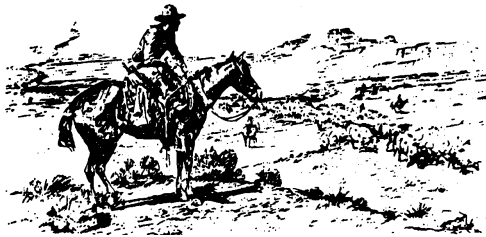


# RANGELAND

# NEWS



TO FOSTER ADVANCEMENT IN THE  
SCIENCE AND ART OF RANGELAND  
MANAGEMENT

NEVADA SECTION – SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT

March 2009

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(see map on last page for zones)

## SUMMER MEETING JUNE 12-13 AT UPPER CLOVER RANCH IN ELKO COUNTY

See article on page 3

Editor's note: Many thanks to Nancy Ballard for the new and improved look to the newsletter banner. Please let me know what you think and if there are any problems opening or viewing the document.

## PRESIDENT'S PONDERERS

I thoroughly enjoyed being in Albuquerque last month at the annual meeting, learning about the local culture and hearing about problems facing producers. No matter where you go in the west, the problems are the same—increasing federal regulation of public land, infringement on private property rights, water rights, and endangered species to name a few. When it's all said and done, it's good to get back to Nevada where we can face these things firsthand. I will say in all seriousness that visiting various other places in the U.S. really makes me appreciate the sagebrush state. There truly is no place like home.

The Producers' Forum, as always, was very informative. To me it is the most important forum of the entire national meeting. I was extremely impressed by all of the speakers at the Forum and the content of their presentations. I was especially impressed with one individual—Virgil Trujillo. He related the traditions of his people and their stockmanship on rangelands now administered by federal

agencies. Without the use of a slide presentation or a prop of any kind, he stood in front of a fairly large group of people and gave a tremendous presentation. He explained the many aspects of the operation and presented some of the obstacles they are attempting to overcome. The one that stood out the most to me was his attempt to encourage the young people of their culture to take ownership in the livestock enterprise, to take stock in the future so that the tradition would continue for future generations. I gathered that the success of these efforts, while he is experiencing some, was less than encouraging. He stressed the importance of continuing this effort so it would not be lost for posterity. This problem is not confined to any one culture or geographic location, it is nationwide.

I was watching an Ag show the other night where two individuals received awards for being outstanding young "agriculturalists." They appeared to be my age at least. It has been quite awhile since I considered myself young and this is a sad testament to the future of production agriculture. Our young people are losing the desire to become involved in the production sector because the regulations are so cumbersome, the hurdles are so high, and the opportunity for failure is so great. The constraints imposed by society, especially in the field of natural resource use, are strangling our efforts to maintain sustainability both now and for future generations. Whether it is an endangered smelt in California, a bighorn sheep herd in Idaho, a wolf in Montana, or a pygmy rabbit in Nevada, we are systematically slapping the hand that feeds us.

I mention this because I was very disappointed in the amount of time allotted to the Producers' Forum. In five days of presentations and meetings, one-half day was committed to this topic. This may be due to other factors and I do not intend to pass judgment, nor do I intend to diminish the importance that sound science has in promoting the continuation of production agriculture. I have a tendency to see fires where there are none and I hope that is the case here. I sincerely hope that the importance of production in land management is never diminished within the Society and that it continues to be a driving force in the success of the annual meeting. We need to listen to and recognize those who, through good stewardship, make their living from the land-- no matter how long it takes.

Ken Conley

## **WELCOME, NEW MEMBER!**

**Eric Eldredge**, PMC manager, USDA-NRCS, [eric.eldredge@nv.usda.gov](mailto:eric.eldredge@nv.usda.gov)

All members: please make sure to keep your membership and contact information current with the national office! Thanks. It makes a huge difference to the operation of your organization.

## **CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2008 AWARD WINNERS!**

Cub Wolfe presented awards at the winter meeting. **Duane Coombs** received the **President's Acknowledgment**, **Tracy Jean Wolfe** the **NV Rangeland Professional of the Year**, **Rex Cleary** the **NV Rangeland Management Sustained Achievement**, and **Chris Freeman** the **Great Basin Award** for "more than two decades of superb teaching and outstanding service for the Nevada Youth Range Camp." **Todd and Laurie Swickard** were the 2008 **NV Rangeland Managers of the Year**. Todd and Laurie's family came to the Santa Clara Valley in CA in the 1850's; they moved to the 5Dot Ranch by Susanville in 1959, still running in CA and NV on their ground and BLM and USFS permits. They run a branded beef operation, marketing in Napa and the Bay area, with the goal of passing the ranch on to their kids even better than it is now. Todd thanked SRM for the work it does for sustainable rangelands and the passionate federal employees they work with in NRCS, BLM, and USFS.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO RANGE MANAGEMENT.**

## SUMMER MEETING 2009

President Elect Ken Visser, with help from Sherm Swanson and Gary McCuin, is arranging what is shaping up to be a “can’t–miss opportunity” for the summer tour. Gregg Simonds (<http://www.openrangeconsulting.com/personnel.php>) has invited us to the Upper Clover Ranch in western Elko County to look at their recent work.

Barrick Goldstrike Mining owns the group of ranches collectively known as the Squaw Valley Ranch. Gregg and his crew are leasing/managing the property and have made significant changes in the operation. This property was previously owned and operated by Ellison Ranches and was managed as a traditional NV buckaroo operation. Some of the management changes include, construction of dikes and diversions for irrigation and water birds/fowl; implementation of a watershed monitoring and comparison study; completing allotment evaluations and renewals, evaluating fire effects recovery and mitigation, riparian recovery; studying grazing effects on length of green period; initiating cheatgrass suppression and integration of meadow grazing; managing to increase sage grouse populations through changing and monitoring habitat use and effects of fires, and using low level flights for PFC assessments. Other possible speakers include Gary Sundseth, Rich Temoke, Jesse Baatz, Eric Sant, Ken Gray, Brian Elmore, and Carol Evans. Craig Mackinnon from the national BLM office has been invited. Craig has been working on BLM’s new assessment method utilizing remote sensing. It has followed a separate but closely related path to the work that has been accomplished on the Squaw Valley property. This is all cutting edge stuff in the GIS and remote sensing world.

We will likely end the tour at Willow Creek Reservoir to discuss riparian grazing, variable recovery from concentrated use as well as the challenge of putting the whole management puzzle together on a public lands ranch with standards and guidelines, and more. At the end of the day we will return to the Upper Clover Ranch for a Curlew Chapter DOG (Dutch oven Gathering).

In keeping with tradition, the Range Club will have a beverage wagon available for the tour and dinner.

The tour will run all day Friday June 12, 2009 beginning at the Upper Clover Ranch. Anyone is invited to arrive Thursday night and camp at the Upper Clover Ranch. Two or three rooms are available in the house at this location for our older non-campers; as well bathrooms, shade trees, wood for a camp fire, and limited cooking facilities in the house. Bring a dish for a potluck Thursday evening and join the group for lively discussions about rangelands, SRM and the new Curlew Chapter affiliation. Gary is organizing a DOG for the Friday evening meal. Breakfast will be served Friday morning and Gregg’s wife has some ancient sourdough passed down through the family she would like to use to make pancakes. We may have the Range Camp Sonoma kitchen which has been totally renovated available for use and perusal by the Section. The business meeting will be held on Saturday morning, June 13.

There are some rooms available a few miles away at the Midas Saloon and Dinner House (<http://midassaloon.com/services>). They are closed until May but the website lists a number at 775 529-0203. Gregg cautioned that reservations should be made early. He doesn’t have a problem if people bring dogs, but we want to be good guests so please keep them tied up or under control so we don’t cause a wreak. Other information on Midas can be found at <http://www.ghostowns.com/states/nv/midas.html>.

A map to the Upper Clover Ranch, a separate part of the Squaw Valley Ranch is located as a companion document on the website with this newsletter. Registration costs and final information in the next newsletter! **Please register early so that we can get a head count for meal planning!!!** Also note that this is a remote site so be sure that if there is anything you absolutely cannot live without bring it along, it is a long way from town. The Idaho Section has been invited and it should be a very informative and fun time so mark your calendars now!

## WINTER MEETING 2008

Minutes of the December 2008 meeting at <http://www.ag.unr.edu/nsrm/Minutes.html>

See Companion Document for the discussion points on PR for SRM / Range Management we discussed prior to the business meeting at <http://www.ag.unr.edu/nsrm/newsletter.html>

### ALBUQUERQUE IMPRESSIONS

~ Sherm Swanson:

Kent's paper was standing room only and very intriguing.

There was much excitement about rotation grazing and its many important utilities including help with distribution and strategies for riparian improvement (even if the research provides only weak support for increased plant and animal production from rotations on small paddocks).

The Riparian Ecological Site Description / State and Transition Modeling Forum was standing room only and organized with a large dose of our own Tamzen Stringham by our own Patti Novak.

The tour on Friday to the Trinity site was well done with a steady pace of interesting new plants, history, museum of the Royal Road and flocks of "snows" with Sandhill Cranes too.

~ Gary McCuin

A lot of things struck me, mostly my lack of stamina. One of the big things that struck me however, was the fact that even though I did not get to attend very many presentations, I did feel that some of the most important things the meetings provide is the ability to interact with like and unlike minded people from all over the world on a professional and personal basis. This really expands one's perspective by allowing you to see the world through a different set of eyes and experiences. When I was younger and a lot smarter, the world was black and white, right and wrong based upon my limited and self centered experiences and opinions. Now I am not so smart and there are a lot of gray areas surrounding the crisp black and white personal images I have of the world. This is tremendously confusing, but wonderful in that there are limitless possibilities in how to solve or resolve problems, or even to turn problems inside out and make them opportunities. The ability to network, learn new things completely outside of our own set of well worn paths is fun, exciting and potentially very useful within our well worn paths if we try a little. I encourage young and old alike to attend these meetings and to speak to strangers, there is a lot to learn experience and enjoy from these strangers.

Things to discuss – Science – what is good science, what is bad science? How do we tell the difference? How do we as a science based society make ourselves heard and credible? Are peer review and p values the ultimate in how we rate what we know, or don't know and don't know we don't know? How do we incorporate and value experiential knowledge? How do we sift the chaff from the wheat?

Regional workshops – Wild horses, fire and rangeland resilience from a ground level perspective, Rangeland tools and wildlife/livestock interactions

~ Floyd Rathbun

As usual the producers' forum was my favorite. Mike Hobbs clearly expressed that the USDA is not welcomed to develop a new level of bureaucracy based on animal ID since New Mexico brand law already is more than enough protection. Each speaker clearly explained that regulatory efforts always fail to provide the result that people want, cooperative work that is enacted by producers is the best opportunity for success.

The modeling discussion on Tuesday included a statement important to those of us who have to endure federal biologists' attempts at modeling wildlife "habitat" based on Habitat Suitability criteria. In my experience and touched on by the speaker, HSI is almost always arbitrary, non-quantifiable, strongly held professional opinions that are otherwise covered by the acronym SWAG. The speaker

called for Resource Selection Functions based on data with quantitative characteristics, spatial structure, and resources; then talked about application of GIS for display and analysis.

~ Chuck Saulisberry

Jo & I thought the meeting was well done and I could not see anything that we could do differently. I was glad to see so many Nevada section members there

~ Heather Mobley

It was amazing to me to find that going to SRM felt like going home for a family reunion. I felt very comfortable around my peers and mentors. The people I've been meeting year after year finally began to stay with me when I left and that, I realize, can only come with active participation in networking at these events. My little black book is filling up with plenty of resources for advice about work or just whatever. I enjoyed SRM more than I ever have before. And...I didn't bring a cold home with me this time...thanks to vitamins and airborne. I am already looking forward to next year.

~ Rex Cleary

I was struck by what I experienced while sitting in on the concurrent session on New Mexico wolf reintroductions. A FWS speaker described the program in glowing terms as well organized and managed and functioning well. Then a woman rancher took the podium and told how it actually was using graphic slides for illustration. It was heart rending!

~ Maggie Orr

I am glad for the conversation/controversy about landscape scale vs. plot size research in the Society as generated by "The Briske Article"; I expect it to lead ultimately to better management of resources. I heard stated several times in various sessions I attended that research should be geared to explain the processes of what is working for innovative managers so that others may follow suit. I like it! You can see the presentations from the December 2008 Colorado Section, "Strategy vs. System: Grazing for Desired Outcomes" at the SRM website at <http://www.rangelands.org/svs/videos/> that discuss this topic. Amazing technology we have.

## **UNR RANGE CLUB**

By Jessica Esenarro

It is Saturday, February 7<sup>th</sup> at 8am in Reno, Nevada and the seven of us are excited to leave for Albuquerque, New Mexico for the Society for Range Management meeting. Nineteen hours driving and two people voted "off the island" later, we arrived at our hotel in Albuquerque, exhausted and one person with a possible black eye. Needless to say, we were relieved the workshops began later in the day on Sunday. The student specific workshops we found most rewarding were the ones on how to write resumes, apply for government jobs and how to prepare for graduate school. We also thought the Ecology I on Monday and Producer's Forum symposiums on Tuesday were incredibly interesting.

This year we had one student, Casey Boyd, participate in the On the Spot Hiring. We were also fortunate enough to have Jessica Orr assemble our student booth display for the trade show and to work the booth for most of the trip. She may not be a Rangeland Management major, but we accept her anyway. Six students, Brittney Askew, Samuel Lossing, Casey Boyd, Gareth Fisher, Maura Bradbury, and Jessica Esenarro, competed in the Plant Identification Exam – it was incredibly difficult and a great learning experience. We also had three participants, Samuel Lossing, Casey Boyd, and Jessica Esenarro, represent UNR and the NV section in the Undergraduate Range Management Exam (URME). Casey Boyd made all of us proud as he finished in the top 35% in the URME contest – pretty impressive for the first effort! UNR URME Team is putting other teams on notice!

Whether looking for a job or exploring graduate school possibilities, networking is incredibly important to all of us. Meeting other professionals who are willing to help is invaluable. Tapping the

Top, Wild Women of Range, and the dance were extremely helpful in allowing us the opportunity for a one-to-one conversation with agency professionals, professors, and other students. One of our students, Jessica Esenarro, even won an instant scholarship from the Wild Women of Range. The dance was great, not to mention discovering Tamzen Stringham can cut a rug (beware, she may try to lead).

As some may know, our club's 2008 Saddle Raffle Fundraiser was made possible by rancher and saddle maker, Duane Coombs, who graciously donated the saddle to our range club. We would like to express our thanks for all the support, especially to Duane, and also to the NV SRM section for donating \$500 to help with travel costs, and to everyone who bought tickets. This year we sold over 500 tickets, but only one could be drawn. The lucky winner was Jeff Rivera from Arizona, and as much as some of our members tried to convince him, he would not donate the saddle to a "poor college student" (darn). Although we have a whole year before next year's annual meeting, we are starting to think about the next fundraiser, so we turn to you. If you have any ideas for next year's fundraising effort, please feel free to contact us. We would greatly appreciate it.

Like all things, this fun had to come to an end and another joyous nineteen hour drive back to Reno was ahead of us. After about hour fourteen, our Apples to Apples game became extremely competitive, causing another three people to be voted "off the island." Thankfully we arrived back in Reno just as the sun began to rise and without any casualties. Next year, we will look into a mode of transportation that doesn't include tight quarters and long stretches of highway in combination with hyperactive college students.

Thank you,

The University of Nevada, Reno Range Club

"Go Nevada! Go, Go Nevada!"

## **RANGE CAMP 2008 & 2009**

Advertising for 2009 Range Camp has been sent out. Please make any contacts you can to encourage participation of campers or counselors at this excellent event happening June 21-27, 2009. 2008 awards went to:

Trail Boss: Mindy Conner, Surprise Valley, CA

Runner-up: Mireya Montero, Fallon

Big Buckeroo: Kali Evanson (2007 Trail Boss runner-up)

See all information needed at: <http://www.ag.unr.edu/nsrm/camp.html>

## **FROM THE ZONES!**

Thanks to Gary McCuin and Jake Tibbitts we now have the zones accurately delineated. See the map on the back page.

The Section Council is composed of 11 elected representatives or council members. These include seven zone council members, the president, president-elect, immediate past president, and the president of the student chapter. There are three appointed members who include the secretary, treasurer, and the executive vice-president.

### ZONES

- Zone I: Elko County and northern Eureka County (that portion *north* of the East-West line between Elko County and White Pine County).
- Zone II: Humboldt County, Pershing County, Churchill County, and Lander County.
- Zone III: Northern Washoe County (that portion *north* of the East-West line between Pershing County and Churchill County).
- Zone IV: Southern Washoe County (that portion *south* of East-West line between Pershing County and Churchill County) and Storey County.

- Zone V: Carson City, Douglas County, Lyon County, Mineral County, and Esmeralda County.  
 Zone VI: Southern Eureka County (that portion *south* of the East-West line between Elko County and White Pine County), White Pine County, northeast Nye County (see map).  
 Zone VII: Nye County (except that portion in Zone VI), Lincoln County, and Clark County.

## NEWS AND NOTES

~Charles "Cheerful Charlie" Fisher passed away peacefully January 17, 2009. Charlie was a long-time member and friend of SRM. More in the next newsletter

~April 1 & 2, Developing a Successful Native Plant Program workshop, Ontario, OR. Contact Nancy Shaw at 208 373-4360, <http://www.fs.fed.us/rm/boise/research/shrub/projects/Native.pdf>

~July 21-23, MIM (multiple indicator monitoring) workshop which includes monitoring of stream bank trampling, streamside vegetation, stubble height, and woody regeneration along streams, Truckee, CA. Contact Dave Weixelman at 530 478-6843 or [dweixelm@fs.fed.us](mailto:dweixelm@fs.fed.us).

~May 12-14, Cal-Pac Sections invites NV to their spring tour in Santa Rosa, CA titled "Climate Change & Carbon Sequestration on CA Rangelands." Info at <http://www.rangelands.org/casrm/>.

~USDA offers an educational program called *Ag-Discovery*; a USDA outreach program to help younger students, ages 12-17, learn about careers in animal science, veterinary medicine, agribusiness and plant pathology. During two-week program participants live on a college campus and learn about Agricultural science from university professors, practicing veterinarians and professionals working for the U.S. Government. Students chosen to participate in *Ag-Discovery* will gain experience through hands-on labs, workshops, field trips and other group and team building activities. The deadline for applications is April 17, 2009. <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/agdiscovery/>.

~The National Riparian Service Team is developing two training courses: Riparian Ecology (pilot course May 18-22 in Albuquerque, NM) and Riparian Monitoring (pilot course October 5-9 in Reno), through the BLM. Check with Sherm Swanson for information, [sswanson@cabnr.unr.edu](mailto:sswanson@cabnr.unr.edu).

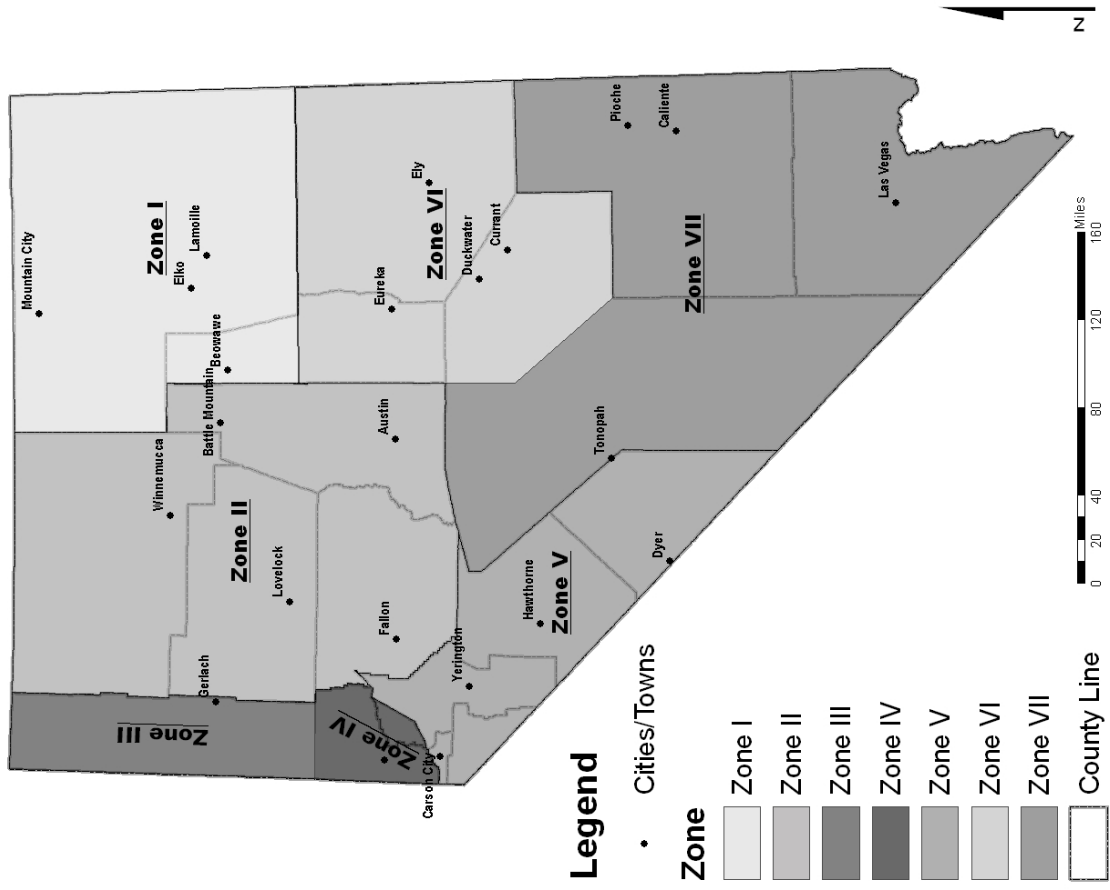
~Dec. 13-16, Fourth National Conference on Grazing Lands (4NCGL) in Sparks, NV. Contact Patti Novak-Echenique at [patti.novak@nv.usda.gov](mailto:patti.novak@nv.usda.gov).

~[http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/res/Education\\_in\\_BLM/riparian\\_module.html](http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/res/Education_in_BLM/riparian_module.html). New BLM youth riparian curriculum available online.

~James Caswell of BLM announced in December that Secretary Dirk Kempthorne has signed a Secretarial Order officially designating the 258 million acres managed by BLM as the National System of Public Lands. "This gives BLM what every other federal land management agency has, an official designation. It confers no change in land status but it underscores several principles important to the stewardship of these lands. Foremost among these is the sense that our lands are interconnected, which is at the heart of our landscape approach to land management. Gradually, over time, we will use this wherever the BLM logo appears; it will be an effective tool to increase public awareness of our agency and our important work." (email to BLM employees, 12/16/08)

~View powerpoints from the Wildfires and Invasive Plants in American Deserts conference of 12/08 at <http://www.rangelands.org/deserts/>. More in next newsletter.

# Nevada SRM Section Zones



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