

# RANGELAND NEWS



TO FOSTER ADVANCEMENT IN THE  
SCIENCE AND ART OF RANGELAND  
MANAGEMENT

NEVADA SECTION – SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT

December 2017

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(see map on last page for zones)

## PRESIDENT'S PONDERERS

Charlie Clements, October 9, 2017

The predictability of an extensive wildfire season came to fruition in 2017 with numerous wildfires consuming grazing and wildlife resources. At the time of this writing, wildfires are still being fought even though snow has fallen. Resource managers across the state are hard at work planning and implementing restoration/rehabilitation efforts. The Society for Range Management-Nevada Section can be proud as the Section has focused and provided valuable information to improve such efforts. With hundreds of thousands of acres being burned, these efforts are a daunting task and much effort just goes into prioritizing areas to be seeded and available seed to be purchased. Logistics of seeding methodology, delivery of equipment and man power are just a few of the challenges resource managers must hurdle to accomplish the tasks they face. The precipitation year that helped provide such high fuel loads in 2016-2017 was definitely one for the books. The USDA-ARS Reno Unit has numerous long-term rain gauges throughout Nevada, many of them received more precipitation in 2016-2017 than recorded in the past 30 plus years. Experience tells us that now that we have received such a high year of

precipitation perhaps we are in line for another above average year but that a dismal precipitation year is soon upon us. This makes it very difficult for all those habitats that are receiving seeding treatments, if in fact the amount and periodicity of precipitation does turn out to be poor. One thing is for certain, burned habitats need to receive treatments to improve restoration/rehabilitation efforts and improve grazing and wildlife resources.

This is an exciting year for the Nevada Section as we are hosting the 2018 Society for Range Management National Meeting at the Nugget in Sparks, January 29 – February 2, 2018. Numerous workshops, symposiums, presentations and exciting tours and events are available to ensure a very informative and exciting National Meeting. Go to [rangelands.org](http://rangelands.org) and register today!!!

Rixey Jenkins, President-Elect, has put together a super winter meeting, “Monitoring Nevada Rangelands” which will include information on the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook, producer’s perspective on the importance of rangeland monitoring and the nuts and bolts of cooperative monitoring agreements with federal agencies. As always, there will be a dinner and awards ceremony following the full day meeting, so please join us and bring a friend to this full day event.

**AWARDED TO TOM WARREN:  
Nevada 2017 Rangeland Professional of the Year**

Tom Warren is the long time Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Manager for USDI-BLM Elko District; he is among the top leaders in extended knowledge of rehabilitation practices and implementation of hundreds of thousands of acres of burned rangelands. His ability to form successful cooperative projects with state and local governments as well as private landowners has substantially benefitted Nevada rangelands in one of the most challenging tasks resource managers face. Tom’s mild manner approach, experience, dedication and professionalism are evidence of how deserving Tom is to receive this Award from the Society for Range Management-Nevada Section.

**CONGRATULATIONS, TOM !!!!**

**2018 SRM ANNUAL MEETING, TECHNICAL TRAINING & TRADE SHOW –  
SPARKS, NV  
January 28 – February 2, 2018  
Co-Chairs, Mark Freese and Ryan Shane**

Don’t miss the Society for Range Management 71<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting, Technical Training, and Trade Show, Jan. 28-Feb. 2 at The Nugget in Sparks. Join the best and brightest minds, including producers, land managers, scientists, educators, students and conservationists, and learn about the newest research, management strategies and ideas for the future of the rangelands. “Empowerment through Applied Science” is this year’s theme.

“Our goal is to bring together ranchers, land managers, and scientists, so we all understand the benefits of science and management and put them into action for sustainable rangeland resources,” said Ryan Shane, meeting co-chair. “And we are pleased to announce that Larry Selzer, President and Chief Executive Office of The Conservation Fund, will be participating in the Plenary Session during the annual meeting.”

Selzer leads an executive team that charts The Conservation Fund's strategy as it pursues its mission of better integrating environmental protection with economic vitality. Under Selzer's leadership, The Conservation Fund has tripled its net assets. He has brought an entrepreneurial spirit to conservation, inspiring and equipping Fund staff and partners to explore new, more effective conservation solutions in which more Americans can participate. He has launched efforts to restore and manage working forests, design and implement mitigation solutions, seed small green business, and engage more diverse communities in conservation.

"We will also be holding a Producer's Forum during the meeting," said Mark Freese, who is co-chairing the meeting with Shane. "The Producer's Forum will consist of one-and-a-half days of symposia and panel discussions on applying the art and science of range management in the Great Basin."

The Producer's Forum will include presentations by the Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative, "Herd Quitter" Kit Pharo, and University of Nevada Professor Dr. Barry Perryman. A panel discussion including ranchers and land management agency staff will discuss collaborative process, results based grazing, and cooperative monitoring.

Several technical tours are planned. A tour of the Carson and Walker River watersheds will include a look at their history, geology, and ecology, including historic land uses, Native American traditional uses, future desired condition, and how collaborative conservation planning for the Bi-State greater sage grouse was used to tie it all together. The tour on wild horse and burro management will ensure an understanding of the various aspects of their management by hiking in a herd management area and touring an inmate training facility. On the wildlife and agriculture tour, guests will visit ranches during winter calving season to view bald eagles and many other bird species in one place. Finally, the targeted grazing tour will highlight targeted grazing applications for vegetation, weed, and fuels management. You'll discuss recent precedent-setting decisions by the Bureau of Land Management and hear what lies ahead.

Social events are also planned, including but not limited to, ski days, tours of Virginia City and Lake Tahoe, the Brenn Hill and Andy Nelson concert, fun run, and Basque Heritage Dinner.

**Nevada Section Members** — Hosting this meeting is the largest revenue source for the Nevada Section. We need your help to make this the best SRM Annual Meeting ever. "We have nearly 100 people contributing to the effort of organizing and hosting the event," said Shane. "Nevada has a reputation of hosting very successful and memorable meetings and we aim to maintain our reputation this time around. If you would like to join the team and contribute, please contact Amy Ruhs, volunteer coordinator, at 775-293-2017 or [amy.ruhs@nv.usda.gov](mailto:amy.ruhs@nv.usda.gov)."

"We also need exhibitors and sponsors," said Freese. "Our Trade Show Chair is Tim Rubald and our Sponsorship Chair is Tye Morgan. If you know of someone who would like to exhibit at the meeting, please contact Tim at [2t@charter.net](mailto:2t@charter.net) or text to 775-790-0035. If you know of potential sponsors, contact Tye at [tmorgan.srm2018@gmail.com](mailto:tmorgan.srm2018@gmail.com)."

Meeting registration, and exhibitor, and sponsorship packages are available on the SRM 2018 Annual Meeting website at [annualmeeting.rangelands.org](http://annualmeeting.rangelands.org). You can book your hotel room now at The Nugget in Sparks, Nev. Use group code GSRM18 and reference the SRM Annual Meeting to get the discounted rate. Students must state they are a student to be placed in the student room block at the special rate. You can also follow us on Facebook at: [www.facebook.com/SRMAnnualMtg2018](https://www.facebook.com/SRMAnnualMtg2018).

## 2017 SUMMER TOUR

Organized by President Elect Rixey Jenkins; Summary Courtesy of President Charlie Clements

### MANAGING CHEATGRASS IN RANGELAND RESTORATION EFFORTS

The Society for Range Management-Nevada Section held its annual summer tour June 14, 2017 on cheatgrass-dominated landscapes in northern Nevada. The tour started in the area of Mack Farms of Boulder Valley, north of Battle Mountain, NV on Elko Land and Livestock TS Ranch-owned property. Dr. Barry Perryman, University of Nevada Range Professor, has been recently researching the effects of fall grazing to reduce cheatgrass fuels in Boulder Valley. During the past decade, new tools developed for the management of invasive annual grasses in the Great Basin have been both refined and introduced, according to Dr. Perryman. The precise combination of chemical fallow (herbicides) and seeding with both introduced and native deep-rooted perennial grasses and half-shrubs like 'Immigrant' forage kochia have provided great successes on many ecological sites and topographies.

Likewise, grazing cheatgrass in the fall and early winter months has demonstrated that it can be managed in such a way as to reduce carryover fuels into the next year's fire season, while simultaneously reducing its ability to dominate sites that still have a perennial grass component in the plant community. Managing cheatgrass, and in some cases medusahead, through the use of dormant season grazing has been very successful at a scale of thousands of acres in both Nevada and Oregon where winter-dominated precipitation occurs. Given these successes in management tool advances, there has been recognition that annual invasive grasses must be managed as a permanent component of the Great Basin and adjacent areas.

For the past fifty years or more, all of our management objectives, goals, and practices have been centered on the perennial grass component of our rangelands. Both rest-rotation and deferred rotation grazing systems (and their various combinations) were designed for managing perennial grasses. However, both of them actually favor the proliferation and dominance of annual grasses. Given our new tool strengths and our new-found ability to manage annual grasses at very large scales, it is time that we begin considering and implementing both planning objectives and on-the-ground activities that will allow us to truly manage annual grasses instead of being victimized by them. It is time to realize and come to admission that many of our shrub-dominated communities in the Great Basin no longer have perennial grass understories, instead they have mixed perennial and annual grass understories. With over 50 million acres dominated by cheatgrass, the time of admission is past due.

During the tour Dr. Perryman presented the specifics of this research, referred to as the Boulder Valley Grazing Project, which is being conducted in cooperation with Elko Land and Livestock and the USDA, Agricultural Research Service Burns, Oregon Unit. This fall they will begin the fourth year of using cattle to graze cheatgrass in the fall (November) to create a linear fire break across a 7,000-acre, unfenced pasture. Using a single water source in one corner, with a liquid protein supplement station spaced about a half mile apart as behavioral attractant, 800-1200 head of bred cows will graze this cheatgrass-dominated pasture. Cattle concentrate between the attractants, usually consuming 80-90% of the current year's standing crop of cheatgrass. At the end of four subsequent weeks, the supplement is moved another half mile away from the water source until the space between water and supplement is approximately 2.5 miles. Cheatgrass biomass, height, and cover has been collected both inside and outside of 16 small grazing exclosures in the pasture, and the data will be analyzed after grazing in the fall of 2017. Cheatgrass seed bank densities have also been recorded, showing more than a 75% reduction of cheatgrass in the seed bank. Even though this seed bank number needs to be much lower, the reduction is headed in the right direction.

The tour continued to the west end of the allotment where Dr. Perryman and other researchers at the University of Nevada, (in cooperation with the Elko Land and Livestock) and the USDA, Agricultural Research Service Fort Collins, Colorado Unit are conducting the Boulder Valley Fire Break Seeding to try and establish and maintain a firebreak. The research is being conducted on a 6-mile-long fenced strip with cross fencing to create nine 50-55-acre paddocks. This is the fourth year of data collection on this project to evaluate treatment combination potentials for fire break development in cheatgrass-dominated areas.

The study includes evaluation of spring grazing, fall grazing (100 head for 10 days/50 acres) and no grazing. Small soil-active herbicide plots are located in each paddock and numerous species with various seeding methodologies (i.e. drill seeding, broadcast seeding, seed coating) are being tested. The tour did not witness any seeding successes, but did notice some differences in grazing treatments with reduced cheatgrass fuel loads, even though the remaining cheatgrass fuel loads were still in the dangerous zone.

The tour then headed to the Hot Pot Fire near the Izzenhood Road where Tom Warren, Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Manager for BLM in Elko, gave us a presentation on the restoration efforts of BLM and NDOW on the Hot Pot and Izzenhood Fires that burned in 2016. The Hot Pot Fire burned more than 130,000 acres and the BLM, in cooperation with NDOW, are aggressively rehabilitating a significant portion of this fire, more than 50,000 acres; usually only about 3% of the burned habitat receive rehabilitation treatments.

The rehabilitation efforts are a great example of what can be accomplished with partnerships. Mr. Warren took us to a fence line contrast where we were able to see several different seeding and herbicide treatment strategies and presented some photos on some very good initial successes of these rehabilitation efforts. Mr. Warren pointed out that both BLM and NDOW are excited with the selection to broadcast seed the new forage kochia release, 'Snowstorm' which grows at heights above most average snow depths and will provide excellent forage for wintering mule deer and antelope affected by this large catastrophic wildfire.

USDA, Agricultural Research Service Reno, NV, Great Basin Rangelands Research Unit (GBRRU) researchers-Charlie Clements and Dan Harmon presented to the tour "The Use of Pre-Emergent Herbicides to Aid in Perennial Grass Establishment". Pre-emergent herbicides such as Plateau (Imazapic), Landmark XP (Sulfometuron Methyl) and Matrix (Rimsulfuron) provide resource managers and land owners with a viable tool to decrease cheatgrass densities, therefore significantly reducing competition at the seedling stage between seeded species and associated cheatgrass competition for limited moisture and nutrients.

It is critically important to understand that these herbicides have a 12-15-month residue activity and they are best suited to be applied in the fall of the year (September-early October) prior to any fall cheatgrass emergence. In their experience, it is not advantageous to apply these pre-emergent herbicides in the spring even if rates are lowered, nor with other herbicides (i.e. Roundup; Glyphosate) as the activity of the soil active herbicide and the foliar activity of Glyphosate will harm seedlings and established residual plants (thus called pre-emergent NOT post-emergent).

These pre-emergent herbicides perform best when applied in combination with a 1-year fallow/fall seeding project. **Simply applying these pre-emergent herbicides without a follow up seeding will not increase perennial grasses.** This proper application of pre-emergent herbicides results in a significant reduction of cheatgrass, therefore reducing the competition that seeded species seedlings incur at the seedling stage allowing for seeded perennial grass seedlings to survive and establish. The establishment of long-lived perennial grasses is the best-

known method at suppressing cheatgrass and other undesirable weeds, decreasing the chance, rate, spread and season of wildfires which significantly decreases range closures to livestock, wildlife habitat destruction and erosion to name a few.

## **NEVADA YOUTH RANGE CAMPERS SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES**

### **Meghan Aerick of Washoe County**

Nevada Youth Range Camp. I would have to say this was the highlight of my summer. Spending a week out in the middle of Nevada in 90-degree heat and rainstorms with a lot of fun-loving people. Sounds like a good time, right? When I first arrived at Smith Creek Ranch, I only knew a few people, but right when we arrived at the actual campsite, it wasn't hard to tell that this group of people was going to make that week fun. I can honestly say that Range Camp has taught me a lot and greatly influenced my thoughts about the future. We learned so much in just one week; we did investigations on sagebrush rangelands, pinyon and juniper areas, riparian areas, and soils. In these investigations, we identified the plants in the area, talked about what species of wildlife may live where and why, were taught ways to measure things such as sagebrush cover or the acidity of soil, and learned about many other elements specific to each environment. Along with the investigations, we also learned map and compass skills, had several evening programs, toured a Snowtel site, and were taught about the rangeland management plan for the Smith Creek Ranch. Two parts of the week particularly stuck out to me – the conservation project we worked on at the ranch and the USGS sage-grouse research evening program. The conservation project included all the campers working to remove tree branches from one side of previously built dams on a stream and build up the other side to switch the bank that the water was eroding. It also involved cutting off small branches of new growth of willows to plant in the dams and stream banks in an effort to make the banks stronger once the roots from the willows started to grow. The sage-grouse presentation was very intriguing because we learned about how they track sage-grouse and why sometimes it's hard to find the nests, and then we actually were able to try it out for ourselves. It was difficult using their tools to find the nests and we never really found one, but we at least narrowed it down to a small area. This just proves how many hands-on experiences there are at Range Camp, which is what makes it worth it. Overall, this camp was a great learning experience which has sparked my interest in potentially pursuing a career in range management. The hard-working people that make the camp successful have also made Range Camp a great place to go each year. I look forward to going again next year!

### **Robert Bright of Round Mountain**

I attended the 2017 Nevada Youth Range Camp and had a fun time. We learned about plants of the area, their uses, and effects. I attended a presentation on how the Indians used the plants. I learned how the Indians used the bark off the stage brush to make sandals. I learned how to conduct surveys of the landscape and the soil. I enjoyed the surveying because it involved math. I like the outdoors, camping, and math – maybe surveying will be my occupation when I grow. Even though we were camping in the middle of nowhere (two hours from the nearest store), they served great food especially the watermelon and tri-tip. The hikes were long and breath taking. It felt like you didn't have enough time to do everything you wanted.

**“Like” the Facebook page for the Nevada Section of SRM: <https://www.facebook.com/nvsrm/>**

## **HISTORIAN'S FIND**

Chris Jasmine

Recently while going through old newsletters I found an interesting article that caught my attention and piqued my interest. The newsletter, from the Fall of 1999, said the following:

*"Buckaroo's in Paradise Now on-line"*

"The Paradise Folklore Project began in the late 1970's. Field documentation resulted in a Smithsonian exhibition entitled "Buckaroos in Paradise: Cowboy Life in Northern Nevada". The material also became part of the Library of Congress exhibition entitled the "American Cowboy".

The article in the newsletter goes on to give an old internet link, but I found that the original link listed in the article to be no longer valid. So, I asked "Google" to help me track it down. The link below is what I found and it takes you to the original content. There are several articles and photo galleries at the link depicting the range livestock industry in Paradise from 1945-1982. The articles and photos paint a great picture of life in the area during that time. It really is a good read and worth your time to go and check out. I hope a few of you take the time and see some great historical photos and read a bit more about what life as a buckaroo in Nevada was, and still is, like.

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/ranching-culture-in-northern-nevada-from-1945-to-1982/>

## **UNR RANGE CLUB**

Lewis Mendive, SRM Student Conclave National President, UNR Range Club VP

With the year coming to the end the University of Nevada, Reno Range Club is gearing up for the 2018 SRM Annual Meeting. As many of you already know, the club's focus is to channel college students in the University to permanent careers centered around rangeland management. Career placement is achieved by networking at the SRM Annual meeting, the Range Club's Mock Interview Event, and range management based field trips. To finance such events the club has been actively selling raffle tickets for a custom saddle donated and hand made by Duane Coombs. Along with the saddle raffle the club is also raffling off a Henry Golden Boy .17 HMR. Saddle tickets are 20\$ apiece and gun tickets are ten with package options available. All proceeds go towards the future generation of range managers. To inquire about raffle tickets please send an email to the club at [unrrangeclub@gmail.com](mailto:unrrangeclub@gmail.com).

## **NvACD RESOURCE NEEDS ASSESSMENTS – LOCALLY LED CONSERVATION IN NV**

Maggie Orr, President, NvACD

Nevada Association of Conservation Districts (NvACD) has launched an effort that will ultimately support and improve all conservation in Nevada by giving a process to locally led conservation in a scalable manner. NvACD signed a Cooperative Agreement with NV NRCS in 2017 to incentivize meaningful participation in the NRCS State Technical Advisory Committee by implementing a Resource Needs Assessment process within six conservation districts (CDs) in Nevada in the next two years, with the intent that the template will expand to all 28 Nevada CDs in time.

The Resource Needs Assessment process will begin when a conservation district brings together local producers, local groups, agencies and general public to identify resource concerns using the detailed NRCS Resource Concerns Inventory checklist used for farm planning. This is the key, to first identify the resource concerns before adding in the human, therefore political, element. Local knowledge and agency GIS layers and other data will inform the process with the results being run through NRCS' Conservation Practices Physical Effects (CPPE) matrix to identify appropriate solutions to remedy the resource concerns.

To be most effective, NvACD has applied for another grant with the National Association of Conservation Districts and national NRCS to hire three positions, hopefully people with prior experience with NRCS planning to assist the CDs accumulate the information and run it through the CPPE. We are also working with UNR to develop a sophisticated survey instrument for obtaining even more input to establish conservation goals and direct efforts to address the most important local resource needs.

In 2016 the State Conservation Commission, with support of Nevada Association of Conservation Districts applied to NRCS for a Regional Conservation Partnership Program or RCPP grant called the "Nevada Coordinated Resource Management Initiative," modeled after the RCPP grant approved for New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts. The Initiative was proposed to provide the technical and financial resources to assist each Nevada CD to develop an individualized Coordinated Resource Management Plan and then fund the chosen conservation project that resulted from the development of that CRMP.

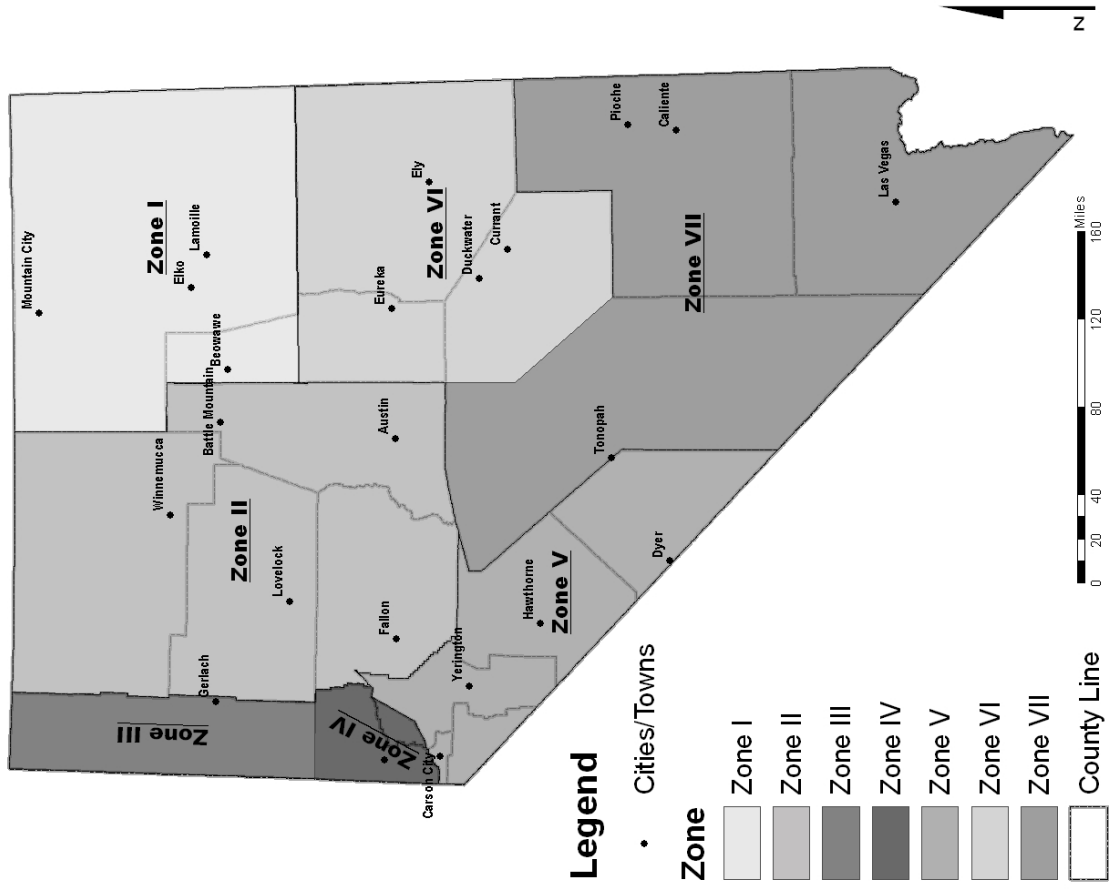
Most significant in this process was the commitment made by the state and federal agencies and other organizations in Nevada. They were willing to dedicate both staff time to participate in the process and allow certain of their project funding to go to projects decided by the CRMPs. We didn't ask for new money, just to let a portion of their existing budgets run through this process. The RCPP application was for \$5 million; the commitments of our partners totaled almost \$18 million. That's \$23 million dollars going to locally led conservation in Nevada. We did not receive the RCPP grant in 2016. However, John Ruhs, BLM State Director, encouraged NvACD to seek a renewal of the commitment with all the partners; we are receiving similar positive responses to the Resource Needs Assessment process.

We see this as a means to bring people together, support the Nevada Collaborative Conservation Network (NCCN), give local input to federal and state planning processes and solve nagging resource problems by their identification and solution through partnerships formed that can utilize funding and staff time committed by agencies and groups in the local area. We are aware this is a significant effort, and definitions need to be clarified for such things as Local Work Groups (LWG) and Local Area Work Groups (LAWG), but we are excited by the possibilities of locally led conservation in Nevada.

Check out NvACD at <http://nvacd.org/> for more information and please stay tuned as this process rolls out! Your participation as rangeland managers, scientists and citizens of Nevada will be needed; it is our sincere hope that you will lend your knowledge, experience and skills when it comes to your area. **NvACD is glad to be a Maverick sponsor of the 2018 International SRM meeting.**



# Nevada SRM Section Zones



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