

RANGELAND NEWS



TO FOSTER ADVANCEMENT IN THE
SCIENCE AND ART OF RANGELAND
MANAGEMENT

NEVADA SECTION – SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT

March 2013

***** NEVADA RANGE CAMP TRAIL BOSS, VALERIE LAVENBURG
TAKES FIRST PLACE AT OKLAHOMA CITY SRM
HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH FORUM! *****

NEVADA SECTION OFFICERS

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Zone 1: Ryan Shane, RSShane@frontiernet.net
Zone 3: BJ Raymond, braymond@fs.fed.us
Zone 5: vacant
Zone 7: Rick Orr, bbwheatgrass@yahoo.com

Zone 2: Bret Allen, bretallen7904@hotmail.com
Zone 4: vacant
Zone 6: Jake Tibbitts, natresmgr@eureka.nv.org
(see map on last page for zones)

PRESIDENT'S PONDERERS

Ryan Leary

There was a lot to learn at the 66th Annual SRM meeting. Of particular interest for Nevada were the Drought and Wildfire Technical Sessions. Of particular interest to range professionals were the Ecological Site Description and Targeted Grazing Technical Sessions. Work out of New Mexico State is focusing on using targeted grazing to reduce stubble height so that flame lengths are low enough to allow hand crews to fight the fires. Other work from New Mexico State looked at the economics of targeted grazing and, not surprisingly, it is the most cost effective to do it on your own ranch with your own cattle.

Oklahoma is largely a private land state, and the flexibility and incentives private land owners have to integrate treatments to suppress fire with targeted grazing provide food for thought for those

of us working with public land grazing. One comment from a session moderator was "It is time to change the paradigm. Maybe we need to think about paying people to graze." Interesting.

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS IN FEBRUARY!

Jessa Davis, Great Basin Institute, davis@gbinstitute.org
Mark Enders, Great Basin Institute, menders@gbinstitute.org,
Lindsey Goss, Great Basin Institute, lgoss@gbinstitute.org
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SUMMER MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

President Elect Mark Freese has scheduled the SRM Nevada section **summer meeting for June 27th and 28th in Ely, Nevada**. Theme for the June 27 field tour is "Pinion Juniper Fuels Reduction Projects and Vegetation Response – What have we learned?" We will tour Pinion Juniper removal project sites around Ely (e.g. Gleason Creek, Marking Coral, and Smith Valley) looking at prescribed burns, mastications, hand treatments, chainings, and other treatments that have occurred over the last 10 years. We will discuss the vegetation responses associated with these methods and their relation to ecological site dynamics. This tour will help land managers make decisions about whether or not to treat, which methods to use, and help them predict the vegetation response.

Following the tour we will have a social including dinner and some Nevada-brewed cheatgrass, medusahead, or crested wheatgrass beer. A business meeting will follow on the next morning June 28th. Please join us for the tour, social, and business meeting. Registration will be distributed soon.

AWARDS

NV Rangeland Professional of the Year – Gary McCuin

At the evening social at McAdoo's after the Winter Meeting, Jim Linebaugh presented the President's Award to Chris Jasmine, recognizing his leadership exhibited in 2012 along with Secretary Ann Bollinger, Secretary Erica Freese, and President-Elect Ryan Leary that together excellently covered the lack of an EVP. Jim also thanked International Board of Directors' Barry and Judy Irving for their attendance at our meeting.

ELECTIONS AND OPEN POSITIONS

Mark Freese was elected President Elect of the Section, Jake Tibbitts was returned as Zone Council VI and Bret Allen and Rick Orr were elected to Zones II and VII respectively. Congratulations and thank you for being willing to serve!

Rob Pearce of Bishop, CA has expressed interest in the Zone V Zone Council position; his biography follows. Thank you, Rob. **Zone IV**, Reno, is vacant; if you live in this area please consider submitting your name to the president for consideration for appointment to the Zone Council.

Membership Committee Chair Tracy Shane will leave that position after the summer meeting. This critical position receives the information from the international office, welcomes new members, advises the newsletter editor and encourages the non-renewing to continue their membership. The organization is nothing without its members so this is a vital position.

A position still vacant is the **Executive Vice President**. This is a very important position for the Nevada Section and while many have shown interest no one has stepped up to the plate yet. Full duties of all these positions are listed in the bylaws and the handbook which can be found on the Section website at <http://nevada.rangelands.org/Documents.html>.

Robert A. Pearce, Bio for Zone Council V

I have been a member of SRM since 1990 and I am currently a section member in Nevada, California-Pacific, and Texas, and previously in Colorado. I was an Associate Editor for the Journal of Range Management from 2000-2004 and I served on the SRM Publications Committee from 2000-2004. I have multiple resource related certifications including three SRM certifications: Certified Range Management Consultant, Certified Professional in Rangeland Management, Certified Rangeland Manager. I am also a Certified Professional in Erosion & Sediment Control (Soil & Water Conservation Society) and a Certified Senior Ecologist (Ecological Society of America). I currently am a panel member for the CalPac Certified Rangeland Manager program. I have been a past CalPac Board of Director and CalPac President, and served as Nominations Committee Chair. I received my BS in Agricultural Management from Cal Poly (SLO), my MS in Range Science from Texas A&M, and my Ph.D. from Colorado State University in Rangeland Ecosystem Science. I have over 30 years range and resource management experience in the field. I have been fortunate to work in a variety of disciplines over the years including manager of a cow/calf ranch, manager of a feedlot, and a USFS Range Technician. I also worked as a consultant for various firms, including Resource Concepts, Inc. in Carson City, as a plant ecologist, restoration ecologist, senior resource specialist, and senior range specialist. I am currently a District Conservationist for NRCS working out of the Bishop Field Office. I am the fifth generation of my family to live in Bishop and my family had been in the livestock business in the Bishop area until 1985. I have deep roots in the livestock industry as well as a strong ecological foundation. My passion is range management as related to livestock grazing, specifically riparian system restoration and management. I believe SRM is a unique organization providing a forum to blend solid ecological expertise with practical applications to land management. I would welcome the opportunity to serve as a zone representative for the Nevada Section of SRM. Bishop is located in the Great Basin and has many similar range and resource issues found in Nevada. The Nevada Section and SRM are outstanding organizations and serving the society is an honor and privilege.

UNR RANGE CLUB

Stephen Anderson

On behalf of the student chapter of the Society for Rangeland Management at the University of Nevada, Reno, we thank you. It was to our delight to be able to participate and be present at this year's SRM meeting in Oklahoma City. We put together a poster on pinyon pine and juniper encroachment for the themed poster contest, and we also participated in the plant identification contest and the undergraduate rangeland management exam. Overall we were in twelfth place, but with knowledge of the amounts of effort we exuded, we feel proud. Thank you for helping make this possible, and thank you for all of your past and present help. It has been greatly appreciated. We look onto our bright future of continued collaboration, science, and rangeland health.

New officers: David Culverson, president, Stephen Anderson VP, and Charlene (Charlie) Duncan, secretary. Contact the UNR Range Club at unrrangeclub@gmail.com.

GREAT BASIN COLLEGE AGGIES

The GBC Aggies club attended the National Cattlemen's Beef Association meeting in Tampa Florida the first week of February. Two students competed in the collegiate cattle marketing competition. It was a great learning experience being in the competition and the students gained knowledge in several ranch management topics during the cattlemen's college sessions.

The Great Basin College Aggies Club would like to invite you to attend the **8th Annual Agriculture Support Dinner and Concert on April 13th, 2013 at Stockmen's Hotel & Casino**. This year's event has been designed as an educational opportunity for livestock owners and managers, a fundraiser, and a night of fun with a concert by Adrian – Buckaroo Girl. Several speakers include:

- Carrie Thomas, Marketing Manager of Merck Animal Health's Food Animal Resource Management Division will discuss how key beef food chain stakeholders – like packers, retailers, and restaurateurs – respond to using animal health technologies in beef production.
- Jim Nix of Fort Supply Technologies will be talking about and demonstrating how to make technology simple, productive and effective for ranchers.
- Lance Knudsen and Candice Shrecengost will be discussing their experiences with diversifying their cattle herd's diet. They have trained cattle to expand the number of species that they eat in the pasture and will be sharing effective strategies during the training process.

In addition to enjoying a rib eye steak dinner and listening to this lineup of informative speakers, you will also have the chance to bid on the silent auction, and have some toe-tapping fun listening to the sounds of Adrian – Buckaroo Girl at the close of the evening.

Dinner tickets are \$30, concert tickets are \$30, or if you want to come for both the dinner and concert, the cost is \$50. Monies raised during previous events have been used to provide student scholarships and to fund educational trips for students to the following types of events:

- Local and state agriculture conferences;
- National Cattlemen's Beef Association – (collegiate cattle marketing competition);
- Nevada Cattleman's Association;
- Nevada Farm Bureau Meeting – (discussion meet contest);
- International Society for Range Management; and
- Western Collegiate Food Marketing Competition.

To purchase tickets, please call Tracy Shane at 753-2344 or buy tickets at J.M. Capriola Co. in Elko, Nevada. RSVPs for dinner need to be received by April 10th. Call Tracy Shane if you can't come but would like to sponsor the club.

BI-STATE SAGE GROUSE SYMPOSIUM

Cub Wolfe

Last October saw the 2012 Bi-State Local Working Group Sage Grouse Symposium and Awards Banquet at the Carson Valley Inn. The symposium was a success for both the Nevada Section SRM and the Bi-State (CA / NV) Local Working Group Members. It provided an opportunity for anyone interested in Sage Grouse ecology to hear and see the progress made to improve habitat conditions

and to view the latest research science applied. Attendees heard from the leading research scientists working for more than 10 years on this project. New research included biological information on the specific populations and a better understanding of the birds' needs. Attendance was good with about 85 attending from as far off as Montana, Ely and Las Vegas, Nevada, and several locals from Bridgeport and Bishop, California. Retired UNR professor, Dr. Don Klebenow who has been studying this bird for decades was there. Governor Bryan Sandoval sent his local representative, Cory Hunt, to inform us of the importance of this bird to Nevada's economy.

Nevada Section awards presented by Awards Chair Cub Wolfe at the banquet in appreciation for the work completed to improve Nevada's rangelands were given to:

Sheila Anderson & RCI	Doug Busselman & Nevada Farm Bureau
Michael Cassazza & USGS	Peter Coates & USGS
Bridgeport Ranger District	Carson City Field Office BLM
Tom Donham & NDOW	Gale Dupree & Nevada Wildlife Federation
Shawn Espinosa & NDOW	Fred Fulstone
Steven Fulstone & the Fulstone Family	Scott Gardner & CA Dept of Fish & Game
Jan Huggans	Jeff Hunewill & the Hunewill Family
Richard Huntsberger & H Bar Cattle	Steve Lewis & UNR Cooperative Extension
James Linebaugh	Walter Mandeville
Leeann Murphy & USFS	Steve Nelson & BLM
Ernie & Robin Paine & Flying M Ranch	Todd Sceirine
Tim Taylor & CA Dept of Fish & Game	John Warpeha & Washoe Tribe
Tracey Jean Wolfe & NRCS	Gil Yanuck & Friends of Nevada Wildlife

Thanks to the following sponsors who helped to make this symposium possible:

5C's Cottonwood Ranch
UNR Cooperative Extension
Resource Concepts Inc.
Nevada Section SRM
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WINTER BUSINESS MEETING

- ~ The Section votes to put in a bid for the 2018 International meeting for Reno. (Ryan reports it was "taken under advisement" at the Oklahoma meeting.)
- ~ The Section now accepts credit cards.
- ~ Maria Ryan takes over Hope on the Range project.
- ~ Section membership stands at 152; BLM will pay for SRM membership for their employees.
- ~ Discussion of a High School Youth Forum Coordinator position under the Mentoring Committee.
- ~ Don Henderson will have the Handbook update for review at the summer meeting.
- ~ Trina Johnson is now the Section historian.

WINTER MEETING A SUCCESS

Despite snowy roads, the Winter Meeting in Elko in January offered the many and varied attendees outstanding speakers on Sage grouse and management ideas for landscapes they inhabit affected by fire, cheatgrass and PJ encroachment. The speakers' Power Point presentations may be found at: <http://www.gbfiresci.org/webinars-and-workshops/2013/1/10/nevada-srm-winter-meeting.html>.

Thoughts from the speakers:

- **Steve Abele, USFWS**, describing the listing process under ESA, said it is hard to find a balance between a species and the livelihoods of people but feels it is good to have the discussions though they are difficult. He believes the list of threats is reasonable: wildfire, invasives, infrastructure, and conifer invasion. He said declines in bird numbers are apparent but how big they are is debatable; the numbers afford context but truly it is a threat-based analysis so they will be looking more at habitat than the species. USFWS issued a negative 12-month finding on the pygmy rabbit.
- **Shawn Espinosa, NDOW**, stated that agriculture listed in the 2005 histogram refers to such situations as ag conversion on the Snake River Plains. There was a wide-ranging discussion on the effect of fire / cheatgrass; the response after fire is critical; mountain sage brush will come back but Wyoming big sage doesn't have the same seed bank and it needs to be seeded before the first snow per Charlie Clements. Sage grouse do not like trees; a good goal for management is to keep PJ encroachment patches less than 200 meters across.
- **Erica Freese, UNR**, detailed state and transition models and emphasized using the "ecological dynamics" section to learn useful background and nuances for that model. She stated BLM, USFS, and NRCS have all signed an MOU that they will use them for inventory and management on public and private lands. They have become a repository for historical, local, and scientific knowledge; a way to capture the long experience of such people as soil scientist Paul Blackburn of NRCS who led our summer tour at the Gund Ranch three years ago. She suggests the management or disturbance models can be used to answer "what if" questions; "what if I change my management," or "what if we experience drought or increased rainfall." She defined triggers and feedbacks and cautioned that not all indicators suggest something is wrong even when you know it is; don't just pick one indicator to look at; pick the right one or enough of them to give a better answer. She defined the At Risk Community Phase as the phase in the state most vulnerable to exceed the resilience of the state; what you have right before the rubber band snaps. When do you know you are at risk? It is not a number or a species list; it is more about the discussion than getting the answer correct – what-if questions are critical. She encouraged that it is ok to get the answer wrong; the point is to go through the discussion which leads to the question of process and function. To repair it, you must focus on the ecological process, not that you just want a particular species present. Vegetation is a tool of repair. There is a fine line between another phase and a new state; why you have to discuss the what-ifs and focus on the ecological processes. There is a better potential for success to treat the at-risk phases; you get more bang for your buck. The most important question to ask yourself is, "what if I do nothing?" Other important questions: what are the site objectives, what processes am I worried about, how much money do I have?
- **Tamzen Stringham, UNR**, discussed a management tool she developed called Disturbance Response Groups which is a group of ecological sites that respond very similarly to some disturbance; the rate (affected by resilience) may be different but the endpoint is the same. When Tamzen started lumping ecological sites together to get a handle on them to do state and transition models she recognized this relationship and how it could assist land managers with vast acreages when ecological sites are too small a scale and MLRAs too big; she has completed 22 million acres. Her team is made up of herself, Erica Freese, Patti Novak-Echenique, Paul Blackburn, Gary Brackley and BLM will provide a GIS specialist. They are available from Tamzen directly; she will freely make them available. It is not an NRCS product.
- **Charlie Clements, ARS**, called cheatgrass the Babe Ruth of weeds, producing an average 252 seeds per square foot. He said the best known way to reduce cheatgrass is to establish a perennial stand; he has had success with kochia, Wyoming big sage, crested wheatgrass and Sherman big bluegrass. He doesn't recommend diverse seed mixes as they increase the cost and decrease the species known to work. He said if you have open ground, put seed on it;

seed the first fall following a wildfire in Wyoming big sage brush starting in September and finishing by Thanksgiving before snow; the seeds need contact with the soil. Seeding onto snow will cause the seed to lose moisture faster than it can gain from the soil as the snow melts away from around the seed. Planting in the spring allows for no stratification or warm season moisture. He doesn't recommend seeding a whole 300,000 acre fire; know you must be successful where the animals are going to go such as south facing slopes. Perennials are harder to establish than maintain; perennial grasses reproduce from tillering, only one in seven years is seed viable and they require rare episodic events to establish. It is hard to manage grazing because you can't predict the events and make decisions that fast. It is a myth that you can graze crested wheatgrass year after year. Unless we can get a handle on the invasives it will not matter what anyone does with grazing. He recommends getting rid of archeological clearances and seeding when the conditions are right! He suggests policies should be guidelines not rules.

- **Bruce Roundy, BYU**, said it does matter what PJ removal treatment is used and what phase exists in the area of encroachment. Killing trees increases available soil water in the resource growth pool and if the trees are in Phase III, will extend water availability by almost a month. Shredding will increase the carbon to nitrogen ratio but not enough to stop cheatgrass. He recommends range and wildlife managers working together, doing monitoring and checking the research behind what you are doing and to be a good observer, keeping track of what happens on the ground.
- **Chris Jasmine, USFWS**, detailed many local Sage grouse projects, stating a lot of good things are going on out there in Elko County. He believes we can break up the fire cycles if we get ahead of the curve.
- **The panel of speakers** recommends applying a triage not shotgun approach to judiciously accomplish what we can do in appropriate sites, working together with hope.

NEW FEATURE! - HISTORIAN'S HIGHLIGHTS

From the March 1973 SRM Nevada section newsletter 40 years ago:
Don Cain of Ely was President; Dave Secrist was Rangeman of the Year

Research committee starts putting together list of endangered plant species and nominations for state grass

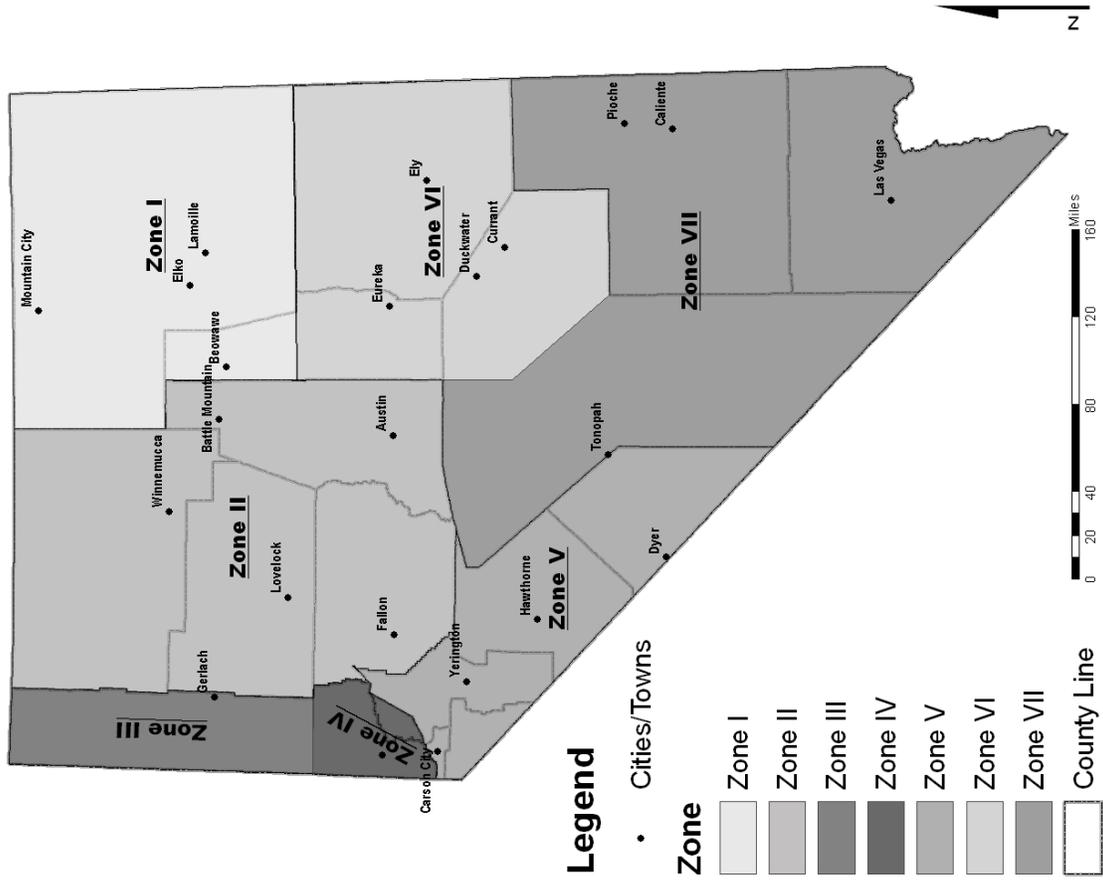
"NEVADA YOUTH RANGE CAMP: Did you note the name change above? At our annual meeting, it was decided we should now bow to women's lib and hereafter invite girl range managers. Thus, we are no longer the Nevada Range Camp for Boys."

Booklet of the "first 20 years of progress" was passed out

NEVADA YOUTH RANGE CAMP

Camp director Kathryn Dyer is readying another outstanding Range Camp which begins, as always, on Father's Day; this year it runs the week of June 16. This year's camp will sport a new 20 x 30 awning to cover the kitchen prep area, a hand sanitizing station, and refurbished ovens courtesy of a \$3000 gift from Nevada Bighorns Unlimited who always sponsor the incredible steak dinner Wednesday night in Austin.

Nevada SRM Section Zones



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