

NEVADA SECTION - SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT
WINTER BUSINESS MEETING
GOLD DUST WEST
CARSON CITY, NEVADA

JANUARY 14, 2015

MINUTES

Present:

Ann Bollinger, Secretary
Meagan Carter, Zone 2 Council Repr.
Charlene (Charlie) Duncan
Kathryn Dyer
Erica Freese, Treasurer
Mark Freese, President
Don Henderson
Emily Harmon
Trina Johnson
Leonard Jolley
Jim Linebaugh
Kent McAdoo
Gary McCuin

John McLain
Tyler Minor
Génie MontBlanc, Zone 4 Council Repr.
Tina Mudd
Patti Novak-Echenique
Maggie Orr
Rick Orr, Zone 7 Council Repr.
Tim Rubald
Brad Schultz
Ryan Shane, President-Elect
Sherm Swanson
Ken Vicencio

The meeting was called to order at 1:35 p.m. by President Freese. A quorum was present.

1. Opening Remarks

Introductions

Mark announced the new officers:

- President-Elect – Tim Rubald
- Zone 2 Council Representative – Meagan Carter
- Zone 5 Council Representative – Rob Pearce
- Zone 6 Council Representative – Jake Tibbitts
- Zone 7 Council Representative – Rick Orr

The official start begins after the SRM Annual Meeting. Mark also acknowledged and thanked all of the officers for their service.

2018 Annual Meeting, hosted in Reno-Sparks: Mark provided an update from the parent society. The hotel contract was reviewed by some members and has been signed. Rick advised to start planning now including the development of a theme and logo – the meeting is just three years away. Don inquired whether anyone was already willing to serve as the meeting co-chair (no one responded) and suggested that people could begin identifying their

particular interest in helping. John offered to the help with the Plenary Session. A volunteer list was started.

Mark said more details will be available after the 2015 Annual Meeting in Sacramento including the Nevada Section's roles and responsibilities. It was recommended that members attend some of the Planning Committee meetings in Sacramento in order to learn the logistics. Mark will contact Kelly Fogarty, and Leonard suggested inviting her to the NVSRM Summer Meeting. Leonard added the CalPac Section hired a local person to assist the section with planning.

Patti commented that committees are identified in a handbook and possibly previous minutes and reports too.

2. Minutes

Maggie made a motion, seconded by Kent for approval of the minutes as written. Motion passed.

3. Board of Directors Report

Leonard informed members that during his tenure, much of the work has been related to business operations with a focus towards membership. The dues were increased recently, and SRM is striving to provide value to its members. Leonard noted that the sections need to be effective too. SRM would like to increase / improve its outreach to students and young professionals.

A new publication contract has been awarded to Elsevier, a European-based company. Librarians have voiced concern about the subscription cost. SRM retained free access to publications, after a time period, through the University of Arizona. Leonard informed members that the "Ahead of Print" option was no longer available.

Due to the budget, the website hasn't been updated in some time. SRM has developed a Request for Proposals for improvements. The WordPress web software will be updated, including compatibility with mobile devices. He cautioned about comparing the website with other organizations whom have larger budgets.

Leonard received the following comments from members regarding the website and Allen Press:

- The website has been fine for members. However, it has not been a good source of information for the public nor livestock producers; and therefore there is limited attraction for new members.
- The membership renewal process is cumbersome.
- The CEU tracking process is also cumbersome. Currently, members need to call the parent society. There should be an online database and it should be accessible under the member profile.
- The Section Report does not seem to reflect all section members. For example, a member can found in the database under his or her name; but they are not included in the section report.

- When the parent society is notified of a member's address change, the parent society should then notify the Section so the local records can be updated as well.

Patti commented that the membership database was a problem several years ago when she served as Chair of the Membership Committee. Other organizations seem to have similar issues.

Mark referenced a letter from SRM President Jenny Pluhar regarding membership and coordination with Sandy Wyman, Chair of the SRM Membership Committee. Mark will follow-up with Sandy.

4. Financial Items

Financial Report: Erica shared copies of various worksheets, with the balance as of December 31, 2014. She cautioned about comparing year-to-year income because only one meeting was held during the calendar year of 2014.

The 2014 Summer Meeting profits were \$959.46. Currently, there is a balance of \$1,476.19 in the Range Camp account; however the High School Youth Forum expenditures have not been deducted. Two students may be attending the 2015 Annual Meeting. The estimated costs include \$900 for registration, one flight from Elko for Francine, gas reimbursement from Fallon for Garrett, and \$50 each as a stipend. The gas reimbursement will be calculated using the federal rate. Erica is still working with the parent society for the reimbursement of \$750 towards Valerie's trip to the 2014 Annual Meeting in Florida.

The 2015 Winter Meeting should also result in a profit. Ryan acknowledged the generous contribution of free meeting rooms by the Gold Dust West. Twelve hotel rooms were booked. From the silent auction held the previous night, \$310 was earned. Sherm made a motion, seconded by Charlie to donate the proceeds to the endowment account. Motion passed.

Erica requested assistance with the investments and suggested \$25,000 be invested in a diversified fund. In a recent conversation with Wells Fargo, they advised that one option may include rolling CDs. Brad asked Erica to meet with Jack Meadows, the financial advisor, for recommendations. Afterwards, an Investment Committee consisting of Erica, Brad, Jim, and Sherm will meet to evaluate and select the best options. Jim suggested the Investment Committee meet once per year and review the accounts.

Sherm made a motion, Don seconded to form an Investment Committee consisting of Brad, Jim, John and/or another person appointed by the President. Rick inquired whether a similar motion had been previously approved. Sherm conceded that if the motion had been previously approved, the current motion would be void. [A specific motion has not been proposed. At the December 2011 Business Meeting and June 2012 Business Meeting, there was discussion and agreement by Brad, John, Jim, and Sherm to provide advice regarding investments to the Finance Committee.]

Don made a motion, seconded by John for approval of the Treasurer's Report.

5. Funding Requests

UNR Range Club: Emily, Secretary of the UNR Range Club, requested \$2,000. The club has a current balance of \$9,500 but expects a balance of \$13,000 after a donation from volunteer project at the Gund Ranch is received. The club is estimating expenses of \$5,800 towards two upcoming events – SRM in Sacramento (February 2015) and the Science in the Sagebrush Steppe event in Oregon (April 24-25, 2015). Currently, the UNR Range Club has 12 members and all will be attending the 2015 Annual Meeting in Sacramento.

Tyler, President of the UNR Range Club, informed members of the students' activities including three fundraising efforts (Gund Ranch – \$3,500 as noted above, the gun raffle – \$900, and the UNR Burning Man presentation) and professional development through mock interviews. He added two internships are now available with Nevada Copper Mine.

The UNR Range Club helped with staffing the Hope on the Range booth at the Nevada Cattlemen's Association Trade Show, and they offered to help with the booth at other future events. They are planning to participate with BLM's Adopt-a-Space Program and will develop a challenge for other student clubs to participate as well.

Tyler explained the club strives to keep a banking account balance of \$10,000-\$12,000. Ryan made a motion, seconded by Kent to provide \$2,500 on the condition that the UNR Range Club establish a corpus (principal amount) of \$10,500. The motion was tabled until all of the funding requests were heard.

Website: Similar to the parent society, Génie suggested the Nevada Section website be updated. Charlie requested that members provide comments. Ryan will include the item on the agenda for further discussion at the Summer Meeting.

Hope on the Range booth: Through a written report, Maria requested a total of \$2,150. The request includes \$1,750 for booth registration and travel and \$400 for ancillary items. The past budget was \$1,500. Due to certain circumstances, the booth did not get out in 2014; and therefore, nothing was spent.

6. Hope on the Range Booth

Following the budget request discussion, members provided suggestions on various outreach opportunities and encouraged outreach to new audiences including: Range Camp, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, UNR College of Agriculture, Biotechnology, and Natural Resources (CABNR) Field Day, Earth Day events, Nevada Legislature, Boys and Girls Clubs, Carson Valley's Eagles and Agriculture (February 2015), and Carson City's Farm Days (April 2015).

Gary inquired about partnership and exchange opportunities with the Nevada Cattlemen's Association. Tina inquired about the process and logistics of the display (location, travel, etc.).

If the content needs to be reviewed and updated, John and Charlie offered to assist. The UNR Range Club may also be available.

7. Range Camp Report

Kathryn reported an attendance of 24 students at Range Camp, which was great attendance considering announcements had not been sent. Previously, Kathryn had coordinated with Liz Warner at NRCS but Liz had retired. Kathryn would like to improve the connection between the students and their funding sponsor, possibly through a presentation. At a minimum, a thank you card should be sent.

2015 Range Camp: In preparation of 2015, neither Rick nor Maggie will not be available so Kathryn and Brittney are looking a kitchen assistant. Also, there is a request for specific set-up and tear-down crew(s). Last year the specific crews made a big difference and were greatly appreciated. The set-up occurs on Saturday morning. Maggie will solicit help. Meagan offered to assist with the tear-down as well as coordination for the propane fill. Sherm extended an invitation for counselors.

Funding Request: Kathryn requested \$1,000 for the cook. Rick has talked with Larry Johnson regarding tie-down ropes. Rick will coordinate with Erica for reimbursement. Rick and Jim will continue communication with Larry Johnson on other items.

Sonoma Kitchen: Ryan has the paperwork for the Sonoma Kitchen. After he receives authorization from the State Asset Managers, then he will acquire the signatures from Purchasing. Someone with the Nevada Section will need to sign for acceptance of the property. If needed, Gary commented there was past paperwork noting that the kitchen was basically owned by the Nevada Section since the section invested in many improvements.

Regarding registration, Jim mentioned the Carson Valley Conservation District held the registration in the past. Tim confirmed that the Nevada Section could own the trailer and the registration be held by the Conservation District. Kathryn made a motion, seconded by Gary and Kent that the Nevada Section SRM take ownership of the Sonoma trailer and the registration be covered by the Conservation District. Ryan abstained.

Water Buffalo: Boss Tanks remains the best option but they must be contacted every year. If the specified tank is not available (due to wildfire or other need), Boss Tanks will provide an alternative. Meagan stated that one “Nevada Range Camp” water buffalo is located at the USFS Austin Ranger District but it’s parked outside of the secured yard. Gary informed members there are two trailers. Sherm made a motion, seconded by Génie for Meagan to investigate the value, sell both trailers, and return the proceeds back to the Nevada Section. Gary added the proceeds could be used towards a new purchase. Motion passed.

Youth Activities: Kathryn acknowledged Dan Harmon and his willingness to assist with youth activities including the SRM registration, travel, and other preparations. Kathryn expressed concern regarding the time and money invested towards the student(s) but the lack of response from one of the current recipients. If needed, she will cancel the student’s participation. Kathryn will work with Dan to identify a project timeline for future students. Ann suggested a student presentation at the section’s winter meeting.

8. Strategic Plan for the Nevada Section

Mark passed out a draft version of the Strategic Plan. No specific comments were received. He will ask the Section Council to review again, and then he will send to all the members via the listserve. He will plan for approval / adoption at the Summer Meeting.

Mark highlighted one of the goals of member development, engagement, and recognition. Gary commented that he accepted his current position as Chair of the Producers Affairs Committee because he would like improved communication and coordination with producer organizations such as the Nevada Cattlemen's Association. Charlie encouraged zone council representatives to reach out to producers as well.

9. Positions

Mark announced the following positions have been filled:

- Producer Affairs – Gary McCuin
- Research Affairs – Charlie Clements
- Youth Activities Co-Chair – Dan Harmon

Vacant Positions:

- Executive Vice-President. Tina offered to serve in the position. Following the direction in the Bylaws and Handbook, Mark appointed Tina to serve as the new Executive Vice-President and the appointment was confirmed by all of present Section Council members (Ryan, Ann, Meagan, Génie, and Rick). Mark thanked Tina for her interest and willingness to serve as an officer with the Nevada Section.
- Awards Committee. Mark did not accept the nomination. Jim expressed the need to fill the position because the Nevada Section is overdue for submitting nominations to the parent society.

Ryan suggested posting vacancies on the listserve and in the newsletter. Don recommended reaching out to all members and commented that members may be more engaged by actively contributing to the section. Sherm mentioned that Ed Ryan recently returned to Nevada and he could be a good contact and participant. Mark will contact zone council representatives for their assistance in recruitment. The discussion will be continued at the Summer Meeting.

10. Committee reports

Awards: Vacant.

Bylaws and Handbook: Don reported that no progress had been made. He will plan on providing a draft version prior to or at the Summer Meeting, with the goal of completing the updated version by the next Winter Meeting. Tim Rubald offered to join the committee, and Ann offered to verify the latest version with Don and Jim.

Endowment Fund: Rick reported the current fund value with investment interest earned was \$45,840.86. The corpus value (donated value that must be retained in the account and includes gifts, donations including property, and proceeds from the SRM Annual Meeting) was \$28,462.17. This includes the addition to the corpus of \$310 transferred during

the 1/14/15 Business Meeting. The funding available to spend on special projects (current fund value minus corpus value) was \$17,378.69.

The President-Elect, President, and Immediate Past President serve as the committee's managers; the Executive Vice-President and Treasurer serve as advisors.

Historian: Trina was present, but there weren't any updates.

Membership: Charlie mentioned concerns and issues earlier in the meeting, but she added there is a time lag from the parent society to the section regarding new and renewed memberships. She will strive to provide better reports to the zone council representatives. A few members still receive snail mail and she will try to keep in contact with those members.

Ann reported that SRM membership forms were provided at the workshop and two new members registered.

Nominations: Ryan Leary received nominations for the various vacancies, elections were held, and the announcements were made at the start of this meeting.

Producer Affairs: As previously reported, Gary would like improved communication and coordination with producer organizations such as the Nevada Cattlemen's Association.

Public Affairs: Sherm provided the following updates:

1. Wild horses: The spring rains had increased the available forage, but he heard that BLM had transported water. The horse populations continue to increase. Kathryn and Tim added that horse facilities had opened but others had decreased their capacity and/or closed.
2. Responding to request from Mark, Sherm had met with a few visitors from the Ukraine. The initial thought was they were interested in rangeland issues; however they were more interested in water and riparian issues. Sherm was honored to share his knowledge and experience.
3. Sherm is looking forward to continuing the conversation from the previous day's workshop and the role / contribution of SRM. He noted the best assistance may be the identification and prioritization of projects. Gary offered to help. Ryan and Sheila offered to write a summary, and Génie will provide a copy of her notes.

Research Affairs: Charlie Clements was not present, but he has been forwarding abstracts on the latest articles to members.

Scholarships: Sherm reported that UNR has a new process for scholarships. All applications are submitted through a central website. Sherm and Tamzen review applicants for eligibility and provide a scholarship award to the top one or two candidates.

Student Affairs: Temporarily, Tye organized the mock interviews – scheduled for January 23rd.

Youth Activities: Co-chaired by Kathryn (Range Camp Director) and Dan Harmon (coordination), the reports were provided earlier in this meeting.

Mentoring: Chris Jasmine was not present. No updates.

Website: Steve Foster was not present. No updates.

Newsletter: Maggie was present, but there weren't any updates. Mark acknowledged Maggie for all her efforts on the newsletter.

Progressive Rancher: Tye Morgan was not present. Mark acknowledged Tye for all her efforts.

11. Zone Council Representatives

Zone 1 Council Repr. (Northeast): Chris Jasmine was not present. No updates.

Zone 2 Council Repr. (North-Central): Meagan Carter learned from ranchers regarding the recent bidding opportunities for fracking leases on BLM lands in the area. There were only a few bids, possibly due to the pending decision on the federal listing of the sage-grouse. Ryan added that the current low cost of oil has resulted in existing operations leaving the Elko area. Meagan recently attended a workshop held by the Eastern Nevada Landscape Coalition where one of the topics was the decreasing budget of the USFS for weed control. Wild horses remain a subject of concern.

Zone 3 Council Repr. (Northwestern): BJ Raymond was not present. No updates.

Zone 4 Council Repr. (Reno): Génie MontBlanc was present, but there weren't any updates.

Zone 5 Council Repr. (West-Central): Rob Pearce was not present. No updates.

Zone 6 Council Repr. (East-Central): Jake Tibbits was not present. Maggie reported for Jake and stated there weren't any updates.

Zone 7 Council Repr. (Southern): Rick reported on two issues: 1) solar energy projects in Tonopah and southern Nevada and related lawsuits from the FAA due to the reflection and 2) a desert tortoise area has been opened again.

12. Summer Meeting

Members would like to continue the conversations from yesterday's presentations and this morning's strategic development roundtable discussion. If the field tour includes discussions for fall grazing, Sherm recommended the Gund Ranch or Boulder Valley. Kathryn added the Gund Ranch and adjacent private lands could share information about the management objectives, how they are measured, etc. The TS Ranch offers opportunities to discuss other research. Sherm relayed questions from Kelly McGowen (with the Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team) about how to manage shrub-closed states because there isn't much information. Mark added there could be a discussion on the state-and-transition model for

shrub-dominated conditions. For either subject, Maggie recommended inviting a soil scientist.

Rick suggested that Ryan, Sherm, and Kathryn coordinate with Tim for the planning of the Summer Meeting. The meeting should not be scheduled in the spring (avoiding the turn-out season for grazing) but then determined on the availability of the host location.

In the future, Jim proposed a meeting at Roaring Springs Ranch. The meeting could be a joint-section opportunity with Oregon.

13. Other News and Updates

Génie reported 184 email addresses on the listserve. She advised members that those with Yahoo email addresses are having issues sending notices through the listserve. If anyone needs assistance, they can contact Génie and she will be glad to help.

Jim inquired about what to do with left-over satchels from the 2007 Annual Meeting and a banner. It was decided to place with the Hope on the Range Booth and provide giveaways as needed.

Returning to the budget requests, Gary made a motion, seconded by Maggie to approve the following requests:

- \$2,500 to the UNR Range Club, with the contingency identified above
- \$2,150 for the Hope on the Range Booth
- \$8,000 for Range Camp

Motion passed.

Sherm made a motion, seconded by Gary to adjourn at 5:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Bollinger

Attachments:

- 2018 Annual Meeting in Reno-Sparks – Sign-Up List
- Treasurer's Report
- UNR Range Club Report
- Hope on the Range Booth Report

Society for Range Management – 2018 Annual Meeting, Reno-Sparks

At the Business Meeting of the Nevada Section SRM on January 14, 2015, the following individuals noted they would be willing to assist with the annual meeting.

1. Ann Bollinger
2. Meagan Carter
3. Charlene (Charlie) Duncan – with the plant identification committee
4. Kathryn Dyer
5. Erica Freese
6. Mark Freese
7. Don Henderson
8. Trina Johnson
9. Kent McAdoo
10. John McLain – Plenary Session
11. Tyler Minor
12. Génie MontBlanc
13. Tina Mudd
14. Patti Novak-Echenique
15. Maggie Orr – willing to help, but not in charge of a committee
16. Rick Orr – willing to help, but not in charge of a committee (due to logistics of living too far away)
17. Tim Rubald
18. Brad Schultz
19. Ryan Shane
20. Ken Vicencio

SRM Nevada Treasurer's Report - Dec 31, 2014

<u>Account</u>	<u>General</u>	<u>Youth</u>	<u>Scholarship</u>	<u>Endowment</u>	<u>HSYF</u> <u>Endowment</u>	<u>Account</u> <u>Balances</u>
Checking	21,979.20	11,215.47	66,124.74	1,445.74	0.00	100,765.15
Savings	8,881.63	3,497.22	2,440.70	23,585.06	11,577.58	49,982.19
American Century Equity Income				20,810.06		20,810.06
Fund Balances	30,860.83	14,712.69	68,565.44	45,840.86	11,577.58	171,557.40

<u>Account Balances</u>	<u>12/31/2014</u>	<u>12/31/2012</u>	<u>12/14/2011</u>	<u>12/31/2010</u>	<u>12/31/2009</u>	<u>12/4/2008</u>
Checking	100,765.15	28,899.65	27,875.60	23,619.85	10,440.15	9,419.90
Savings	49,982.19	49,924.98	49,821.48			
Meridian Growth		29,911.54	26,196.92	26,444.61	8,489.07	13,885.84
Meridian Value		25,667.31	23,233.16	22,335.44	18,942.61	15,165.01
American Century Equity Income	20,810.06	15,615.88	13,099.33	13,633.65	12,026.47	9,917.42
Totals	171,557.40	150,019.35	140,226.49	86,033.55	49,898.30	48,388.17

Summer 2014 Meeting Profit \$ 959.46
Range Camp* \$ 1,476.19

* 2015 HSYF Costs are not included (\$1030+752.20+???)

REPORT

Nevada Section – Society for Range Management

Hope on the Range Booth Outreach & Education

1/15/2015

In 2014 the Nevada Hope on the Range booth did not travel as previously planned and approved. No money was spent from the Section for the booth activities. This was mainly to due personal circumstances of the person in charge of the display. Maria Ryan was laid off from the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA) in the spring and was subsequently hired with the BLM in Ely in the fall. Timing of planned events for the display coincided with required BLM trainings and there was one event that Maria had little notice where the booth might have been displayed. One event in the Carson City area during the summer only had 3 volunteers to work the booth, so Maria cancelled our participation in hopes that next year the Section will have better participation. Maria accepts responsibility for the failure to get the booth to planned events, and plans on getting the booth around the state at a few events 2015. Maria has full support from the Ely BLM to take time to participate with the Nevada Section and promote the Section and booth. She is very grateful for that!

There are several opportunities for the Nevada Section Hope on the Range booth to be displayed. Members and the Board are asked to please consider the following events for 2015.

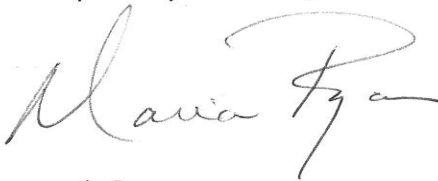
1. **Youth Outdoor Event** – Reno/Carson Area – August 2015. This event in 2013 was a great opportunity to reach youth that are interested in the outdoors. The Nevada Section SRM promoted rangelands, Range Camp, careers in range and educated many children at the initial event in 2013 about plants, habitat, wildlife, livestock grazing, etc. The event is free to booth participants and would be a great event to attend in 2015. Budget - \$300 for hotel and travel. Maria would like to take the lead and attend this event with the booth again this year.
2. **Nevada Cattlemen's Association** – Winnemucca – November 12-14, 2015. The Section usually participates in this event with the booth. Approximate booth cost - \$300 + travel (unless members in the area participate).
3. **Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) Elk Camp** – Las Vegas - December 2015 (may again coincide with NFR and Cowboy Christmas!). RMEF was going to give us a 50% discount for a booth in 2014 which was \$750. Several people have remarked that this is a very good event and now that we have contact with the organizers and a decent (for that event) price, participating in their event would be very beneficial in getting the NV SRM mission and purpose to a new and interested audience. Budget for this event - \$750 booth, \$400 for hotel and travel.
4. Additional events should be considered.

Total cost for all events listed above is approximately \$1750.

Maria also needs approximately \$150 for completing the table top display she purchased the end of 2013. The original panels and posters used in 2013 will be used for the outdoor events and the table top display (or combination of the two) will be used indoors. Maria has rounded up hundreds of photos that need to be mounted on cardboard and Velcro to be used on the display. Cardboard mounts of logos and text will also be included. Maria also wants to get with Kathryn Dyer to purchase promotional items (pens, key chains, USB drives) with the SRM logo and contact information. Kathryn may be purchasing item for Range Camp and there may be better pricing when the orders are combined. Budget for these items - \$250. Total request for ancillary items - \$400.

If you have any questions, please contact Maria Ryan at Lutra.2039@yahoo.com or 702-480-4247 cell, 775-289-1888 work.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Maria Ryan". The signature is fluid and stylized, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Maria Ryan

Science in the Sagebrush Steppe: An Event for College Range and Ag Clubs April 24 & 25, 2015



*"The land manager activity was very beneficial and I learned a lot from this exercise!"
"I really enjoyed myself here... essential for integrating and applying the information I am learning in school."*

Description:

Science in the Sagebrush Steppe is a 2-day workshop for college range and agriculture clubs to gain field experience using a systems approach to management in the sagebrush steppe. Our program is designed entirely around field-based activities with USDA-ARS rangeland and OSU cooperative extension scientists from the Eastern Oregon Agricultural Research Center (EOARC) in Burns, OR lead activities. The event is held at the Northern Great Basin Experimental Range (NGBER) about 35 miles west of Burns, OR. This is a 16,000 acre property administered by USDA-ARS in Burns, OR for the purposes of range and livestock research. A number of plant communities exist on the property reflective of Great Basin sagebrush steppe rangelands. Key components of the event include a team competition where students develop a land management plan. Over the course of the 2-days each team interacts with a "land manager" to address management issues for a specific plot of land they have been assigned. Using the information from the scientists each team creates and presents a management plan for their area. Additional activities include a presentation from a local rancher, a "Dutch oven" cookoff, and a field plant identification exam.

Facilities at NGBER consist of a conference room for meetings and meals, but students will camp. Meals are provided and we have volunteer camp cooks to prepare meals for the event. Indoor restrooms and showers are available.

Background:

Science in the Sagebrush Steppe was first held in April of 2014 with students and advisors from University of Nevada Reno, California State University Humboldt, University of Idaho, and Treasure Valley Community College attending. A total of 20 students participated in this first year. The event evolved in a discussion with Dr. Tamzen Stringham, UNR rangeland professor, who was looking for additional collegial activities for UNR students that were held within the region. EOARC has a long-standing education tradition and the scientists at the station are involved in numerous field-based educational events. EOARC organizer for this event is Dr. Brenda Smith, Education/ Outreach Coordinator.

The High Desert Youth Range Camp for high school students in the Pacific Northwest is also held at this location and we were interested in using similar resources from EOARC for Science in the Sagebrush Steppe college event. Scientists and staff at EOARC are broadly involved in the high school range camp and they were asked to review their activities and prepare for a college student audience. This first event was a great success and everyone was excited about holding future events. In our first year, the event was sponsored by EOARC, Country Natural Beef and Roaring Springs Ranch, Nevada and Pacific Northwest Sections of SRM. We are currently pursuing additional funding sources.

Approach:

The entire event revolves around the “management plan competition” and the field activities all are designed to assist the teams in gaining more knowledge about the land they have been assigned for developing their management plan. We are interested in creating a collaborative learning environment using a systems approach process to synthesize relevant scientific information and identify potential management strategies as teams develop a management plan. We believe this approach improves co-learning, allows student to recognize the value of local knowledge (they work with a field-based land manager/ producer who volunteers to attend the event), and creates a scenario where the knowledge they receive is immediately usable in a simulated “real-life” exercise in management planning.

Each college attending will receive the outline and rules for developing a management plan prior to attending. Teams will be assigned “land to manage” with boundaries marked when they arrive and will work with a volunteer “land manager” to assist the team in developing the management plan. Our land managers are employed with the NRCS, BLM or are a local producer. Throughout the 2 day event, scientists present field-based activities relating to knowledge of soils, plant communities, succession, invasive plants, wildlife and livestock management and adaptive management. Each activity will build upon the information the teams need to develop a management plan. Teams will present their management plans at the end of the event and will be judged. The winning team will receive an award.

Goals:

1. Provide a forum for students to come together get to know each other and have some fun on rangelands.
2. Create an opportunity for a field-based collegiate rangeland competition.
3. Students will practice management concepts and systems approach to managing on a sagebrush steppe rangeland.
4. Gain field experience on Northern Great Basin sagebrush steppe rangeland.
5. Meet scientists, agency land managers and producers who work in eastern Oregon rangelands.

Growing the Program:

We are looking to National SRM to endorse this event and hope that it eventually becomes a national program for college students. This year we will formalize the details and rules of the management plan competition. These materials can be shared to provide a framework for other ARS or Experiment stations to expand this program regionally. We are asking the SRM Board of Directors to consider providing our winning team (4 students) a free registration to the annual meeting as the “award” for the top management plan. We would be excited to explore other opportunities for the National SRM organization to sponsor and grow this event.