

THE PLAINSMAN

SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT
NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS SECTION

JUNE 2006



President's Message

Lance Vermeire, NGP-SRM President

We have had a good early spring to follow last year's impressive growing season. However, the water tap was shut off for May and fuel costs are up, having many thinking about drought, wildfires and increased feed costs. How quickly things can change!

Rangelands and the people who manage them are constantly bombarded by various forces threatening change. In the northern plains, we commonly find ourselves faced with drought, wildfire, high costs of feeding animals, and weed invasions. We often apply a similar response to each of these agents of change. We hope. We hope it will rain, we hope fire will not change our management or cause negative shifts in the plant community, we hope costs of feeding will come down, and we hope weeds will remain someone else's problem.

We know that the northern plains is a climate-driven system, in which drought and fire are natural and inevitable. We also know feeding animals is among the greatest input costs for livestock producers and weeds are among the most likely sources of lasting change in rangelands. Less clear, is the list of alternatives that may allow us to be more proactive in our management. How deeply affected by drought do we have to be before we take action? Should grazing practices be changed to mitigate fire effects? Should we hope for reduced feed prices or can we alter management to reduce demand? If noxious weeds are in the area, are there things that can be done to prevent their establishment and spread?

We would like to highlight research addressing proactive management of drought, fire, animal nutrition, and weeds in a symposium and field tour of Fort Keogh. You are invited to submit oral or poster presentations on these topics. The **symposium and tour** will be held in conjunction with the Northern Great Plains Section meeting in **Miles City, MT** this fall.

Please mark **October 11-12** on your calendars and plan to join us in Miles City to discuss opportunities for the section and the management of our rangelands. **Please submit abstracts to me by August 1.** A detailed agenda and available CEUs will be provided in September.

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Who's Who?

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Mark your calendars! Upcoming events:

Montana Range Days, June
19—21, 2006, Clyde Park,
MT

Native Prairie Appreciation
Week , Matador Grassland
Tour, June 21-22, 2006,
Beechy, SK

Weed Control Workshop,
July 7– 8, 2006, Lisbon, ND

NGP Section Meeting, Oct
11-12, 2006, Miles City, MT

Do you know of an upcoming event? Want to report on a past event? Do you have new information to share? Send information for **The Plainsman** to Elaine Grings at elaine@larrl.ars.usda.gov.

The Plainsman is published 4 times per year. The deadline for the next issue is **August 20, 2006**. We welcome information on events, current projects, research results, extension activities, and items of general interest to the membership.

Future newsletters are scheduled for the first week of September, and December. Please have information and article submitted by the 20th of the preceding month.

Herbicide Wipers: How Low Can You Go?

- Submitted by Ron Moss, Community Pastures A/Tech Transfer Coordinator (AAFC-PFRA) -

Herbicides applied with a carpet wiper can control both low and high densities of aspen and balsam poplar (Bowes, 1996). With the right equipment, this technique can be used on aspen suckers and trees up to 16 feet tall.

Applications on Saskatchewan Provincial Pastures, AAFC-PFRA Community Pastures and by Henry Rosing (from the EUR Ranch, Lake Francis, MB), have consistently found that glyphosate wipers can control brush at a reasonable cost per acre, and that they are easy and relatively inexpensive to build. These wipers are selective for the species you want to kill. They are also safe and very effective on bush up to 8 feet tall. Bowes' research found that if an operator can achieve adequate initial herbicide coverage, follow-up treatments are not required for a very long time.

Basically, an herbicide wiper is a folded length of carpet attached to a linear frame. A spray boom soaks the carpet from the inside of the fold. The carpet has to be kept saturated and slightly dripping to get enough herbicide on the trees. The percent of glyphosate in the solution varies and is probably dependant on the age of the trees. Both AAFC-PFRA and Henry Rosing have used the 25-30 % solution, but Saskatchewan Provincial Pasture staff have been applying herbicide at rates as low as 17-18 % with success.

It should be said, however, that there are drawbacks or limitations with any technique. Many herbicide wipers are built to be front-mounted on skidders or tractors. This positioning allows for ease of movement around obstacles and makes it easier to see whether the carpet is staying adequately saturated. The title of this article refers to the clearance of the machine above grasses and forbs – **if the bottom of the carpet or the machine (clearance) is touching the grass and legumes, you will kill a lot of valuable forage.** With front-mounted wipers, herbicide can also get on the wheels or tracks of the machine,

killing some forage. However, this problem can be reduced when the wiper has a wider boom.

If you are unable to wipe at a lower height, the carpet will not make contact with species of low shrub that grow into taller regrowth (such as rose and western snowberry), thereby reducing or eliminating the possibility of effective control. Ronald Stanley (Bield AAFC-PFRA Pasture Manager) prefers to graze a field before treating it with a herbicide wiper. This temporarily reduces the height of valuable forage species, but gives him the opportunity to treat shorter regrowth and shrubs without contacting the forage.

A wiper has advantages over aerial spraying for areas that contain patchy regrowth, but there are still issues to consider. If you drive around poplar groves with too wide a boom, the excess dripping of herbicide (that results from the part of the boom not coming into contact with any trees or shrubs) will kill your forages. If you have a lot of patchy areas in your pasture, you may want to install solenoids or valves that will stop the flow at the outside edges of the wings. Another alternative would be to have smaller booms.

AAFC-PFRA Pasture Managers Dwayne Whitehead and Ronald Stanley have noted an accelerated mortality rate in aspen when the tree is abraded by a skidder blade while being wiped. This supports Bowes' research findings. There may be some benefit (particularly with larger regrowth) in attaching a bark scraper (such as sharpened angle iron) to the front of a wiper. Along with the action of scraping the tree and physically damaging it, the scrape will provide another herbicide entry point besides the leaves. More herbicide translocating to the roots will kill the tree quicker.

References cited:

Bowes, G. 1996. Wiper applied herbicides to manage brush. Final Report. Saskatoon Research Centre. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Saskatoon, SK.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

Randall Gaebe, Bowman ND
 Jason Holt, Hindale MT
 Sue Michalsky, Esatend, SK
 Deb Reichman, Sidney, MT
 Rose Stoneberg, Hinsdale, MT
 Jay Volk, Center, ND

How to Attack Canada Thistle

-submitted by Ron Moss, A/Tech Transfer Coordinator, AAFC – Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration, Dauphin, MB

The Canada Thistle in some Manitoba pastures is so thick and tall that it actually acts as a physical barrier to grazing cattle!

Unfortunately, that is what some producers farming near Saskram, Manitoba, are dealing with these days. On a positive note, staff with Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI) and AAFC-PFRA are in the process of trying to find solutions to this problem.

Marney McCracken, Farm Production Advisor (MAFRI), is conducting a herbicide trial on one area pasture, owned by Rod Berezowecki, testing three different rates of Grazon®. In 2003, Grazon® was applied to this pasture by Bill Gardiner, specialist with Manitoba Crown Lands, using a quad sprayer. After two years of testing, the initial results are encouraging, as very little Canada Thistle can be found in the treated areas. MAFRI will continue to monitor these sites to see if higher application rates have any residual effect and are able to keep the weed in check.

The May 2004 issue of *Cattlemen's Magazine* contained an article on thistle control. One of the methods discussed in the article was the application of Grazon® using a herbicide wiper. According to the article, the results were very good, as the Canada Thistle decreased dramatically. In previous trials, the authors had applied glyphosate using a wiper attachment, with significant kills of legumes and broad leaved plants. Both Pasquia Pasture Manager Randy Dreger and former Manager Danny Pearson have applied glyphosate using a wiper, with good results. Successful results using a wiper depend on two factors: the amount of herbicide the operator applies onto the specific target species; and the machine used to apply the herbicide.

For instance, if the wiper is mounted ahead of the machine, some of the glyphosate may accumulate underneath it. If the clearance is not set high enough, the herbicide will contact the forage and potentially kill some or all of it. However, a pull-behind wiper can eliminate this problem.

Any method that can entice cattle into an area to graze, such as spreading salt or molasses, can also help control weed problems. By attracting cattle onto an infected field, they may eliminate the target species by eating and trampling. In 2004, a remote watering system (pipeline and trough) was installed to concentrate cattle on areas of Canada Thistle, resulting in a noticeable decrease.

Dr. Edward Bork, a professor at the University of Alberta, has conducted studies which show that heavy stocking rates over short grazing periods can decrease Canada Thistle significantly. Livestock are less selective at a high-stocking density and, as a result, inclined to consume the thistle. Trampling also contributes to mortality of the plant.

Greg Simmons, the manager of Ensign Ranches in Utah, spread molasses on the Canada Thistle growing on his land, to entice his cattle to eat it. And eat it they did. In fact, in subsequent years the cattle readily consumed the weeds, even though the thistle was not treated with the molasses.

In 2004, this method was applied at the AAFC-PFRA Pasquia Community Pasture, but with poor results. This can be attributed to two factors. First, the test field contained yearling heifers that were very easily frightened by the quad sprayer while it was applying the molasses. Secondly, the forage in the test field was lush and abundant, resulting in little interest by cattle of the weed. Despite the result, this method will be tested again in future.

The feed value of Canada Thistle is quite high, and some livestock will readily consume it at certain stages of growth, from initial bolting to first flower. However, one drawback to this method is the possibility of nitrate poisoning in the cattle after a frost.

For more information on this article, please contact Ron Moss at (204)638-6108.



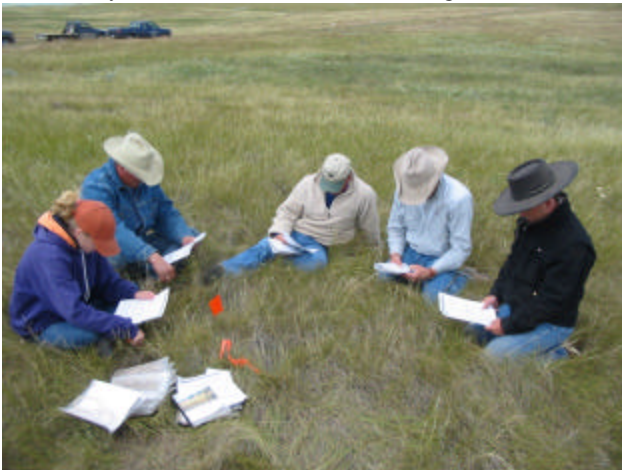
Range Health Assessment in Saskatchewan

-submitted by Krista Connick, Prairie Parkland Chapter Communication and Promotions Director, and Julie MacKenzie, Prairie Parkland Chapter Youth Director

A group of government and conservation agencies in Saskatchewan has joined forces to overhaul and standardize the way that ecological health assessments are done in the province. Following Alberta's lead, a new riparian, native range, forest and tame pasture assessment methodology is being developed for Saskatchewan. The first draft of the riparian, forest and native range assessment guidebooks will be available for the upcoming field season. Test groups of pasture managers and field staff have already been trained in the new methodologies and have begun to use them in the field, testing for applicability and usefulness in the approach. Ten additional workshops will be held this summer to field-test the workbooks and train extension staff and livestock producers on the new methodologies.

The new range health protocol is an expansion on the traditional range condition concept. While the range condition only looked at species composition, the new range health methodology adds ratings for litter cover, structure, susceptibility for erosion, and invasive plant species. This new protocol gives a more complete look at the essential functions of native prairie. Another major benefit lies in having a standardized methodology for ecological health assessment across the province and between agencies.

Work is currently being undertaken to define reference plant communities and expected litter levels on different range sites. Defining target litter levels on tame pastures is also a challenge. A "Soil Indicators of Range Health" Workshop will be held in Swift Current, SK on May 31 and June 1st, for professional and extension staff from Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Manitoba. Guest speakers for the workshop will be Dr. David Pyke (USGS – Oregon) and Dr. Jeff Herrick (USDA-ARS – New Mexico). David and Jeff were recently awarded the SRM Outstanding Achievement Award for their work on the USA Rangeland Health Team.



Many thanks to the team at Alberta Sustainable Resource Development and Alberta Cows and Fish for helping to get this project up and running. This project to overhaul and standardize the way that ecological health assessments are done in the province has been funded through the Technical Assistance Component of Greencover Canada.

MEMBER NEWS:

Dr. Marshall Haferkamp, Rangeland Scientist with USDA-ARS will be retiring July 31, 2006.

Area Farmers and Ranchers Invited to Attend the Innovative Weed Control Workshop on July 7-8, 2006 in Lisbon, North Dakota

Pasture weeds got your goat? Farmers and ranchers who are looking for ways to improve profits and control the spread of weeds are invited to attend an upcoming workshop sponsored by local County Weed Boards, Sheyenne Valley Grazing Association, Soil Conservation Districts, and Resource Conservation and Development Councils in partnership with the US Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and NDSU Extension Service. The **Innovative Weed Control Workshop** will be held at the Eagles Club in Lisbon, ND on July 7 and 8, 2006.

In addition to hearing from a top research panel, farmers and ranchers will have an opportunity to learn from their peers about various weed control methods -- including goat and sheep grazing, biological, traditional, and integrated approaches to weed control. Friday's program (July 7) will include lunch, an evening barbeque, and a presentation by North Dakota entertainer Tom Gibson. Saturday's program (July 8) will consist of tours to treated sites in the area, followed by an afternoon barbeque. Don't miss this enjoyable opportunity to visit with specialists and other producers from across the state. Registration forms will be available through your local Soil Conservation Districts, FSA, and NRCS field offices. Contact Becky Myhra, Richland County Soil Conservation District, at 701-642-5997 (extension 3) for a workshop agenda.

On the Road Again....

*Submitted by Julie MacKenzie- Prairie Parkland Chapter Youth Director and Mae Elsinger, PPC Manitoba director.
Please contact Mae at (204) 578-3635 or elsingerm@agr.gc.ca for more information*

Did you know? Students from across North America put their interests and skills to work on various exams at the annual SRM meeting, hoping to place high in the competitions. Some of the more successful students spend 200-300 hours studying for the *Plant ID Exam* and 50-100 hours studying for the *Undergraduate Range Management Exam (URME)*.

What do they get? The US Bureau of Land Management and US Forest Service host trips to agency field offices, or their headquarters in Washington D.C. for first place winners of the *Plant ID contest* and the *URME*. For highest *combined score* in both contests, the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service sponsors a similar first place award.

What about 2nd place? Canadian organizations and individuals have teamed up to host and sponsor a tour for the runner-up of the *Combined Score Award*!! This will be a treat for a student who has put considerable effort into both contests.

Where are they going? Possibilities for tour stops in Western Canada are endless. They are planned based on support from agencies, interest groups, and interested individuals. The tour will start in Edmonton, mosey on through the University of Alberta Kinsella Ranch, catch some of the Native Prairie Appreciation Week Tour in Beechy, swing by the AAFC- research station in Swift Current, visit some southern ranches, and land on a Duck's Unlimited Canada project.

Who is Helping? The Range and Biodiversity Division of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada-PFRA will host our guest. Ducks Unlimited Canada, Prairie Conservation Action Plan, the SRM International Mountain Section, the SRM Prairie Parkland chapter, and various interested individuals are all contributing cash or in-kind financial support.

How Can I Help? We still need sponsorship, either in-kind or cash, for this year and for the years to come. What an excellent opportunity to showcase the Northern Great Plains, and highlight your organization or livestock operation!! Contact Mae for more details.

What is our vision? Our vision is a long-term arrangement where Canada can continue to showcase Canadian range management work to deserving students participating in the Annual SRM Meetings, but at this point the project only applies for 2006.

So, Who is Visiting This Year? (We know this has been your burning question since the beginning of the article...) The very lucky lady is Jennifer Coleman from Brigham Young University in Utah. Jennifer was ecstatic when she learned of the trip. Watch for upcoming articles and pictures of Jennifer's trip to the Northern Great Plains and Canada!!

Range Days is Coming!

The Park County Range Committee has been busy preparing for the 30th annual Montana Range Days. Montana's largest range education seminar will be held June 19th -21st. The event is open to all age groups interested in Montana's range land. Range Days is hosted by the Park Conservation District, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Northern Ag Network, and the Local Range Days Committee.

Range Days headquarters will be at the Shields Valley High School in Clyde Park. The range workshops and testing sites will be in carefully selected sites near Clyde Park. Workshops will focus on plant anatomy and identification, range sites/soils, plant inventory/monitoring, range planning, and livestock stocking rate/utilization. Individuals from ages four to adult may participate in these specially tailored workshops. An alternative to the workshops is the Adult Range Management Tour, which will include a tour of Yellowstone Nation Park.

The range contestant divisions include Buckaroos (4-8 years), Super Starters (9-11 years), Wranglers (12-13 years), Youth (14-19 years), and Open Youth through Adult (14- 114 years).

Registration will start Monday June 19th at the Shields Valley High School from 10:00 AM till 6:00 PM. The Plant ID workshops will be Monday from 2:00 Pm to 4:30 PM. Dinner will be a fundraiser served by the Clyde Park Rural Fire Department at 5:00 PM followed by Illustrated Talks at 6:30 PM.

Tuesday June 20th is the largest day of the event. Registration will re-open at 7:00 AM. Rotating workshops will begin at 8:00 AM. Tuesday's Adult Range Management Tours will begin at 8:15 AM. A BBQ lunch will be served for those participating. Everyone will return to Clyde Park for the banquet around 5:00 PM, which will be followed by a dance at the community hall.

The Competition will continue on Wednesday, June 21st from 8:00 AM till noon. Following the contest everyone will return to the High School for lunch and the rewards program.

Registration Fees: Individual \$30, Family \$80 prior to June 1st. After June 1st 5\$ will be added to the fees. The fees take care of workshop materials and meals with the exception of dinner Monday evening. Overnight accommodations can be found south of Clyde Park in Livingston.

The Park County Range Days Committee hopes to see you at the 30th annual Montana Range Days. If you want more information contact the Park Conservation District at 406-222-3701 or Amy Miller at amy.miller@mt.nacdnet.net or the Montana Range Days web site at <http://montanarangedays.com>.

A Letter From Samantha Gundlach, Gerald Sharp Memorial Scholarship recipient from Montana State University

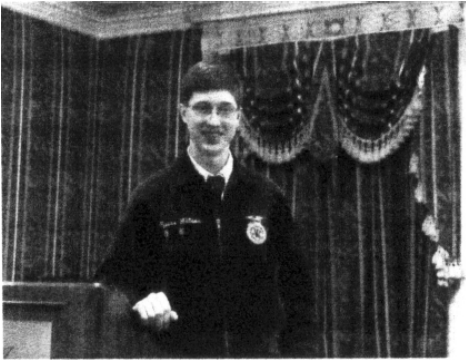
I am so honored that you chose me to receive the Northern Great Plains/Gerald Sharp Memorial Scholarship for the upcoming school year. I know there was probably a long list of applicants, and I want to assure you that the scholarship will be put to good use, especially when book buying season rolls around.

I grew up on a ranch outside of Ekalaka, South Eastern Montana, and that beginning led me to where I am now, a senior in the Range Science department. I recently added an Economics major as well, and I plan to use the two majors in conjunction and enter the farm loan field.

Once again I want to thank you so much for the scholarship, and to encourage you to continue your support of the students of the College of Ag at MSU, it is sincerely appreciated.

Sincerely,

Samantha Gundlach
Bozeman, MT



A Letter from Spurr Watson, High School Youth Forum Delegate:

Dear Northern Great Plains Section of the Society of Range Management,

Thank you so much for the \$300 that you sent me for my trip to Vancouver, British Columbia. The money that you sent went toward my plane ticket. I had a very enjoyable time and it was a chance of a lifetime. I was able to meet people from all over the country and was able to make lifelong friends. In addition I had an opportunity to see agriculture in Vancouver and learn more about urban agriculture. Because of this trip it solidified my plan to make range science my intended major in college.

Sincerely,

Spurr Watson
President Huntley Project FFA 2005 – 2006.

Evaluating Forage Stand Establishment Success, *submitted by Michel Tremblay*

Forages can be a challenge to get established. Small seeded forages can be difficult to meter and place at the correct seeding depth. When in the soil, forage seeds and seedlings are susceptible to drought, insect damage and competition from other plants growing in the field. Despite the challenges, a well-established forage stand will pay dividends in many years of optimal production. Every newly seeded field will have to be evaluated to determine the success of establishment.

Plant density is the primary measurement when evaluating stand establishment. Evaluate new forage stands in the fall of the seeding year or in the spring following the seeding year. Plant densities should be determined at several points along a line crossing the entire field in order to have an accurate and comprehensive assessment of establishment. Densities of 3-5 plants per square foot or greater are considered necessary for optimal production. Creeping rooted species may fill in thin stands over time.



Satisfactory stand 4 plants/ft²



Fair stand of 2 plants/ft²



Poor stand of <1 plant/

The workshop and tours will be based out of Beechy, Saskatchewan.

ACCOMMODATIONS ARE LIMITED SO PLEASE RESERVE EARLY TO ENSURE YOU HAVE SOMEWHERE TO STAY!!!

Accommodations within 30 minutes from Beechy:

Coteau Country Inn (Beechy) 859-2246
Beechy Hotel 859-2233
Double L Motel (Lucky Lake) 858-2008
Clearwater Lake 375-2726
Demaine Hotel 858-2027

Accommodations more than 30 minutes from Beechy:

Tumbleweed Inn (Kyle) 375-2335
Kyle Hotel 375-2222
Elrose Motel 378-2223
Elrose Tavern 378-2223
Irrigation Centre Motel (Outlook) 867-8633

**Mainstay Inn (Riverhurst) 353-2077
**Riverside Inn (Riverhurst) 353-2211

Camping accommodations:

Less than 30 minutes from Beechy:
Prairie Lake Regional Park (Beechy) 859-2143
Clearwater Lake Regional Park 375-2726

More than 30 minutes from Beechy:

Elrose Regional Park 378-2277
Sask Landing Provincial Park (Bear Paw, Riverside and Sagebrush Campground) 375-5527
Kyle Campground 375-2331
**Palliser Regional Park (Riverhurst) 353-4604
**Riverhurst Campground 353-2220

****Remember that you will need adequate time to take the Riverhurst ferry over to Beechy. The ferry runs 24 hours and leaves the west shore on the half hour and leaves the east shore on the hour. Please call 306-353-6250 for ferry information.**



"The native prairie is to be sustained in a healthy state in which natural and human values are respected"

Saskatchewan's Eighth Annual

Native Prairie Appreciation Week

Runs from June 18 to 24, 2006



Needle and Thread
Saskatchewan's Provincial Grass

Partners



Society for Range Management



 Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada / Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada



Saskatchewan Watershed Authority



Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food



Ducks Unlimited Canada
CANADA'S WATERFOWL CENTRAL



Saskatchewan Stockgrowers Association

Funding for this workshop provided by
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's
Greencover Canada Program



Government of Saskatchewan

Discovering The Matador Grasslands



A workshop and tour
held in conjunction with
*Native Prairie
Appreciation Week*

June 21 – 22, 2006

Beechy, Saskatchewan

Divisions

Beginning Buckaroos (4-8 years old)

An instructional/social program offered for the little tykes, permitting parents to take an active part in Range Days. The day and a half program will provide meaningful activities to help foster interest in Range Days competition when the youngsters are older.

Super Starters (9-11 years old)

Super Starters will spend time exploring rangeland and having fun naming range plants. They will compete for several awards including "Top Super Starter" and the Super Starter 4-H Team Award.

Wranglers (12-13 years old)

Wranglers will spend time studying range plants, determining utilization levels, as well as studying and texturing soils. Awards include "Top Wrangler" and the Wrangler 4-H Team Award.

Youth

(14-19 years old and not graduated from high school)

FFA and 4-H

These participants will rotate through workshops with instruction from specialists in each category. The competition requires that the participants are registered as either FFA or 4-H to be eligible for team and individual awards.

Open Youth

This division is for anyone 14-19 years old who does not qualify for the other division. You will also rotate through workshops with instruction from specialists, and you will compete for individual awards.

Divisions (cont.)

Adult

Open Adult

This division is for any adult who wishes to attend the rotating workshops and take part in the contest.

Rancher Division (Contest Optional)

This division is for ranchers who want to take part in the rotating workshops, and test their knowledge of range.

Range Educational Tour (No Contest)

This division is for any adult who wishes to attend the management tours. (Any adult who signs up for this division but wishes to participate in the contest may do so by also signing up for "Open Adult" or "Rancher Division".)

A "First Timer" group is available for any youth or adult who has never participated in Montana Range Days. First Timer workshops are taught on an introductory basis. If you wish to be in this group, please specify on your registration form.

MT Range Days Scholarships

- \$500 Harold & Lillian Jensen Scholarship
- \$500 Bob Sitz Memorial Scholarship
- \$500 Range Days Scholarship

Awards

Ribbons, awards, and/or plaques will be given in various categories. The Montana Range Days Traveling Trophy goes to the Top Range Hand.

Rotating Range Workshops

1. Plant Anatomy and Identification

Learn how to identify range plants and study their characteristics.

2. Range Sites/Soils

Study soils common in the Western Foot Hills and Western Glaciated Plains to determine the range site and associated range plants.

3. Inventory/Monitoring

Learn the process of how to calculate range condition/similarity and evaluate forage production and trend on a range site.

4. Range Planning

Given a ranching scenario and resource information, make decisions yourself on goals, management, and monitoring alternatives.

5. Stocking Rate/Utilization

Learn to calculate stocking rates, and determine grazing utilization levels.

Range Educational Tour

The Range Educational Tour is designed for those interested in learning about the current topics in range management. The tour will be held Monday afternoon through Wednesday morning. The tour will feature the following topics:

- Impacts of Grazing Cattle in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem
-Bull Trout
- Riparian Impacts of Grazing Cattle – Why the Concern?
- Range Management in Yellowstone National Park from a wildlife aspect.
- Plant Identification/Growth Habitats
- Managing Range for Wildlife

REGISTRATION

Registration Fee includes workshop materials and meals

Individuals – Prior to June 1 is \$30.00; after June 1 is \$35.00

Family – Prior to June 1 is \$80.00; after June 1 is \$85.00

Dinner will be available Monday evening at an additional cost by the Clyde Park Rural Fire Department. There is only one restaurant in Clyde Park.

Lodging

Best Western Yellowstone Inn	800-770-1874
Super 8 Motel	800-800-8000
Travelodge	800-437-6291
Econolodge	800-553-2566
Comfort Inn	800-424-6423

Camping is available at the Shields Valley High School in Clyde Park. Restroom and shower facilities will be available in the school. Motels are available in Livingston, which is 20 miles south of Clyde Park.

Equipment Needs

Warm coats, hats, towels, slickers, overshoes, sunscreen, mosquito repellent, clip board, pencils, calculator, 10 power hand lens, tent and sleeping bag.

Optional: camera and plant press

Contests

Range Exhibits (Youth) 130 points

Each contestant is limited to one plant collection and one range display for points. (These need to be in place by 8:00 a.m. Tuesday.) (Present year is 6/15/04 – 6/15/05)

Categories

Lot 1. Range Plant Coll. – present year (80 pts)

Lot 2. Range Plant Coll. – past and present years (80 pts)

Lot 3. Weed Collection – present year (80 pts)

Lot 4. Weed Collection – past and present years (80 pts)

Lot 5. Range Display – Individual (50 pts) –Group (no pts)

Lot 6. Range Workbooks (4-H): Units 1-5 (no pts)

Illustrated Talks 100 points

Youth participants may present an illustrated talk on any phase of range management. Talks should concentrate on a specific topic rather than trying to cover too much. A slide projector, screen, and overhead projector will be available. Time is limited to 5-8 minutes with time for judge's questions. Powerpoint presenters must supply their own computer and projector.

Range Plant Anatomy 100 points

This is a multiple-choice contest on range plant anatomy that will cover plant parts and their variations. This contest enhances one's ability to identify plants and understand the use of plant keys.

Range Plant Identification Approx. 275 pts

This portion of the contest will consist of identifying 25 - 30 range plants in the field. Plants on the test will be from the "2005 Montana Range Days Plant List" (available on the Montana Range Days web page)

www.montanarangedays.com

You Will Need to Know

1. Common Name
2. Type of Plant
3. Life Span
4. Grazing Response
5. Season of Growth
6. Plant Origin
7. Poisonous or Non Poisonous

** Points given only for each plant correctly named as shown on plant list.

Range Management Approximately 255 points

This portion of the contest will be conducted in the field with the contestants determining the following:

1. Range Site Identification
2. Condition/Similarity Index Improvements
3. Range Utilization
4. Range Planning and Improvements
5. Animal Stocking Rates

Individual Competition

1. The coveted "Top Range Hand" award will be awarded to the youth individual ages 15-19 years old with the highest total score from the three basic contests, in addition to the Illustrated Talks and Range Exhibits.
2. All 14 year olds will be considered for the "Top Green Hand" award. The individual with the highest total score from the three basic contests, in addition to the Illustrated Talks and Range Exhibits will receive the award.
3. Former Montana Range Days first place winning individuals are not eligible for awards in the same category. However, participants may still compete in the same contest category and receive points towards the "Top Range Hand".
4. Plant identification scores will be used to break all ties.
5. The MT State 4-H team to compete at the Old West Regional Judging Contest will be chosen from MT Range Days individual competition. Those who wish to be considered for this team need to identify themselves as a 4-H member even if they are competing in the FFA or Open Youth Division at MT Range Days.

Team Competition

1. Teams must identify themselves as either FFA or 4-H teams.
2. Teams will have at least three members and no more than four members.
3. Team points will be scored from the high three individual scores.
4. Team member points will automatically be considered for individual placing.
5. Open Youth Individuals may not participate on a 4-H or FFA team.
6. Each FFA Chapter may enter only one team.
7. Former first place teams must replace at least one of the previous high three-team members.
8. The range plant identification, plant anatomy, and range planning contests are the only contests used for team points.
9. Team members must be 14-19 years old and not yet graduated from high school
10. 4-H team members must be enrolled in the same state.
11. FFA team members must be enrolled in the same Chapter.

For a complete set of rules, see the web page.

Montana Range Days

Statewide Sponsors

Farm Credit Services
Great Northern Properties
Hubbard Feeds, Inc.
MT Assoc. of State Grazing Districts
MT Livestock Ag Credit, Inc.
Society for Range Management
-International Mountain Section
-Northern Great Plains Section
MT Stockgrowers, Research, Education and Endowment Foundation
Western Energy Company
Dow AgroSciences
Western Ranch Supply
Wells Fargo
Cattleman's Choice Loomix
Montana CattleWomen
Stillwater Mining Company
Montana Land Reliance
Carter County Conservation District
BASF Corporation
DuPont Crop Protection
Wilbur-Ellis Company

Hosted By:

- Park Conservation District
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Northern Ag Network

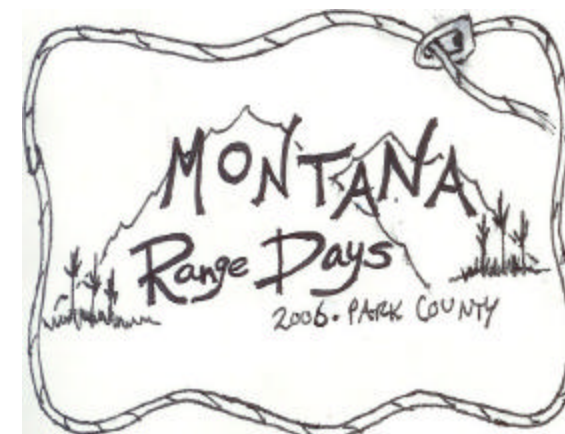
Contact Info:

Park Conservation District

Phone: (406) 222-3701

Fax: 406) 222-8538

www.montanarangedays.com



30th Annual Montana Range Days

**June 19-21, 2006
Park County
Clyde Park, MT**

Come join us in the scenic Shields Valley if you are interested in learning about Montana rangelands. Range Workshops will include: plant identification and anatomy, soils, range planning, stocking rate/utilization, and inventory/monitoring.



Prairie Winds: (Section members may submit to this column, publication of materials is subject to review for grammar, length, appropriateness, etc.)

Social Capital – By Elaine Grings, Newsletter Editor

A paper titled “The Story of a Stockpond” piqued my interest enough to lead me into a session on “Rangeland Economics, Sociology, and Education” during the last morning of this year’s SRM meetings. My training in animal science usually drives me to sessions on domestic range animal nutrition and grazing management, not the social aspects of rangeland science. Throughout the morning, I heard a lot about social capital.

Social capital is defined as the value created through the application of social networks during non-organizational time. It is what allows groups of people to accomplish more than what can be accomplished by individuals acting alone. In the context of rangeland management, social capital is important in allowing groups, including those with apparent divergent interests, to come together to solve land management problems. This capital can be built through tours, workshops, and informal discussion times. It arises while chatting over lunch about commonalities in our lives, during the bus rides to the program sites, or while organizing the table and chairs for a section meeting. Trust, respect, dependability, commitment, understanding, and empathy are all regularly used terms in discussion social capital. None of these occur when individuals do not participate.

Many of us invest heavily into this form of capital in our own communities, whether it is coaching a child’s soccer team, serving on the church or school board, or volunteering during a community clean-up day. We work together to make our communities a great place to live. The concept is just as important in accomplishing goals at other levels of community – county events, state programs, and the section and national levels of SRM.

Some argue that social capital is declining in the United States. Let’s not let this happen in rangeland management. This newsletter includes articles about tours and workshops and a call for participation in the fall section meeting. Put these dates on your calendar and plan to attend and participate.

P.S. The moral of “The Story of the Stockpond” was that value is in the eyes of the beholder. Management of a stockpond that is favorable for both cattle and ducks, may not be favorable to the endangered salamander that is eaten by those same ducks. But maybe that’s a topic of another column.