

# RANGELAND NEWS

Society for Range Management  
Nevada Section

**LATE FALL 2007**

**TO FOSTER ADVANCEMENT IN THE SCIENCE AND ART OF RANGELAND MANAGEMENT**

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**FROM CHANDLER MUNDY: ALL YOUNG PROFESSIONALS PLEASE REGISTER FOR THE CONCLAVE IN LOUISVILLE**

## PRESIDENT'S PONDERERS

Gary McCuin

First let me wish you all a Merry Christmas and thank you for a wonderful year for the NV SRM Section. We started it off with the annual meeting which by all accounts was one of the best ever. Thanks to such a wonderful group of dedicated range professionals. We had a successful Range camp and are looking forward to a better one in 08 with a newly dedicated Sonoma kitchen donated by NDF. The summer meeting at Smith Creek ranch was well attended and enjoyed with a great tour, good food and lots of fun. Thanks to Duane Coombs and the Hendrix family.

At the Fallon Christmas meeting we voted to spend \$4K to rehab our camp kitchen to working order. We also voted to underwrite the Range club to the tune of \$2.5K to go to Louisville and represent NV in the plant ID contest. This is a very active and ambitious group and we commend them for their efforts. The Section portion of annual meeting funds was approximately \$19K and this amount less the cost for rehabbing the kitchen and contribution to the Range Club will be put into the Endowment Fund. Range Club also provided a great dinner and fun was had by all.

As we move into the next year we have some important positions that require filling. Chuck Saulsberry is retiring as the EVP after many years of exemplary service.

We thank Chuck for his service and dedication to the Section. In honor of this service the Section will establish a Saulisberry scholarship. Brad Schultz has also served the Section in exemplary fashion as the Section Treasurer and now wishes to spend more time with his active family. We need dedicated and capable Section members to step forward and fill these important roles. Please contact Duane if you are interested.

Starting in the new year I will be moving to Eureka as the Eureka County Extension Educator. I am thrilled with this opportunity and look forward to working with the Section and many friends I have accumulated in this capacity. Thanks to all for your support and a wonderful year as Section president. I am pleased and honored to have served the section and look forward to the new year. Hope to see you in Louisville.

## **NEW MEMBERS / OLD FRIENDS**

Patti reports SRM membership records have not been updated since September. She had some change of addresses for existing members. Current membership is 189.

**Jack Artz** has moved from California to Sparks, [jartz0594@charter.net](mailto:jartz0594@charter.net)

**Denise Adkins** has moved from Idaho to Winnemucca, [denise.adkins@nv.usda.gov](mailto:denise.adkins@nv.usda.gov)

**Chris Jasmine**, Spring Creek, joined in February 2007; [chris.jasmine@nv.usda.gov](mailto:chris.jasmine@nv.usda.gov)

## **ELECTIONS**

President-Elect: My name is **Ken Conley**. I am a native Nevadan, raised in Gerlach, Nevada, graduating from Gerlach High School in 1974. I attended the University of Nevada from 1974 to 1978 and received a B.S. in Agriculture in 1978. In 1978 I became employed by the University of Nevada as a Research Aid at the Gund Research and Demonstration Facility. I became manager of this facility in 1985 and continue in that capacity at the present time. In 1991 I entered graduate school at the University of Nevada and received an M.S. in Animal Science in 1993. I became a member of SRM in 2004. Since then I have become aware of the benefits associated with active involvement in SRM. I believe that increased participation and membership in SRM, particularly by individuals in the range livestock industry, is essential for promoting the sustainability of ranching on public lands. I would be honored to serve as Section President of the Nevada Section of the Society for Range Management.

President-Elect: **Ken Visser** - I was born near Sunnyvale, California before it became Silicon Valley where my father started a Lutheran church soon after World War II. He was raised on the Visser Ranch near Havillah, Washington just above the Okanogan Valley which his grandfather, after emigrating from Holland, homesteaded in 1910. This ranch was expanded by my grandfather and then by my Uncle Ray who still owns and runs it with the help of my cousins. In 1933 my father was sent by his parents at age 13 to attend a Lutheran High School in Oakland, California and from there he went to Seminary in St. Louis, where he met my Mom. After being ordained he went to Kansas for his first parish and then to Sunnyvale to start a new one, and then on to Lodi in the Central Valley where he took over an established church.

I was raised in what was then the small, primarily agricultural town of Lodi, was a high school athlete (basketball and baseball), and played in the band (baritone horn) and enjoyed heading up to the Sierra rivers with my older brothers in the summer for camping, hiking, swimming and cliff diving. I then attended Cal Berkeley which was only 90 miles from home and declared as a Forestry major cause I knew I wanted to

“work outside.” Although family college funds were lacking, I worked my way through it thanks to 72 hours per week summer employment at an apricot, peach and tomato cannery in Lodi. In my sophomore year I switched majors to Conservation of Natural Resources with emphasis in Range, in which I received my B.S. in 1979.

Upon graduation, I was hired by BLM in Elko where I worked range inventory for two years, then as a Range Conservationist in the Wells Resource Area for nine. Then I transferred to Susanville as a Supervisory Range Conservationist where I served for nine years before being hired by BLM headquarters into my current position as a Rangeland Management Specialist in the Division of Rangeland Resources. While in the field positions I performed the breadth of duties typical of government range conservationists from allotment management to wildfire fighting. In my current position my focus is on range policy development and program oversight in the area of grazing administration. Recent BLM efforts in which I had significant involvement included the 2003 Sustaining Working Landscapes initiative and the 2006 grazing regulations rulemaking.

I live with my wife in Reno, Nevada near Bartley Ranch Regional Park and enjoy exploring mountain and desert venues with my dog and with my two teenage sons when they can find the time.

Zone 1 Council: **Ryan Shane** - As homesteaders of Nevada in the late 1800's, my family has valued the natural resources of this state for more than a century. While the earlier generations of my family had varying land ethics, SRM has provided me with a balanced forum for the use, management, and conservation of natural resources within Nevada. Aside from personal interests, I sought a deeper connection with natural resources by pursuing a professional connection with them. I attended the University of Nevada, Reno and earned dual bachelors in rangeland management and forestry. With the help of UNR faculty and the Nevada Section, I initiated the reinstatement of the UNR Range Club and served as President. The office required intensive coordination of supporting officers as well as communication with all membership to meet the fund raising, social, educational, training, and career-opportunity objectives of the club. In addition, I am working to complete a Masters degree in natural resource management from UNR. These experiences have allowed me to work effectively as a natural resource consultant for nearly five years in Nevada, Idaho, and California. As Zone Councilman, I would seek to provide meaningful coordination, communication, and other services to the Zone I membership. It would be an honor to serve those whom have been instrumental in supporting as well as those who enjoy the benefits of our great society.

Zone III Council: **Marti Butow** – (reinstatement) I received my Bachelor's degree in Animal Science from Cal-Poly State University in 1985. Prior to graduation I worked for the Loomix Corporation in their feed analysis lab. After graduation I worked for the University of Santa Barbara in their Biology Department as an Animal Technician. I completed course work in range management at Humboldt State University while a range technician with the Mendocino National Forest. In 1993 I accepted a Range Management Specialist position with the BLM at the Alturas Field Office where I still presently work. I joined SRM in 1993 and am a member of three sections; Nevada, Cal/Pac, and Pacific Northwest. I was the co-coordinator for volunteers at the Reno 2007 meeting.

Zone V Council: Greetings, I'm **Don Henderson** running for a second shot at a Zone Council position. Hopefully, many of you will know or remember me, which will allow this statement to be brief. I have an undergraduate degree from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo and a UNR Master's degree in rangeland management. I started my professional career at Resource Concepts (RCI) and then did a 9-year tour with the Nevada Department of Agriculture. I am now back at RCI and loving it! Overall, I've spent just under 25 years working on range and agriculture issues in Nevada and around the west. During this period, I have actively served on numerous SRM committees, at both the Section and National levels. Back in the late 80's and early 90's I did my first terms as Zone Councilman and Section President. I am pleased for the opportunity to take another shot at the Section Council because I am certain I can be more effective than I was during my first go. My priority will be to recruit new SRM members and excite old members to get more involved in activities of the Section. Happy holidays to all!

Zone VI Council: **Chandler Mundy** is a bull rider from a farming background in Holden, Utah. He graduated from Southern Utah University with an Ag/Animal Science degree and later received a Range degree from Utah State University where he was active in the Utah SRM Section and the Range Club. He was on the Plant ID team for USU. Chandler is now the one and only Range Management Specialist for USFS in Ely. He is the NV representative for SRM's Young Professionals Conclave. (as told to Maggie Orr)

## **2007 AWARDS**

Cub Wolfe presented the 2007 Awards at the banquet in Bishop. We had lots to show the California folks! Congratulations to all recipients and thanks for your great work.

Excellence in Range Management: **Ken Conley** – Ken's plaque states: This award is in recognition of exceptional leadership in progressive research and management of Nevada's rangelands on the NAES Gund Ranch. Ken's efforts have increased ranch profitability and improved rangeland health and sustainability through the development and implementation of a comprehensive management system matching the livestock's production cycle to the seasonal availability and physiological requirements of the forage resources on both private and public lands. Ken has also shared the knowledge gained from this management change with rangeland managers, producers and citizens of Nevada through the Range Management School and other educational efforts.

Young Rangeland Professional: **Angela Mushrush** is only the third recipient of the Young Rangeland Professional Award and the first from a federal agency. Angela began her career after her graduation from UNR with the USFS on the Plumas National Forest in California as a Wildlife Biologist. From there she moved to the Battle Mountain District of BLM as a Rangeland Management Specialist. Soon Angela became one of the most informed specialists on the District in rangeland monitoring and evaluations of studies based on collected data. Her ability to work with permittees and understand the complex working of environmental processes made her an effective manager of the public lands and grazing allotments she was responsible for overseeing. She then transferred to NRCS where she has continued her work on Nevada's rangelands. Angela is one of the few young professionals still working in the field with permittees to help them understand the importance of good rangeland stewardship. She actively works on inventory teams to collect data for analysis and evaluation. Angela is an asset to Nevada and the rangeland profession.

Sustained Achievement Award: **John McLain** is one of the most respected leaders of the Nevada Section SRM. John's knowledge and experience of rangeland management is most valuable to our section and its membership. John's work and dedication to the Society for Range Management is never-ending. We so appreciate his contributions and his support of the Nevada Section. For these reasons John is most deserving of this Sustained Achievement Award.

Rangeland Professional of the Year: **Jay Davison** - Jay is a graduate of UNR and has worked for a number of agencies and private rangeland management consultants. His vast experience and knowledge of the rangeland resource has been the key to assisting young rangeland managers of many different agencies in the field. His present position as Rangeland Management Specialist with UNR Cooperative Extension has allowed Jay to disseminate this knowledge throughout the State of Nevada. Jay is always willing to help and follows through to the end. He is most deserving of the honor.

Great Basin Award: **Nevada Bighorns Unlimited** - In appreciation for your sustained contributions and partnership in the Nevada Youth Range Camp. You sponsor Nevada youth and provide them the opportunity to attend this learning experience. You generously assisted in the purchase of a new camp trailer and other new camping equipment. You willingly participate in the educational programs and sponsor the evening dinners in Austin. Your never-ending support of the Nevada Youth Range Camp has provided the key ingredient needed to make it successful. Thank you for your endless dedication to our Nevada youth.

Great Basin Award: **Nevada Association of Conservation Districts and Nevada Division of Conservation Districts** - In appreciation of your sustained contributions and partnership to the Nevada Youth Range Camp by sponsoring Nevada youth and providing them the opportunity to attend this learning experience. You generously assisted in the purchase of new camp equipment and necessary teaching supplies. Your never-ending support of the Nevada Youth Range Camp has provided the key ingredient needed to make it successful. Thank you for your endless dedication to our Nevada youth.

Great Basin Award: **Nevada Wildlife Federation** – as presented at the summer meeting.

## **JOINT MEETING WITH CAL/PAC SECTION**

Nevada had a strong showing at the joint winter meeting with the Cal/Pac Section in Bishop, CA where the focus was on the management and restoration of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) lands in the Owens Valley. Despite we being unable to teach moderator Dave Kelley how to properly say "Nevada" the California folks said they would like to be invited to a Nevada camping meeting.

**Linda Coates-Markle** spoke for SRM President Dennis Phillippi who could not make the meeting due to illness. She said the Denver office is focusing on improving communication with the membership; they want to use the website as the primary tool so check it often and tell Denver any suggestions you might have. They will send Range Flashes/Catch-alls with the website link but want to know how often will pique your interest but not turn you off.

**Brian Tillemans**, responsible for watershed management from the Mono Basin to Owens Lake for LADWP, spoke on changes he has seen in the last 26 years. LADWP is a multiple use agency, owning over 314,000 acres in the eastern Sierra, charged with providing a reliable high quality water supply by maintaining the watershed in good condition. In 1981 it was an undeveloped watershed and they relied on ranchers to be their eyes and advisors. They had a strong interagency committee and high trust, things could be accomplished fast and there was less regulation. They did short term fixes for problems and didn't think about long term restoration as they do now.

Today, recreation demands have increased 10,000-fold and they occur year round instead of seasonally; all their lands are open by policy. They do NEPA and archeological considerations on all situations. Environmental groups' influence has grown in the area with the resulting increase in the involvement of attorneys. This has caused a loss in flexibility of management and a negative impact on the resource. "Flavor of the Day" politics and a turnover in political leaders and positions has been a challenge and dry years bring all issues to the forefront.

Since 1981 Los Angeles has lost one third of its water from the Owens Valley to conservation projects such as Mono Lake and dust control on Owens Lake. This means micromanagement of water. Since 1997 an MOU has required that land management plans be written for everything to maintain sustainable uses while providing for environmental needs. To be that responsible and efficient LADWP has gotten very proactive, working to maintain flexibility and get buy off from diverse groups by building relationships with the idea that everybody wants a well-functioning watershed while still balancing each decision in the regulatory climate of economic, environmental, social, legal and political trends. One innovation has been flow management of water in the system. A computer tells them when to expect peak flow, ranchers get their irrigation before, the peak will aerate the gravels and they can ramp it down to prevent bank sloughing.

**Debbie House** spoke on LADWP's rangeland monitoring program. She said LA started buying land and water in 1907, of the 315,000 acres owned, 239,000 are leased for livestock and alfalfa. Historically they had a hands-off management, only reacting to crises, defaulting to the lessees for management. A qualitative photographic study was done between 1975 and 1996. The 1997 MOU required a plan for each lease which specifically addressed problem areas caused by grazing or recreation. The plans are based on utilization data which they take once or twice during the grazing season for combined total use. They would like to use Ecological Site Descriptions but these are not available for the area yet. They are now working to improve the lack of trust in the valley caused by groups setting demands and LADWP not wanting to commit. Adaptive management is being used but it is difficult to get to where they want to be. Currently the leases are five years but as the plans are adopted there is talk of them being issued for ten years. Many of their lessees are long term partners.

**Dave Martin** of LADWP described the Lower Owens River Project (LORP) which began as a mitigation measure out of the 1991 long term water agreement and the 1997 MOU. In December 2006 they reopened flow back into the lower river, dewatered since 1917. There are four portions including the riverine system, Black Rock Wetlands, off-river lakes and ponds and the Owens Delta Wetland below the pump back station. There are ditches to augment flows to keep the required 40 cfs in the system. The pump back station allows water to be pumped back to the aqueduct or onto the Owens Lake for dust control. The waterfowl area is required to have 500 acres watered at any one time if it is an average water year, if less than average they must have whatever the percent of

average snow pack is for that year. If the river is dry they burn to keep the tules and cattails out. The off-river lakes and ponds are on the 1872 fault line and are maintained with flows off the Black Rock Ditch. The delta is managed using flows and land management; though the entire onus has been placed on land management since modifying the flow was lost in the last legal wrangling. Dave said they don't want to manage a river this way, with a permanent flow required, and they have a ways to go to hone the process. He guessed the historic flow was probably greater than 600 cfs but there are no records. Their restoration goal is a healthy warm water system, not in a pristine condition. They are not planting fish; the fish are migrating. The four native fish in the Owens Valley were a chub, sucker, pupfish and speckled dace.

**Jeff Starosta** spoke on BLM rangelands in the eastern Sierra and **Terry McClendon**, a LADWP consultant described the Ecological Dynamics Simulation Model, EDYS, which is a mechanistic model and spatially explicit. It can show what factor decides what will happen, where and when the thresholds are, probably what is causing a problem and what is best to change to give the best response. The model shows him what he doesn't know about a system, where the bottlenecks are and points to something he may not have considered. **Yvonne Wood** of UC Extension described the fascinating complex and dynamic geomorphology of the Owens Valley and **Jack Alexander** wrapped up the day discussing different monitoring techniques and the uses and misuses of them in prescribing management.

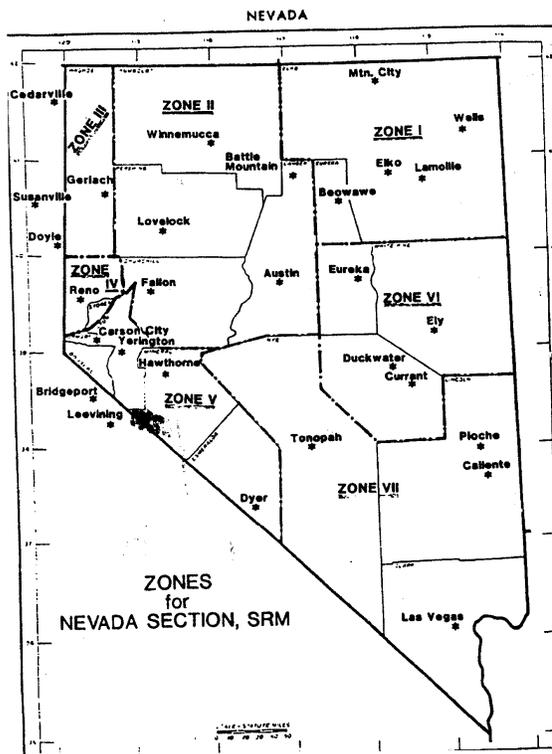
See <http://www.ag.unr.edu/nsrm/Minutes.html> for the minutes of the **Business Meeting**. Stay tuned to our next newsletter for a description of the LADWP **tour** at Bishop.

## STUDENT UPDATE

By Brittney Askew

In early November the student chapter of Society for Range Management at University of Nevada Reno attended the Nevada Section/ Cal Pac joint winter meeting. The UNR Range Club was represented by six undergraduate students who are all majoring in animal science with the rangeland management and livestock production option. Currently, we are finalizing our plans to attend the National Convention of Society for Range Management in Louisville, Kentucky. The Nevada Section of SRM and the University of Nevada Reno both generously contributed funds to help pay for five club members to attend the convention. At the National Convention our organization will be participating in Undergraduate Range Management Exam (URME) and the rangeland plant identification test. We would like to thank all the members of the Nevada Section of SRM and the University of Nevada Reno for their continued support. Happy holidays, and we will see you in Louisville.

**RICK ORR ELECTED TO  
SRM BOARD OF DIRECTORS!  
CONGRATULATIONS, RICK!**



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