

THE PLAINSMAN

SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT
NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS SECTION
AUGUST 2007



President's Message

Dale Weisbrot, NGP-SRM President

For All You Do; This Bud's For You!

The marketing slogan from the Anheuser-Busch company for their Budweiser product is very fitting for my column today. After a very successful meeting, workshop and tour in the Cypress Hills, I felt it appropriate to reflect a bit because a previous world class Northern Great Plains Section event was held at the same location nearly 20 years earlier.

As I noted at the Section meeting a lot of water has passed under the bridge since the Prairie Parkland Chapter hosted the NGP summer meeting in 1989. We, as the local organizing group, were all relatively new to SRM and our society had not yet developed a high presence or profile throughout the community. Local rangeland resource management has advanced since 1989 – now there is more awareness, new agencies, a variety of groups that maintain close working partnerships, active participation from a diversity of individuals and their backgrounds. Today there are many great things taking place with good local SRM presence.

At both the 1989 and 2007 events I observed: considerable fun, laughter and good times; great learning opportunities and experiences, and; an obvious passion for the land and all of its resources (from presenters and participants alike). Those observations should come as no surprise to SRM members; they reflect our underlining core values, which are: Love of Rangelands; Love of People (camaraderie); and Love of Learning – **this is what we do!**

We are the folks directly and indirectly connected with range management in the larger sense: rangeland, forage development and forage use. Rangeland management professionals work with landowners and land managers throughout the Northern Great Plains Section to promote and develop beneficial, proper land management practices. We are also people who carry out direct research and make recommendations to policy makers in our jurisdictions as to regulations, guidelines and policies that promote and maintain the wise use of rangeland and forage resources. Many land managers and practitioners are also SRM members who are directly managing the landscape. We most often are working, collaboratively in partnership with numerous agencies and individuals.

If one scans the subject matter and topics offered at the concurrent sessions of a SRM Annual General Meeting an overarching theme will be revealed. This is also displayed “on the ground” at the local level – there is a myriad of events, activities, articles and efforts that all help the “cause”. Chances are, the next time you pick up literature or participate in a seminar, tour or workshop dealing with pasture management and forage in general, a SRM member has been instrumental in its development.

NGP Section events and activities of note are:

Organizing pasture or stockperson's schools, regular rangeland forums, workshops, seminars, hands-on exercises, field days, range camps and pasture tours (including the first Prairie Pasture School for Women in Saskatchewan that would make SRM's Wild Women of the Range proud).

Offering continued assistance to range and forage producer clubs as well as individual producers and land managers.

Developing, updating and revising a multitude of excellent literature, publications and articles.

Working to help protect threatened species at risk and combat against the further spread and damage from invasive alien species.

As we know healthy grass growth comes from bud initiation and we all want healthy grass and rangeland. Also it's important to look after yourself by taking time for a refreshing pause in your busy routine (and that pause may very well involve a “Bud”). **So, Thanks and For All You Do – This Bud's For You!**

WHAT'S INSIDE?

- President's Message
- Who's Who
- NGP Business Meeting Minutes
- Pictures from the Cypress Hills Tour
- Excellence in Range Management Poster Nominees
- Lost Resources
- 2007 Montana Governor's Range Tour
- www.ForageBeef.ca
- Montana Range Days

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.grings@ars.usda.gov The Plainsman is published 4 times per year. We welcome information on events, current projects, research results, extension activities, and items of general interest to the membership.

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Awards –

A New Chair is needed!

Student Activities – Bret Olson

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After many years of service, Chuck McGlothlin has stepped down as Chair of the Awards Committee. Anyone wishing to serve as Chair of this important section committee, please contact Dale Weisbrot.



2006 TESA recipient—McDougald Ranch, Ray McDougald during the Cypress Hills Tour



Marty Bohnet of Cypress Hills Vineyards pours samples during the Section Tour

Northern Great Plains SRM Section Summer Meeting – 2007	Tuesday, June 19, 2007 Wapiti Room, Cypress Park Resort Inn Cypress Hills Saskatchewan
Chair: President Dale Weisbrot	Note taker: Michael Champion
Meeting Minutes :	
<p>Dale called the meeting to order 8:05 pm and read the agenda calling for any additional items</p> <p>Michel Tremblay / Cheri Sykes moved / 2nd adoption of agenda – carried</p> <p>After welcoming comments from Dale the 24 members attending introduced themselves</p> <p>Brad White / Kylie McRae moved / 2nd adoption of minutes as read – carried</p> <p>Receive Reports:</p> <p>Parent Society – SRM President, Dennis Phillippi presented a brief report as follows:</p> <p>The SRM membership is from 43 countries with total numbers between 3,600 and 4,000 over the last few years from a wide range of backgrounds.</p> <p>Hosting the 2008 International Grassland Congress in Hohot, China June 29 - July 5, 2008.</p> <p>Membership survey conducted on how to change SRM – about 800 members completed which is a very encouraging return rate – the results are being processed at this time.</p> <p>The AGM will continue to rotate among the Sections (no decision has been made to change) – the Advisory Council is seeking further input. Dennis invited the NGP to consider putting a bid to host the 2011 meeting, if there are facilities that could handle SRM needs.</p> <p>Next AGM is January 26-31, 2008 – jointly with the American Forage & Grasslands Council at the Galt House Hotel & Suites in Louisville, Kentucky.</p> <p>Task Group is looking at ways to improve <i>Rangelands</i> publication.</p> <p>Searching for a new editor for SRM’s publications (the editor is a paid position).</p> <p>The SRM is working toward a development function for training members and others – the first trial session is the National Sage Grouse Workshop October 22 – 25 in Park City Utah</p> <p>The next board meeting is July 9 in Park City Utah.</p> <p>Questions about CPRM (certification, continuing education credit and Canadian participation) lead to a discussion and a suggestion that the section and CPRM committee consider an option to hold an exam at one of the section events.</p> <p>NGP President – Dale thanked the PPC and the local members for hosting the section summer meeting – recalling that the last time we held the NGP section meeting in the Cypress Hills was in 1989 nearly 20 years ago. That meeting was very successful – we look forward to similar results. A lot has happened since 1989 at the rangeland resource management level – more awareness, new agencies, a variety of groups that maintain close working partnerships, active participation from a diversity of individuals and their backgrounds. There are great things taking place “on the ground” with good local SRM presence (as noted in the PPC AGM reports). These are all signs of a healthy organization. Congratulations and thank you to all who are making this occur.</p> <p>Dale noted that there is opportunity for members to gain some work experience and knowledge by volunteering at other levels within SRM. SRM has many committees dealing with specific subject areas (like Wildlife Habitat or Invasive Rangeland Species). Check out more information on our website www.rangelands.org most are “open” committees that welcome new participants.</p> <p>The next NGP business meeting will be in conjunction with the SRM’s AGM in Louisville Kentucky January 26 to 31, 2008 – watch for further details.</p> <p>Membership – Dale noted the membership total of 227 is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 57 Prairie Parkland Chapter – including Alberta and British Columbia 80 North Dakota Chapter – including neighbouring states 86 Montana – including neighbouring states (4 from more distant states) <p>Task Group – Michael Schellenberg provided the following report (read by Dale):</p> <p>I have taken the opportunity to request the views of past Presidents (Canadian) of the section and Prairie Parkland Chapter (PPC) for their views on the role and existence of the Prairie Parkland chapter.</p> <p>Their views can be summarized in the following excerpt taken from a communication with Lance on the subject.</p> <p><u>Status quo</u> – downside is continuing struggle at the Section level to maintain cohesiveness across the Section. Upside is not stirring up</p>	
<i>(Continued on page 4)</i>	

(Continued from page 3)

the hornet's nest about how the Section/Chapters should be structured.

Eliminating all Chapters in Section. A lot of Canadians will have resistance to that. They want to be active in SRM, but only north of the line. But will put momentum and influence back at the Section board level.

Eliminate ND Section, keep PPC. ND people may have something to say about this. Realistically, I think that a PPC will need to exist because the differences from Canada to the US are large.

Create a Prairie Parkland Section, breaking away from the NGP Section. The membership in the PP Chapter will probably not provide the critical mass to sustain a Section designation. What about combining with Alberta membership? Which brings up the topic of how the Intermountain Section deals with their international border.

There is seen a need to maintain the Canadian Identity. The way range is seen and treated in Canada is completely different than the US experience. From my own work within SRM I would suggest there is a failure to recognise these differences. I would also suggest a word of caution in considering a Canadian Section. In order for sufficient numbers BC, Alberta and PPC would have to join. This becomes unworkable in some ways because of distance and large ecological differences in range. Also it is unlikely members from BC, and Alberta would want to move in this direction. There is a stronger commonality north-south than east-west. This action could isolate the Canadian perspective, limit exchange, and disallow argument for attending meetings in the US. This option has been discussed previously when Rod Heitschmidt (I believe) was NGP President.

One should note one individual did suggest if the PPC was disbanded they would discontinue their membership in SRM. Emotions can run high with this issue.

I have also taken the opportunity to ask how the Intermountain section functions with western Montana and Alberta. They have no chapters and simply rotate between the two regions for their executive. Their advantage is a much smaller region to cover and I believe a smaller membership.

Other Reports – no other report was submitted or received.

Other:

Dale noted that the Awards Committee needs a chair since long serving Chuck McGlothlin has stepped down. Dale thanked Chuck for his great work over the years.



Eric Lawrence of the Lawrence ranch addresses the group during the Cypress Hills Tour



Dale Montgomery introduces the stock dog demonstration at the McDougald Ranch during the Cypress Hills Tour



SK Environment Minister John Nilson and others at workshop during Prairie Appreciation Week



SRM President Dennis Phillippi provides an interview during the Cypress Hills Tour

The Excellence Range Management Poster Nominations

The Northern Great Plains

Reno Nevada February 2007

Two Posters were presented at the SRM Annual meeting in Reno Nevada in February 2007.

Merit Cattle Co. Ranch

Radville, Saskatchewan Canada

Authors

Daryl Nazar - Ducks Unlimited Canada -Regina Saskatchewan, Canada

Ross MacDonald- 98 Ranch Inc. Lake Alma Saskatchewan, Canada

MERIT Cattle Co. is owned and operated by Emile and Sandra Carles along with their daughter Janelle and her husband Trent Liebreich. The ranch is cradled within the Prairie Pothole Region of the Missouri Coteau in Southern Saskatchewan. The “knob and kettle topography” and the “permanent wetlands” are prominent features across the MERIT Cattle Co. Ranch. MERIT Cattle Co. grazing lands lie in the Brown and Dark Brown Soil Zones, totaling 6740 acres of both seeded pastureland and native rangeland

MERIT Cattle Co. is all about managing for the future. Emile’s management philosophy is simple. He states “...my grazing management allows me to make a good living off my land and improve the grass for my children and grandchildren to make their living.” By developing a sustainable approach to their grazing management MERIT Cattle Co. is able to maintain a profitable ranching operation that includes healthy rangelands and wildlife populations. The members of The MERIT Cattle Co. are true leaders and stewards of the land.

Old Man on His Back Prairie & Heritage Conservation Area – The Butala Ranch

Author

Cheri Sykes – Nature Conservancy of Canada – Regina Saskatchewan Canada

The Butala’s ranch in South-western Saskatchewan has been a working ranch since the family built there homestead in 1913. In 1996 the Butala family retired, they then began to peruse their life-long vision of restoring the historical grazer Plains Bison to the land and allow the 13,000 acre site to continue to be preserved as native northern mixed grass prairie. They turned to the Nature Conservancy of Canada to reach the vision; in 1999 the site was transferred to the Nature Conservancy and is now called Old Man on His Back Prairie & Heritage Conservation Area. The site has now attracted visitors and ranchers from across North America to learn about new techniques in range management and the rich culture and natural history the Old Man on His Back Plateau provides. This family has been able to create awareness and appreciation of range management to local ranchers, school children and urban people

LOST RESOURCES:

Alicia Nairn Hargrave was born September 1, 1980 in Medicine Hat, Alberta. She passed away at the young age of 26 on July 4, 2007, in Calgary hospital from complications sustained in a riding accident at the Family Ranch. Alicia grew up on the Hargrave (JH) Ranch north of Walsh where she was able to continue to live a life she loved; raising cattle and managing the native prairie grasslands. She left behind close relationships with her brother James and partner BJ Haubrich. Alicia began her post secondary education at Lethbridge Community College earning an Agriculture diploma and continued in Range Management at the University of Saskatchewan graduating with distinction in 2002. Alicia and James took over managing the JH Ranch where Alicia became very involved in minimizing the impact of gas well development on native prairie grasslands. She was contracted by the Saskatchewan Government and worked diligently to complete a series of field guides for the Saskatchewan Forage Council. Alicia was here for only a short time, but definitely made a mark in the world of Range Management. She will be missed by her SRM friends and colleagues.

2007 Montana Governor's Range Tour

The Governor's Range Tour is an annual event sponsored by the Rangeland Resources Executive Committee and has been a tradition among rangeland community stewards for many years. This 2-day event is hosted by a different conservation district each year. The Sweet Grass County Conservation District is pleased to announce that the 2007 Governor's Range Tour will be based out of Big Timber on September 20-21 at the American Legion located at 110 East 3rd Avenue. The tentative schedule includes tour stops on the first day at Sweet Grass County Weed District weed management projects, a ranch that has implemented various water developments and fences in an intensive cell grazing program, and an AFO/CAFO that was funded by the NRCS and GLCI with design assistance from MSU Extension. The first day of the tour will conclude with a banquet at the American Legion with the Governor as the invited keynote speaker and entertainment to follow. The second day of the tour will be to visit two landowners who were affected by the Derby Fires of 2006.

For more information please contact Heidi Olbert, Rangeland Resources Program Coordinator at (406) 444-6619 or holbert@mt.gov.

31st Montana Range Days offers Food, Fun, Fodder for Thought

Montana's premier range education event brought more than 200 students and adults to Conrad, Montana, June 18-20. Participants learned how our native grasslands feed and clothe people, offer habitat for more than 50 species of big game and other wildlife, filter our water and reduce carbon dioxide.

"We have more than 65 million acres of private and public rangelands in Montana," reported Paul Jones, chair of the Pondera County Conservation District, which hosted the 31st annual Montana Range Days, along with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Northern Ag Network. "These vast expanses of grasses, shrubs and other plants form the foundation for our state's economy, environment and beauty."

Workshops and tours focused on best land management practices, the influence of soil on plants and water, identification of range plants, and monitoring changes in range condition. Study sites were northwest of Conrad but will be near Dupuyer next June. Montana Range Days is hosted by a community for 2 years before moving to the next location.



A tour is part of Montana Range Days

Results of the 31st Montana Range Days contest:

Illustrated talk - 1. Danny Pratt, Miles City FFA; 2. Colter Brown, Huntley Project FFA; 3. Julie Banister, Hysham FFA

Wrangler high point soils - 1. Shawna Pratt, Miles City; 2. Casey Hereim, Wheatland County 4-H; 3. Seth Swandal, Wilsall; 4. Logan Verschoot, Richey; 5. Colter Kroon, Wilsall.

Range exhibits - Sunny Gaughen of Carter County 4-H took first in the 4-H range handbook division; Danny Pratt took first and Colter Brown took second in the range display division; Caitlin Dalzell of Carter County 4-H took first and Dylan Mulkey of Carter County 4-H took second in the weed collection division; Colter Brown won first and Danny Pratt took second in the range plant collection division; and Deon Olsen of Bridger won first and Tyler Stutterheim of Shields Valley FFA took second in the youth high point inventory division.

Plant anatomy high point awards - Macy Ricketts of Livingston, won the Wrangler division; Gage Henderson of Huntley Project FFA won the Youth division; and Tyanna Dunbar of Malta won the Super Starter division.

Wrangler utilization high point awards - 1. Dylan Mulkey, Carter County; 2. Shawna Pratt, Miles City; 3. Casey Hereim, Wheatland County; 4. Ashley Holmes, Harlowton; 5. Clay Olson, Harlowton; 6. Justin Ratzburg, Conrad; 7. Joseph Desch, Bozeman; 8. Drew Doane, Bloomfield; 9. Cody Kerkaert, Livingston.

Plant identification high point awards - Sunny Gaughen, Alzada, won first and Alissa Wolenetz, Baker took second in the Super Starter division; Macy Ricketts, Livingston won the Wrangler division; and Colter Brown, Huntley Project won the Youth division.

Open adult awards— 1. Lori Hoppe, Belgrade; 2. JoAnne Kotar, Hysham; 3. Kari Hanson, Park City; 4. Jeff Holmes, Ryegate; 5. Michaela LeVeque, Great Falls; 6. Chantel Verschoot, Richey.

FFA top individual awards - 1. Colter Brown, Huntley Project FFA; 2. Gage Henderson, Huntley Project FFA; 3. Sally Knox, Winifred FFA; 4. Tyler Stutterheim, Shields Valley FFA; Sara Knox, Winifred FFA; 5. Ben Lynn, Shields Valley FFA.

4-H top individual awards - 1. Jackie French, Cascade County 4-H; 2. Kelli French, Cascade County 4-H; 3. Boo LeVeque, Cascade County 4-H; 4. Brandon Gould, Cascade County 4-H; 5. Tyler Christiaens, Helena; 6. Andrew Gould, Cascade County 4-H.

Super Starter top individual awards - 1. Alissa Wolenetz, Baker; 2. Sunny Gaughen, Alzada; 3. Jordy Hereim, Judith Gap; 4. Ladan Ricketts, Livingston; 5. Julienne Rychner, Ekalaka; 6. Rose Doucette, Malta.

Wranglers top individual awards - 1. Macy Ricketts, Livingston; 2. Shawna Pratt, Miles City; 3. Casey Hereim, Wheatland County; 4. Clay Olson, Harlowton; 5. Caitlin Danzell, Carter County; 6. Dylan Mulkey, Carter County.

Open Youth top individual awards - 1. Deon Olsen, Bridger; 2. Alexandra Ricketts, Livingston; 3. Kole Olsen, Bridger; 4. Alexandra Bold, Winifred; 5. Regan Bold, Winifred; 6. Jessie Boyce, Ekalaka.

Top 4-H team awards - Cascade County 4-H won the champion 4-H team award; and Carter County 4-H won the Super Starter and Wrangler 4-H divisions.

Top FFA team awards - 1. Huntley Project FFA; 2. Shields Valley FFA; 3. Winifred FFA; 4. Missoula FFA; 5. Big Timber FFA; 6. Park City FFA.

Top Greenhand awards - 1. Jackie French, Cascade County; 2. Brandon Gould, Ulm; 3. Deon Olsen, Bridger; 4. Alexandra Ricketts, Livingston; 5. Andrew Gould, Ulm; 6. Shawn Stutterheim, Wilsall.

Top Rangehand awards - 1. Colter Brown, Huntley Project; 2. Danny Pratt, Miles City; 3. Gage Henderson, Huntley Project; 4. Sally Knox, Winifred; 5. Tyler Stutterheim, Wilsall; 6. Sarah Knox, Winifred,.

Top Adult Rancher awards - 1. Toren Thomas, Alzada; 2. Randy Wolenetz, Baker; 3. Aimee Gould, Ulm; 4. Helen King, Hammond,.

Montana Noxious Weed Grant Trust Fund winners - Caitlin Dalzell with \$100; Sunny Gaughen with \$100; Justin King with \$100; and Dylan Mulkey with \$150.

Montana Range Day Hall of Fame award - Bret Olson of the MSU Department of Animal and Range Sciences, Bozeman.

www.Foragebeef.ca

A web site devoted to meeting the information needs of the cow calf and forage producer.

www.Foragebeef.ca is a web site that highlights and summarizes forage and beef research that is relevant to Canadian beef and forage producers. The Alberta Beef Producers, Canada Alberta Beef Research Fund, Saskatchewan Agriculture Development Fund, Alberta Agriculture, Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, Manitoba Agriculture along with Matching Investment Initiatives Fund of Agriculture and Agri Food Canada are all supporting partners in the development of the web site.

www.Foragebeef.ca was developed as a means of creating a living library for research and extension information that is useful Canadian beef producers although the majority of the information is western Canadian based. In the initial phase, an extensive search of international university and government web sites was done to locate the best available fact sheets on a wide variety of forage and beef topics. From the 4000 fact sheets that were sourced, the 5 to 10 best fact sheets on each topic were chosen by a review panel of Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba forage and beef extension specialists. In addition, scientific research papers from the Canadian Journal of Animal Science and Canadian Journal of Plant Science were obtained. The extension specialist then developed the Knowledge Nuggets, a collection of one sentence key statements for each specific topic. These topics were then built into folders or modules consisting of Knowledge Nuggets, Fact Sheets and Scientific Review Papers all applicable to the cow calf producer. The process took several years and involved over 50 Agriculture and Agri Food Canada research scientists, university researchers and provincial forage and beef cattle extension specialists from all across Canada. The www.Foregbeef.ca team won a major national Agriculture and Agri Food Canada award for their efforts in developing the web site that brings agriculture research closer to Canadian farmers.

During the past year a significant amount of new information has been added to the site. One major topic is Climate Change. Information in the form of scientific papers that were presented at the Climate Change and Managed Ecosystems conference jointly sponsored by the Canadian Societies of Animal Science, Plant Science and Soil Science in Edmonton Alberta have been developed into two new modules under Environment called Climate change- Beef , Climate Change –Forage. These two modules provide a detailed summary of information under Knowledge Nuggets, and the best fact sheet that are available from Universities, government agencies, and the Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Program for Agriculture and Agri Food Canada / Canadian Cattlemen Association. This is followed with several scientific papers on research on the forage and beef cattle industry as it relates to greenhouse gas emissions.

Another key module deals with Molds and Mycotoxins as it's effect beef cattle health. This site deals with problems with molds and mycotoxins in animal feed and makes suggestions on how to alleviate possible health problems. A significant number of very good fact sheets have been added to this module.

Research information on Nutrition and Reproductive Efficiency has been summarized from a wide variety of scientific papers that are posted on the site. In addition, new modules have been developed on vitamin nutrition, and nutrition as it related to reproductive efficiency in addition to cattle identification systems, bull management, bedding, and crossbreeding.

Next year the fact sheets and information developed under the Agriculture and Agri Food Canada Alberta Greencover Best Management Practices for riparian, forage and grazing lands will be available on the site. This information will come from numerous projects sponsored by this program and will feature new and up to date information on how to best manage these landscapes.

www.Foragebeef.ca has it's own internal search engine which allows the viewer to quickly locate the information on the site. In the near future a new index on site specific information will be added much like the index in a book. This will give an overall view of the wide breath of information available on the site.

We intend to develop new modules on forage insects and diseases, forage insect control, vaccination programs for beef cattle, conservation, feed mixing and forage for other livestock *ie* dairy and horses. This past year we have contacted the majority of Canadian forage and beef cattle research scientists and have included many of their recent research papers on the site. This process will continue next year with possible inclusion of many more papers.

The basic concept of www.Foragebeef.ca was to develop a renowned web site that has selected the best research and extension information on all topics involving forage production and management and beef cow calf production as it relates to western Canadian conditions. We have provided Canadian farmers with an easy to use, up to date information system that will meet their future needs for agriculture research information summarized in a form that they can use.

Duane McCartney
Forage beef Systems Research Scientist

Ken Ziegler
Forage and Beef Specialist

Agriculture and Agri Food Canada
Lacombe Alberta

Ag Info Centre
Alberta Agric and Food