year told me what they enjoyed about range camp and why they went. Alex Werbeckes of Reno, Nevada quoted, "I went to learn about what I want to be when I grow up." Domenic Ricci of Dayton, Nevada quoted, "I wanted to learn more about Nevada's rangelands and I enjoyed the Dutch oven cooking!"

Nevada Youth Range Camp is held every year at the Big Creek Campground South of Austin, Nevada. Campers stay in tents, experience the outdoors and some great food! The kind of country range camp is held in is located right near Big Creek, a stream located just at the mouth of the Canyon. The terrain by the campground is steep and rocky. The mountain steppe goes from grasses and sagebrush to a mix of juniper and pinyon.

The best thing I learned since I started attending range camp is the variety of plants found in and around the Big Creek Campground area. There are fifty different plants on the list that campers learn about during the week at camp, but there are far many more plants still to be learned on the rangeland.

I highly recommend high school youth from ages 14-18 attending range camp to experience living in a tent for a week in Nevada's back yard enjoying some of the greatest Dutch oven cook' in you'll ever have!

2009 SUMMER MEETING AT UPPER CLOVER RANCH

by Brittney Askew and Erin Hourihan

The Nevada section 2009 summer meeting found us at the Upper Clover Ranch. This high desert outfit is owned by Barrick mines and runs Country National Beef Cattle. The ranch consists of 366,000 acres and runs about 5,300 yearlings with 650 mother cows. Barrick uses their position with this ranch to better understand what the Great Basin ecosystem has to offer, with a management approach primarily based in monitoring.

Much of the native vegetation community has been devastated by reoccurring fire in recent years. This has required ranch managers to avoid areas until the desired plant communities recover. Consequently the operation is not fully stocked. With properly timed and intensity of grazing they have

been able to gradually increase the stocking rate over the last three years. In addition to the challenges presented by wildfires, there are also about 1,500 feral horses to contend with; this is more than four times the number of horses supposed to be in this HMA.

The first stop on the field tour was along Willow Creek. This site illustrated how mismanagement in the past can be corrected by resting an area. Stream surveys in the late 70's and early 80's have provided evidence this area was in need of restoration. The restoration goals were achieved through a three phase approach that included rest until the desired functioning plant communities re-established, a second phase that incorporated the goals of Trout Unlimited, and a current management approach of rest rotation with grazing every other year. The integrated management approach includes managing for sagebrush habitat. Starting in 2002, in cooperation with the Nevada Department of Wildlife, sage grouse leks have been counted. Severe fires in '05 and '06 negatively affected lek populations that were previously doing well. Currently the collaring program indicates that populations are recovering three years post fire.

The last stop along the field tour compared the vegetation composition of two sites that burned a different number of times. Both sites had been reseeded, however, vegetation is establishing better on the site with a lower disturbance frequency. The annual invasive grass that dominates after a site is burned multiple times increases competition against the desired native perennials decreasing the forage value of the site. Therefore it is desirable to manipulate grazing practices with the goal of decreasing annuals and overall fuel loads.

A wonderful Dutch oven dinner concluded the field day activities. Saturday the business portion of the meeting was conducted, and with that the 2009 summer meeting was concluded.

Learning on the Land: Ecologically-Based Invasive Plant Management (EBIPM) Field School By Brenda Smith

What is the EBIPM Field School?

For those of us who make our living from managing rangelands, it's simple common sense to have trainings that can improve management to take place out on the land. Classroom time is certainly relevant but when it comes to invasive plant management, the value of getting out and seeing how to apply theory is immeasurable. The Circle Bar Ranch in Mitchell, OR was the setting for this 2 day training September 16-17, 2009. Almost 70 ranchers, resource managers and scientists gathered for a unique 'hands-on' curriculum in ecologically-based invasive plant management. The goal of this field school (and future field schools planned for 2010) is to give managers the necessary tools to implement the EBIPM decision model through developing strategies for managing ecosystems for reducing invasive grass dominance, repair ecosystem processes and prevent reinvasion.

Just what is EBIPM?

EBIPM is a decision model that land managers can implement to improve rangeland, especially lands that are being invaded by invasive species. The framework is helpful in providing managers with the knowledge, tools and strategies to repair the underlying problems that cause invasive species infestations. Through a step by step method EBIPM, links natural ecological principles to management. This offers managers the opportunity to implement a truly effective invasive plant management program. The EBIPM framework is a way to implement science based solutions for the invasive plant infestations that continue to plague western rangelands.

What Do We Do at a Field School?

The Circle Bar Ranch was the perfect setting for such an event. Ben and Barbara McGough, owners of the ranch, have been working with Roger Sheley, rangeland ecologist with USDA-ARS in Burns, OR on heavy infestations of medusahead throughout the ranch property the last 5 years using the EBIPM decision model. The results have been positive and attendees of the field school were able to see successful restoration efforts. Field presentations were made by Chad Boyd, Ed Vasquez, Jeremy James, Tony Svejcar and Roger Sheley, all scientists with the USDA, ARS at the Eastern Oregon Agricultural Research Center in Burns, OR and Tom Monaco and Lesley Morris, with USDA, ARS in Logan, Utah. Presentations were held in various sites throughout the ranch. Field exercises

were utilized to demonstrate how to use the EBIPM model to disentangle the complex nature of invasive species infestations, assessing the land to identify the ecological processes in disrepair, understanding the 3 causes of succession –1. site availability, 2. species availability and 3. species performance. At the end of the field school, teams worked on a specific management plan, going through each step of the EBIPM model and finally presenting their plan to the other teams.

EBIPM can elevate land management beyond what many of us have seen with range management over the years, which sometimes can be summed up by this quote: ‘the true definition of insanity is when you keep doing the same thing over and over again and expect a different result’. Finally, EBIPM can help managers make sane decisions to get positive results on the rangeland.

Are you interested in finding out more about EBIPM?

The Circle Bar Field School was presented as a part of the Area-wide Project for Invasive Annual Grasses. The good news is that more trainings and workshops in all these areas are being scheduled in 2010. The field school will be in Boise, ID the week of Sept. 13-17, 2010. Additionally, EBIPM field days will be held in Elko, NV, Adin, CA and Logan, and Park Valley, UT. To find out the latest information on the all the happenings with invasive grasses and ecologically-based invasive plant management and how you can start using this model to help your management challenges go to www.ebipm.org.

2009 CONFERENCE ON WILD & FERAL HORSE & BURRO MANAGEMENT AND POLICY

Ongoing information available at: <http://www.rangelands.org/index.shtml> under CPED.

GREAT BASIN COLLEGE AGGIES

The GBC Aggies club has elected their new officers for the 2009-2010 school year. They are Seth Vesco - president, Marissa Dolfin - Vice President, Hayle Bufford - Secretary, Jacklyn Burchard - Treasurer, and Mireya Montero - Social Chair. The Aggies are cooking lunch for approximately 70 FFA students, advisors, and volunteers at the state FFA soils and range career development event outside Elko, NV on Tuesday Sept. 29th. This is a great opportunity for the club to get the word out about the natural resource classes offered at GBC. The Aggies are also planning to attend the Nevada Cattlemen's Convention in Reno in November.

(Editor's Note: I recognize Jacklyn Burchard and Mireya Montero as Range Camp graduates!)

High School Students Judge Soils and Range in Starr Valley By James Gatzke

This year the Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapters of Nevada met in Elko County to judge soils and range. The FFA Soils and Range Career Development Event started at Great Basin College in Elko and then the students traveled east to the Howell Ranch in Starr Valley. There the students in soil judging had the opportunity to evaluate some very old soils by Nevada standards. All four soil profiles had clay subsurface horizons with great examples of prismatic structure. Meanwhile the students in range judging evaluated a low sagebrush site, a narrow riparian area, and a loamy site with robust bluebunch wheatgrass and not a blade of cheatgrass. I didn't know that there were loamy sites in Elko County without cheatgrass.

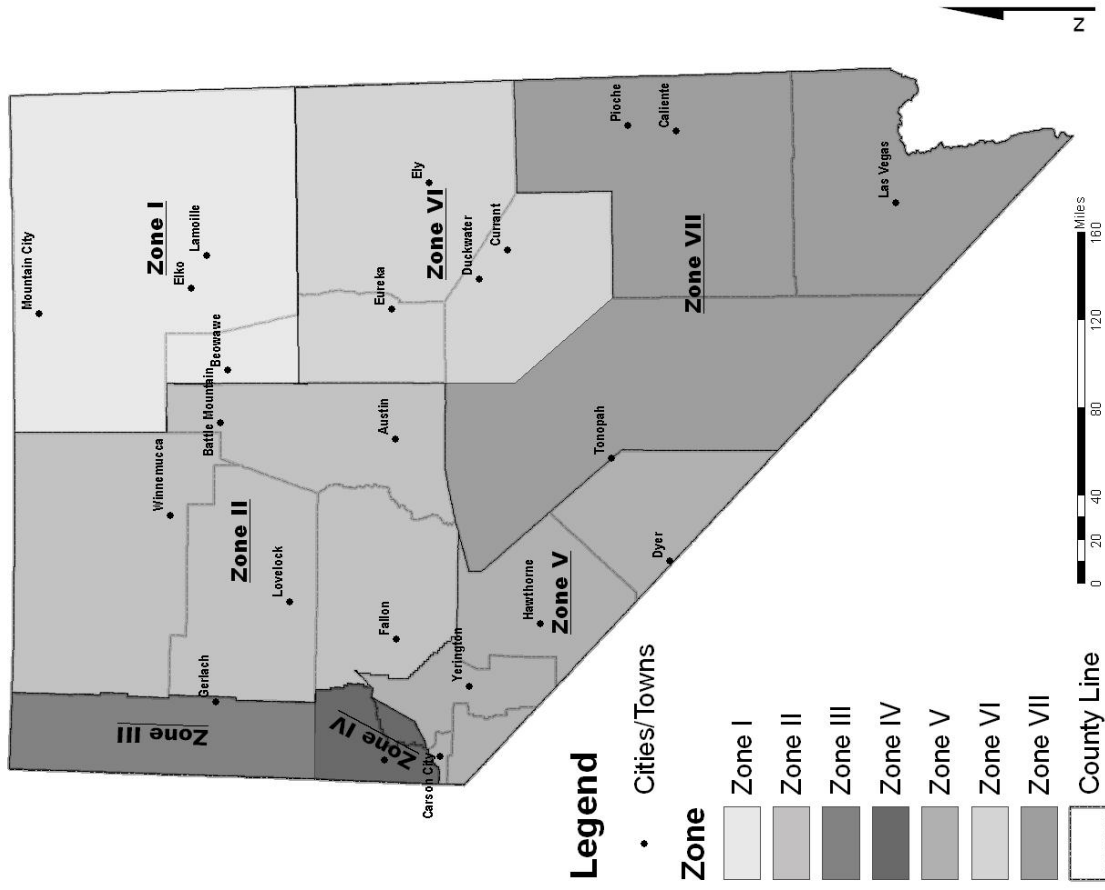
Awards were presented to the top individuals and top chapters in soils and range. The top individuals in range were 1st Myles Nance, 2nd Katy West, and 3rd Shannon Walker, all from Wells. The top chapters in range were 1st Wells and a distant 2nd Lincoln County.

REMEMBER TO VOTE!

ABOUT 2014 TOO!

SEE YOU IN DENVER!

Nevada SRM Section Zones



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