

RANGELAND NEWS



NEVADA SECTION – SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT

Spring 2020

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A PRESIDENT PONDERs

Dave Voth, NvSRM President

If there was ever a group that can handle social distancing, it has to be the Nevada Section Members of the Society of Range Management. Most of us have fine-tuned our isolation skills to perfection. I realize that some of you are still unable to go into the field, but for those of you still able to get things done, whether from a home office or in the field, your efforts are appreciated! The land must continue to be managed. There are many things that we could complain about this spring: a worldwide pandemic, dry conditions, a bad cattle market, but I want to focus on some good news...

The annual meeting in Denver last February was focused on Transformation and Translation. It seems ironic that weeks later, we have been given the chance to make real transformation. We have been given the chance to globally reprioritize what is important to humanity. Agriculture has once again been recognized as essential and my hope is that stewardship of the land will soon be valued by the general public.

Not only are producers being recognized by the general public, but also by SRM. My goal as president-elect was to bring more producers into the fold of NV SRM. Last year we had over 30 producers attend either the summer or the winter meeting! The disconnect between producers and SRM is as absurd as the disconnect between the public and the health of public land. If we do not continue this trend of developing the obvious partnerships, then we will never realize the benefit of having the public on our side, especially when it comes to making sound range management decisions.

Let's make the best out of the situation we have been given. People are looking at things with a new perspective and they are looking for new role models. As responsible land managers, we need to continue to do good work, tell our stories of stewardship, and become relevant to the public again.

"In the rush to return to normal, use this time to consider which parts of normal are worth rushing back to" Dave Hollis

P.S. – Please see The Future of Nevada Youth Range Camp information after the Awards Section on Page 4.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Trina Johnson, Membership Chair

NvSRM has 145 active members, but 48 Non-active members since 12/31/2019.

- 12 of the inactive members had been active since before the Reno Meeting
- 36 were new members correlated to the 2018 Reno international meeting or newer; 10 of these were students and 2 were family members.

Request: please submit suggested survey questions to send to lapsed members to determine the reasons for not continuing membership. Send suggestions to Trina at Tmski17@sbcglobal.net.

Thank you everyone that is active; we greatly appreciate you!

STATE OF THE 2020 SUMMER TOUR

Dan Harmon, President Elect

The SRM Nevada section summer meetings have become one of my favorite activities of the year. More than the knowledge I gain at each event, I look forward to seeing familiar faces and meeting wonderful people all dedicated to the rangelands that we all love so much. Planning the summer and winter meetings is the primary duty of the SRM Nevada section president-elect and I was chomping at the bit to take on this task. After being nominated for the president-elect position in January, I could not wait to start planning this year's events. After the national SRM meeting in Denver, I had reached out to an amazing group of professionals that to my great pleasure and surprise were all excited to present at the SRM Nevada section summer meeting. Unfortunately, on March 16th I sent an email informing all the presenters of the 2020 meeting that the event was on hold, postponed due to COVID-19. This was before most states had closed non-essential businesses and any specific guidelines had been given for conducting day to day activities. It is now 7 weeks later and even though many daily activities will hopefully resume soon, the 2020 summer meeting will need to be cancelled this year. It is a very difficult and disappointing decision to make, yet important for everyone's health and safety

who may be at risk during this difficult time. This strange and confusing year is not over though, and I am not giving up on having the participation of our incredible members in some sort of event. Some of the other SRM sections are considering virtual meetings for the remainder of the year. We too are considering the possibilities of a virtual meeting and how that would work. Even though things may be different this year, the well-being of our families, friends and communities is most important to us. I welcome all ideas and feedback: nvsectionwebmaster@gmail.com Take care and I will see you soon on the range!

2019 AWARDS

**Excellence in Range Management Award
Results Oriented Grazing for Ecological Resilience (R.O.G.E.R)**

for improving relationships and communication between land management agencies
and other stakeholders;
for promoting flexibility and science in management
to achieve resource objectives that directly benefit Nevada's rangelands

**Nevada Rangeland Manager of the Year
Cody Coombs**

for his demonstrated leadership, promotion and application of sound management principles,
and high quantity of quality work restoring Nevada's rangelands

**Nevada Rangeland Professional of the Year
Kathryn Dyer**

for her sustained accomplishments in rangeland management,
demonstrated leadership through service to the section and future generations,
and significant contributions for the betterment of Nevada's rangelands

**Great Basin Award
Kirk Davies**

for his pioneering and world-renown contributions to rangeland management
in the Great Basin and beyond;
his research, development and implementation of new procedures and tools
that use the latest science to improve management efficiency and rangeland outcomes;
and for his sustained service to the SRM and other national and community organizations.

THE FUTURE OF NEVADA YOUTH RANGE CAMP

Dave Voth, President, with Maggie Orr

Over the winter the Range Camp team planned and were well on their way to being ready for this year's Camp by creating a spreadsheet of all jobs and responsibilities, which we hadn't had before, and for which various people volunteered to cover everything. Our intent was to continue to consider changes needed, but keep Camp the same this year. Then COVID-19 happened, only seven campers applied, and we had to make the decision to not hold Camp this year. Other big news is we are in need of a new Camp Director. After nine great years as fearless leader, Kathryn Dyer will pass the baton forward. Who will the next Range Camp Director be? Please contact me if you are interested or have questions. What do you think the future of Range Camp should look like?

Because there will be no 2020 Range Camp, a Range Camp subcommittee led by Lewis Mendive has formed to prepare an **alternative means to choose a Nevada delegate to the 2021 High School Youth Forum** at the Boise meeting next February. Should there be no Boise meeting, the Nevada Section will award a scholarship. Please see the NvSRM website for a flyer and announcement of this essay opportunity for high school students.

At the **High School Youth Forum** in Denver, two Nevada delegates presented: Cade Crookshanks spoke on "Sage Grouse in Nevada" and Leanna Sarman's topic was, "Wolves in Nevada, Are They Closer Than You Think?" Leanna wrote about her experience in Denver:

My name is Leanna Sarman; I am a junior at Spring Creek High School. I am active and an officer in my local FFA, Grange, and 4-H clubs. I am a fifth-generation Nevada rancher and am living on my family's ranch in Spring Creek, Nevada. I enjoy showing cattle, public speaking, welding, horseback riding and working on the family ranch. I was selected by the Nevada section to represent Nevada at the High School Youth Forum in Denver Colorado. I was honored to be selected and had an amazing time. I became friends with all of the amazing kids who attended also. In fact, we all still keep in touch. We braved sketchy McDonalds together and packed WAY too many people on the hotel elevators. We all learned a lot from each other not only from our presentations but, from learning about each other's different cultures. For example, the Canadian didn't know what sweet tea was until he met a Texan. We all also learned how to dance from each other at the dance. I had no idea each state danced so differently!

We got the opportunity to talk to some incredible people in the rangeland profession face to face and heard some super cool talks. We also went to some super cool places on our ecological tour. On the tour, we went to an award-winning ranch for their rangeland management and got to learn how they solve the rangeland issues that they faced every day. We also went to a wildlife reserve that was once a storage place for military weapons, and military training grounds. The Reserve had to face many issues from the chemicals in the soil leftover from the reserve's army days and from when it was used to test chemicals. At the Reserve, we also got to see the Bison they are raising. I had an amazing time and learned a lot! I brought what I learned back to the family ranch to better improve our rangelands. My passion for rangeland has grown even greater after this amazing trip!

Thank you, Nevada Society for Range Management for this amazing opportunity!

Last Fall, Maggie sent out a questionnaire to past campers for input to consider as we make decisions and got some interesting and humorous results... In my opinion, these answers define what we need to decide – do we want to do this camp for those who want to be there, or do we want to get as many kids there as possible that

may or may not want to be there.... And, what time commitment can the adults involved provide. Let your thoughts be heard... The survey responses are at the end of the newsletter and paint a good picture of Range Camp. Some will give you a chuckle. Thank you to Kathryn for her long commitment to Range Camp.

2019 WINTER MEETING – ELKO

Dave Voth article for *The Nevada Rancher*

When cell phones first became popular many people swore that they would never use them. Fast forward to 2020, it is a rare exception to meet someone that doesn't have and use a cell phone on a regular basis. A similar aversion to new technology has too often put the beef industry and land management behind the times. The Nevada Section of the Society for Range Management attempted to tackle this technology phobia and put on a one-day workshop on emerging technologies specifically for ranchers and agency folks.

Technology can be one of the most frustrating parts of any job. The workshop created a low-stress learning environment where attendees could start at their own skill level and walk away with new skills that would help in their everyday work environment.

The day started with brief introductions to four mapping technologies: Google Earth, Web Soil Survey, Rangeland Analysis Platform (RAP), and Climate Engine. This diverse selection was chosen so that there would be something for everyone. Beginners and technological pros alike were able to learn something new. Pete Mori of the Mori Ranch said, "Coming from someone who is not very 'tech-savvy' I found these tools to be user-friendly and feel it was time well spent to attend. The instructors were very helpful, knowledgeable, and available to answer questions."

The presentations gave a general overview of what each product can accomplish. The real value of the workshop came after the presentations; each presenter held a hands-on training session. The event was held in the Great Basin College Computer Lab, and each attendee had access to a computer where they could build a map of whatever they found to be most helpful. Some built soil maps of their operation using Web Soil Survey, others used RAP to remotely identify cover of an area. Hands-on application varied from creating fence lines on Google Earth to using the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) that Climate Engine provides. The ratio of instructors to students allowed not only for all questions to be answered in detail but to have one-on-one time with an instructor that could walk a novice through any portion of the process. Attendees were encouraged to learn about what interested them the most and to take a break if the technology became overwhelming.

Carol Evans, former Fisheries Biologist from Elko BLM said, "I thought it was outstanding. Of particular interest to me is the use of NDVI for tracking riparian areas: For those interested in tracking the response of riparian areas to changes in management over time, the use of the NDVI metric in Climate Engine provides a powerful tool. Making such a powerful tool available for public use has the potential to greatly accelerate and expand riparian recovery, particularly as it relates to livestock grazing management."

This workshop owes a tremendous thank you to the sponsors and presenters, particularly to the Nevada Ag Foundation for covering registration fees for any producers in attendance. As well as the Nevada Rangeland Resource Commission for hosting a fantastic lunch catered by Sisters Food Service. NvSRM was pleased there were over 14 producers in attendance. The handy handout from the meeting follows:



Google Earth as a tool for ranchers - Jon Griggs, Maggie Creek Ranch

Google Earth is a relatively easy and free way for ranchers to map their ranch. Fences, weed treatments, production records, burned areas, future improvements and pasture monitoring are just a few of the things you can keep track of with Google Earth. And did we mention it's free? <https://www.google.com/earth/>

Web Soil Survey - Paul Meiman, UNR Cooperative Extension & AVRS and Patti Novak-Echenique, USDA-NRCS

Come learn how to begin using the Web Soil Survey to help you remotely identify characteristics of soils and rangeland plant communities on the land you manage. With this (and some time to consolidate data), you can build useful custom maps and reports of soils, plant community information, forage production, and more.

<https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/WebSoilSurvey.aspx>

Approved Ecological Site Descriptions are available on Ecosystem Dynamics Interpretive Tool (EDIT)
<https://edit.jornada.nmsu.edu/>

For other areas in Nevada (mostly) Older Ecological Site Descriptions, Disturbance Response Groups Reports and related information are available through the UNR Rangeland Ecology Lab
https://naes.unr.edu/rangeland_ecology/reports-and-downloads/

Rangeland Analysis Platform - Thad Heater, NRCS

The Rangeland Analysis Platform is an innovative online mapping tool that can be used by anyone. Learn more about how this free tool provides quick landscape scale snapshots of rangeland vegetation allowing users to easily compare trends in rangeland resources through time. The tool allows users to track yearly changes in cover for annuals, perennials, shrubs, trees, and bare ground dating back to 1984. <https://rangelands.app/>

Climate Engine - Dan McEvoy, Desert Research Institute

Climate Engine uses Google's Earth Engine for on-demand processing of satellite and climate data via a web browser. With the tool you can analyze and interact with climate and earth observations for decision support related to drought, water use, agriculture, wildfire, and ecology. <http://climateengine.org/>

Some other apps...mostly smartphone. These are just a handful of Apps we brainstormed. There are many, many more out there!

Land PKS (Land Potential Knowledge System) - NRCS A free mobile phone app connected to global databases, models, and cloud based storage. Land PKS is a system for storing and accessing user data, as well as providing access to knowledge that can inform sustainable land management. <https://landpotential.org/> (NOTE: Data, including location, are logged and publicly available).

SoilWeb - Explore soil survey areas using an interactive Google map. View detailed information about map units and their components. This app runs in your web browser and is compatible with desktop computers, tablets, and smartphones. **SoilWeb Earth** - Soil survey data are delivered dynamically in a KML file, allowing you to view mapped areas in a 3-D display. You must have Google Earth or some other means of viewing KML files installed on your desktop computer, tablet, or smartphone.
<https://casoilresource.lawr.ucdavis.edu/soilweb-apps>

EDD Maps - Real time tracking of invasive species occurrences; Local and national distribution maps; Electronic early detection reporting tools; Library of identification and management information
<https://www.eddmaps.org/> and http://agri.nv.gov/Plant/Noxious_Weeds/Useful_Forms_Page/

Pasture Map - PastureMap is grazing management and cattle software. Calculate stocking rate, carrying capacity, planned grazing, cattle records, grazing records. Available for purchase. <https://pasturemap.com/>

GrassSnap - Snapshots of your Grasslands! Monitoring is the key to good rangeland/pasture management and photo-monitoring can be a straight forward tool to use. With GrassSnap, photo-monitoring is a snap! This app assists producers in grabbing repeatable photo-monitoring data, and saving it on their smart device in an orderly fashion so it can be downloaded to the home computer to study.
<https://extension.unl.edu/statewide/centralsandhills/grasssnap/>

Nevada Wildflowers – This App helps find and identify plants. When you give the App information about a plant, such as its location, flower color and the time of year, the App will quickly show you which plants match your selections. The App includes 2569 species of plants found in Nevada. Find it on GooglePlay and the App Store. **NOTE: There are a BUNCH of plant ID apps out there, so it is worth looking around and asking folks what they have had good luck with.**

Range App - Nevada Department of Agriculture monitoring app – **COMING SOON!**
http://agri.nv.gov/Plant/Rangeland_Health/Rangeland_Health_Program/

NEVADA NEWS

~~Barry Perryman and Jared Talley were keynote speakers at the National Association of Conservation Districts meeting in Las Vegas in early February.

~~Ethan Mower has taken over the NvSRM Treasurer position. Thank you to Erica Freese who served NvSRM long and well in that role!

~~At the SRM meeting in Denver NvSRM President Dave Voth became the Vice Chair to the Advisory Council and will represent the Advisory Council and Nevada at SRM Board of Director's meetings.

2019 RANGE CAMP SURVEY

Do you like the length of camp? Do you feel it should be shorter or longer?

it is a perfect length. // I loved the length, I would have stayed longer if I could! // Perfect length. Longer would be great - but in reality kids and families these days are short on time with so many things pulling on them. Definitely not shorter though! Need that week to acclimate, settle in, learn, grow up a bit... // I think the length of camp is appropriate as an "introductory course." I think it would be valuable especially to campers who have attended range camp previously to lengthen the length of camp and spend a full day on each topic. // I think the camp is a perfect length, not too long and not too short. Not so long that it becomes repetitive and boring, and not too short to where you don't get to know everyone and learn everything you can. Although I'd never turn down a longer camp!

Where would you like Range Camp to be held in Nevada? Do you have any suggestions?

We really like the location the resource is good and it is far enough away that you feel like you are camping but close enough if we need something. The ranch is very gracious to let us be there // Austin was my favorite place to go! It might be cool to take the camp more north but I feel Austin was the perfect location. // I think it would be interesting to see range camp at a couple different places every year, just to mix it up a little bit more. I know as far as planning and coordinating though, that can be a nightmare. // SMITH CREEK RANCH IT's a beautiful ranch. It has tons of history, it's beautiful, and Sam (The manager of the ranch?) adds an experience to the camp that I don't think can be replaced. Like Shirm.

What do you enjoy the most about Range Camp?

Meeting new people, I really like all the lessons we learn a lot. // I enjoyed doing the compass night activities well as learning about the Pinion Juniper. // I most enjoy applying topics we have learned to the conservation projects and sitting down to discuss how it is applied in the real world with the Bighorn Sheep Foundation.

What do you like the least about Range Camp?

The campers who are disrespectful. They run around camp and then they don't listen during the presentations // I least enjoyed feeling rushed and having camp counselors who couldn't answer questions. I know it is just whoever you guys can get to volunteer to counsel, but it is frustrating when you have simple plant ID questions that they cannot answer. // The wait for it. I haven't been able to get the camp out of my head. Also the end, that sucks.

What would you keep the same about Range Camp?

I really like camp just the way it is. // I would keep the location or one similar to it. Not having cellphone service, getting to camp, and be outside all the time was the best part of camp. // I would definitely keep the cooking the same. I really enjoy the plant ID and the practical application. // I'd like to keep everything the same. This camp is seriously the best thing about summer

What would you change about Range Camp?

I wish the boys were better behaved. The food was not great. It is hard to cook for a group but kids don't like onions and tomatoes in everything. Maybe put some stuff on the side so we can pick because if you don't like one thing it ruins your whole dinner. I like meat and potatoes- I eat like a ranch kid but some of it just wasn't that good // I would try to coordinate with Nevada FFA on the time frame for doing camp. I know this can be super hard to do but I wish I could have done both. // I would like to see more practical application throughout the camp.

The only application that campers are able to see is during the ranch conservation project. I would like to see more collaborating between campers and teachers. I think it would even be interesting to be able to work with environmental managers and technicians from mines to see how it all is similar and what is different in a scenario outside of universities or government agencies. // MORE FIRE!!! Also maybe making a specific Facebook page or something would be nice where everyone could post pictures and be able to easily find info to show to their friends. To try to get them to come as well.

Why do your friends not come to Range Camp? What reason(s) do they give?

I don't know if they can camp as long as me. I will try to get more people this year. // They were never interested or they wanted to go to FFA leadership camp instead. My FFA advisor was also never very good about spreading the word about camp. // Most of my friends are not interested in wildlife, or going to BFE to take one shower over the span of one week while camping having no cell service, or learning about dirt. All of which makes this the greatest camp ever!

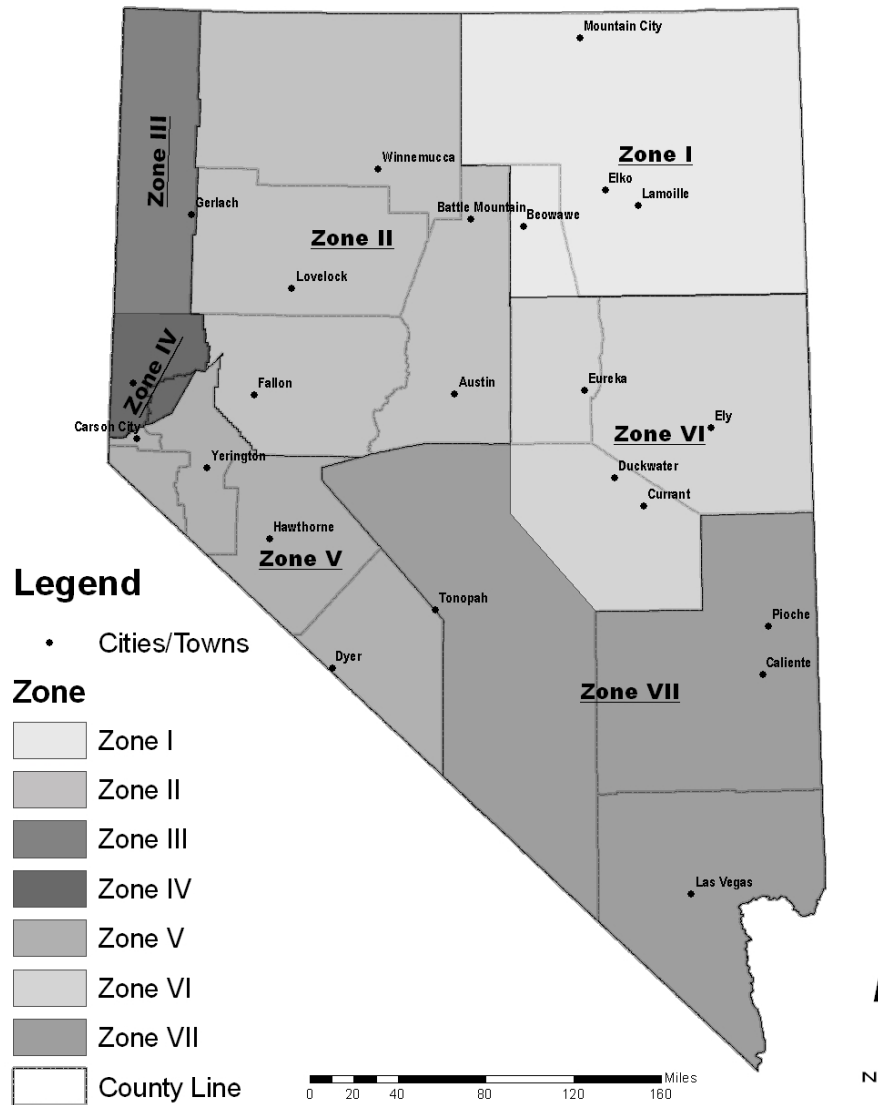
General Comments

I think we need to get information to all of the schools better, maybe giving it to the science teachers or the ag science teachers so they can personally ask students. // Overall this is the best camp I have ever been to. // First off, I miss range camp and I definitely miss your cooking. I attended range camp for 4 years (8th grade-Junior year of high school). When I stopped attending camp it was because the information was very repetitive and I was moving on with my life (working and pursuing my career in veterinary medicine). I do miss attending camp to because I did learn so much from camp, had amazing opportunities, and made lifelong friends and connections.

// Thank you so much for this email. You have no clue how much joy this brought me, just seeing an email about range camp. For the last 2 weeks or so I haven't been able to get range camp off my mind! So seeing this made me so happy! // Thank you so much for reaching out. This put the biggest smile on my face! And I can't wait for the summer to come! And thank you so much for cooking for the camp! It's always delicious and makes coming back to camp for Breakfast, Lunch, or Dinner as exciting as watching ants crawl up Sherm while he talks about the wonders of the streams!

// How about a Range Camp reunion for all the past attendees? I'm sure there would be issues such as funding, etc., however maybe it could be a way to get the past attendees to come back and maybe help or volunteer? I also remember one of the reasons my son didn't go sooner was he had never heard about it until his Ag teacher asked him one year why he wasn't going. Not sure how it is publicized at the high schools, but perhaps are ways to publicize it better? What about a challenge to alumni to "sponsor" one kid to go? // Thanks for asking for our input! You guys do a GREAT job!!! THANK YOU

**Please help make the future of Nevada Youth Range Camp big and bright !!!
Share your ideas and concerns, and see if there is a way you can be involved !!!**



visit <https://nevada.rangelands.org/>