



Arizona Section Newsletter

DECEMBER 2014



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President's Message:
Greetings,

As I write this, I sit at my desk basking in the sunlight of a south facing window the day after Thanksgiving. While much of the east is covered in snow and some lack power, I click away at a computer in short-sleeve shirt. December is right upon us, and with it comes our second best chance for precipitation, especially in the Sonoran Desert. This January will be our Winter Meeting, held in Tucson, and the topic will be change in our climate and in our landscapes. I look forward to seeing all of you there, and to spending a nice day and a half catching up and sharing information. As Past President, Mike Hemovich has been actively recruiting for our Director positions and for Vice President. He has been in touch with a lot of our members seeking candidates who can lead us onward. This organization has some great traditions, such as supporting NRCWAY, having a summer meeting outdoors, and exchanging science and observation based information about Arizona rangelands.



We have also reinitiated some past traditions, like the plant ID contest; that was something done at our meetings decades ago. As the year draws to a close, I thank you for the opportunity to serve as Arizona Section President, and to serve with a terrific Board of Directors. We have some good things to look forward to in 2015 – our Winter Meeting, a SRM Meeting in Sacramento, and opportunities for this organization to continue to keep us engaged and educated in the field of rangeland management. Happy Holidays and see you in Tucson!

Take care,

Willie

Save the Date!
Arizona Section Winter Meeting
“Change in Arizona”
January 14-16, 2015
Holiday Inn Hotel and Suites Tucson Airport-North.



There will be perspectives of the research community, land owners, ranchers and land managers based on long-term observations of vegetation, landscapes, weather and climate. We seek to encourage a dialogue among attendees to better understand the relations among biophysical changes, land management policy, and management adaptations by land owners and ranchers. Program and registration details will be forthcoming in December so please be sure that we have your email address.

Board of Directors*President**Willie Sommers**wsommers@azland.gov**President-Elect**Mary Nichols**Mary.nichols@ars.usda.gov**Past President**Mike Hemovich**Mh520@aol.com**Vice President**Christine Thiel**cathiel@fs.fed.us**Secretary/Treasurer**Ashley Shepherd**AshleyS3@email.arizona.edu**Director North**Kelsey Hawkes**khawkes@email.arizona.edu**Director North**Shai Schendel**Shai.schendel@az.usda.gov**Director South**John Hall**jahall@blm.gov**Director South**Steve Barker**SteveBarker.az@gmail.com**U of A Student President**Emily Pecilunas**epecilunas@email.arizona.edu**ASU Student President**Matt Kilford**mkilford@asu.edu***2015 Winter Meeting Auction**

The winter meeting is quickly approaching, and as always, come prepared to bid at this year's auction! Remember, the auction is most successful when we have plenty of items to be auctioned off, and lots of people bidding on those items. Please consider donating one or more items to this year's auction (Hint: A good trick is to look around the house and find that one thing you've wanted to get rid of for years!).

The proceeds from the auction directly support the students who participate in the Natural Resources Conservation Workshop for Arizona Youth (NRCWAY) as well as the Arizona Section itself. If you are in need of ideas for types of items to donate, popular items in the past have included artwork, books, other décor, spurs, hand-crafted items, and don't forget the world famous Traveling Chihuahua! Please don't feel limited to these types of items, as we appreciate any and all donations. If you are in need of more ideas or have questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me directly. Looking forward to a great turnout this year!



Cheers,
Kelsey Hawkes

HELP WANTED

We need you to serve as a Director or Vice-President of the Arizona Section SRM! What better way to spend your free time than making the Section a better Society? If you are up to the challenge, nominate yourself for one of the positions in need. Director North and South serve a two year term and perform a multitude of duties overseeing committees and serving on the Board of Directors. Vice-President then serves as President-Elect and then President! If you, or someone you know would like to be nominated for any of these offices, please contact Mike Hemovich, mh520@aol.com or 928 462-3743.

Director North Candidate Bio

Hello! I'm Joelle Acton, Research Specialist for the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension out of Kingman. I received a BS in Wildlife Biology from Arizona State University in 2011. Although wildlife was my main focus during my education, it was my Rangeland Ecology classes that got me interested in pursuing a career with Rangeland Management. I then continued as a Range Technician for the Forest Service on the Tonto National Forest until my position with UA. As a Research Specialist I work out of the Bureau of Land Management field office and work closely with the Range Specialist and Wildlife Biologist. I have been a part of the SRM since my education with ASU and would like to continue my participation as I continue with my career in Rangeland Management.



Director North Candidate Bio

Hello, my name is Christopher Bernau and I would like the opportunity to serve as Director North for the AZSRM. I've been an active member of the SRM since 2009, assisting with SRM section workshops both in Arizona and in Idaho, and working with the University of Idaho's range club in their pursuits for the coveted range cup. I'd like to be Director North to give back to the society that's helped my professional and education career.

A little more about me: I received a Masters in Rangeland Ecology and Management from the University of Idaho in 2012. Since then I've been a Rangeland Research Specialist at the University of Arizona's V Bar V Ranch. As part of my job I've had the opportunity to travel up and down Arizona to work on collaborative projects and to monitor in just about every vegetation type Arizona has to offer. Prior to all this I worked the seasonal lifestyle; mostly rangeland ecology type jobs, with a touch of costal and tropical ecology thrown in for fun. I'm particularly interested in arid system ecology and I'm fascinated by invasive biology and fire ecology. Thanks for your consideration.



Director North Candidate Bio

An introduction of myself...

I received my Bachelors in Rangeland Ecology and Management in December, 2012 from The University of Arizona. While at the university I was a member of Soil, Water, and Environmental Science club, treasurer of the Society of Range Management (UA chapter), and research assistant (monitoring and analysis) for an ongoing mineland reclamation project. I started at the Arizona State Land Department as the Range Resource Area Manager in September, 2014. In my short time here I've worked on various collaborative projects in rangeland ecosystems across the SW corner of Arizona. Prior to my current position I held seasonal jobs in rangeland monitoring and management for the federal government. My favorite topic within rangeland management and ecology is holistic management in arid ecosystems. Thank you for the opportunity to run for the Director North position.



Welcome New Members



September

William Jake Russell Chino Valley, AZ

October

James Holder	Clifton, AZ
Leighton Dimler	Claypool, AZ
Madison Frary	Buckeye, AZ
Joshua Troub	Buckeye, AZ



Director South Candidate Bio

Hello Rangers! My name is Kelsey Hawkes and I would be happy to have the opportunity to serve as Director South for the Arizona Section. I expect most of the membership knows me already, as I served as a Director North this past year. I have resigned my position as Director North because I have recently moved back to Tucson, and I am interested in continuing on the Board of Directors as a representative of the southern half of the state. As many of you know, I am a Tucson native with a love for the outdoors and especially for rangeland ecosystems. I received my Bachelor's in Rangeland Ecology and Management from the University of Arizona. Following completion of my undergraduate work, I spent over a year with the Arizona State Land Department as a Rangeland Resource Area Manager and worked with many rangeland ecosystems and people from Yuma to Congress to Winkelman. This fall marks my first semester as a returned student at the University of Arizona. I am working towards my Master's degree in Rangeland Ecology and Management with a project that aims to improve livestock grazing during times of drought on the Tonto National Forest. I became involved in the Society for Range Management as a member and as the President of the U of A student chapter. I am interested in continuing as a Director for the Arizona Section so that I can return the support that the Section gave me as a student member. Thank you for considering me for the Director South position.



Don't Tell Me What to Do!

We often get upset when we are directed to do things. It starts early, if you had children you remember the terrible twos! Children don't like being told what to do. As parents we spend most of our children's teen years holding them accountable in order to teach them responsibility. Parents feel responsible to help children become responsible citizens, doing the right thing, making the world we live in a better place.

Now some are a little more comfortable and prefer to be told what to do on a day to day basis, after all this removes accountability.

Some people just don't have what it takes to be accountable. Some would rather have no responsibility or accountability. "Did I forget to get something done? Why didn't you tell me what to do?" We all know these people, and soon learn not to rely on them.

Most of us learn to deal with authority as we mature. In many instances we subjugate ourselves to authority for the purpose of employment. I know, I spent 20 years in the Military (MSgt, USAF, Retired).

In Arizona much of the rangeland is owned by the federal government and Grazing Permittees are held accountable for that use. Grazing on federal land comes with a list of dos and don'ts, and direction from federal employees, who are ultimately accountable for the care of that land.

It can be a tenuous relationship, but that *topic* is for another time.

I want to pose a question of Thanksgiving.

It seems we are all too happy to gather with family and friends on a day the Government assigns. According to Wikipedia, "Thanksgiving Day is a national holiday celebrated primarily in the United States and Canada as a day of giving thanks for the blessing of the harvest and of the preceding year. It is celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November in the United States and on the second Monday of October in Canada. Several other places around the world observe similar celebrations. Thanksgiving has its historical roots in religious and cultural traditions, and has long been celebrated in a secular manner as well."

I hope you spent some time with family and friends being thankful for the harvest in your life this past year, after all the Government says that is what we should do!

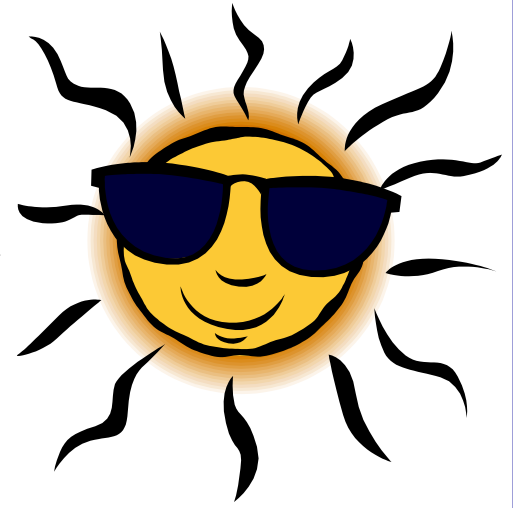
Praying for a great 2015 and beyond.

John Kava, Section Newsletter Editor

Director South Report by John Hall

Greetings from South...the far South!

Let me start out this article by saying that Yuma holds the Guinness World Record as the sunniest city on earth, with sunshine 91 percent of daylight hours (a mean of 4,055 hours per year). Now most of the time you can guarantee a sunny day in Yuma, that is until monsoon season hits. The rule of thumb here is that a 50-100% chance of rain means nothing but a 10% will most likely result in a torrential downpour. Gary Nabhan describes rain in Southern Arizona as:



"The stimulating power of rain in the desert is simply more than moisture. Be it the nutrients released in a rainstorm, or the physical force of the water, there are other releasing mechanisms associated with rainwater."

The green carpet of annuals that comes up after a good monsoon season has always amazed visitors to the desert and is something I have come to embrace/desire as an employee for the BLM. I have come to learn this release of nutrients from the rain is what keeps our desert functional and the ranching tradition alive.

The other releasing mechanism that seems to always come to mind is the smell of rain in the desert. That smell is something that sticks with a native Yuman their whole lives because it may only occur a few times a year. It's hard to pinpoint the exact smell, maybe it's the Creosote Bush or maybe it's the desert pavement? Either way, it brings back memories of chasing storms in my dad's old Ford Bronco and having to break deer camp because your comfy spot in a wash is about to be engulfed by a wall of water.

These days, rain in the desert means a lot more to me than when I was a kid. Now it means ephemeral applications and burros showing up in places out of the norm. It means field days bouncing around in my f250 chasing ephemeral growth and running transects through happy PRGL and ACGR. It means scouting for the dove, quail, deer, pheasant, and javelina seasons coming up in the fall.

Long story short....I love rain in the desert!



Why we need more Navajo rangeland management specialist's on the Navajo Reservation.

Alvin Whitehair, USDI Bureau of Land Management

I am writing this as a member of the Navajo Tribe. I have found 2 main reasons for desertification on the Navajo Reservation: 1) The long standing institutional reluctance to change and adapt ecological monitoring methods of land management from federal and tribal levels, and 2) the challenges of political and economic pressures on the growing majority of Navajos who depend on livestock for subsistence and income. Desertification on the Navajo Reservation was observed as early as the 1890's. In the 1930's, John Collier (appointed Commissioner of what is now called the Bureau of Indian Affairs) instituted widespread livestock reduction, utilizing forced impoundments and shipping livestock on railways, which caused a permanent and bitter distrust between the Tribe and the Federal government. Cattle that couldn't be shipped were killed with Hotchkiss guns or doused with diesel fuel and burned alive. Those memories are still vivid with many tribal elders. In the 1950's, the responsibility of livestock enforcement and grazing regulations was passed from the Federal government to the Tribe, which resulted in a laissez-faire approach. This caused livestock numbers to increase, and desertification steadily continued. Currently, unemployment is high (greater than 50%) and annual earning rates are low (less than \$10,000 per year) on the Navajo Reservation. High rates of poverty, increasing population growth (60,000 in 1948, 160,000 in 1980, and now 300,00+) and low levels of education among the Tribe along with very little expansion of economic alternatives have played a significant role, accompanied by political, religious and cultural factors (a 300+ year old tradition on which the culture is now based). Recent rangeland carrying capacity studies have been conducted by tribal and federal land managers, indicating that most areas are overstocked by more than 70%. I see a need for change and would like to see more Navajo rangeland professionals in this field. However, before we can see these changes, we need to do the following: 1) help our youth (and other tribal members) understand the importance of their natural resources for our long-term survival, 2) help our people understand the principles of sound rangeland practices, 3) strengthen the job base in natural resources on the reservation, 4) offer field training opportunities for our current range personnel, and 5) encourage natural resource management programs at colleges and universities that are culturally and traditionally adapted for our people. On a positive note, there are current efforts in the SRM to develop tribal rangeland management training opportunities. If you are a tribal member and are interested in learning more about an education in this field, you can find information by going to http://www.rangelands.org/education_universities.shtml. Feel free to contact me at awhitehair@blm.gov if you have questions or need some guidance about becoming a rangeland manager.

**KEEP IT COOL
WITH A KOOZIE \$5**

Club Meetings:
Oct 22 - RM 218
Nov 5, 19 & Dec 3
RM 311 - 12-1pm

Email: epecilunas@email.arizona.edu

Tierra Seca Chapter

Over the course of the Fall semester, Tierra Seca has been busy preparing for the annual Society for Range Management meeting in the winter. We have 3 undergraduate students studying for the Plant ID exam and 7 more studying for the Undergraduate Range Management Exam, meaning we have been working hard fundraising to get 11 students traveled and boarded in Sacramento. (No easy feat since money doesn't grow on trees.....or in rangelands).

Aside from hounding faculty and our parents to buy koozies (Do you want one? Twenty? Only \$5/each!) our club has been busy seeking and participating in a variety of events. By the time you read this letter we will have helped V Bar V Ranch in participating at U of A's Family Day event, successfully (I hope) beaten our sister club Wildlife & Fisheries in a "friendly" game of kickball and helped monitor at The Elkhorn/Las Delicias Watershed Restoration Demonstration Project. We are always seeking opportunities to learn more and/or get hands on experience-if you have a way Tierra Seca could get involved, we would love to hear about it! (E-mail: epecilunas@email.arizona.edu)



Mike McIntire and Rachel Turner after finishing up monitoring work in Altar Valley



Out in the Altar Valley they reward volunteers with cookies (pictured is Joe Kellner, Pima County Range Manager).



Trevor Chilcote with Wilbur advertising Tierra Seca to incoming College of Ag



(L to R) Rachel Turner, Andy Warnick, Jennifer Hanson, Trevor Chilcote, Leland Sutter with the grazing utilization model we built for V Bar V outreach. This picture was taken at UA Family Day.

Lost Resource

William M. "Billie" Riggs, Jr., of Willcox, died Nov. 14, 2014 at the age of 90. He was born in Willcox on Aug. 18, 1924 to William M. Riggs and Cora Riggs and grew up above the Riggs Bank in downtown Willcox.

He served in the U.S. Army during WWII, was a charter member of the Willcox Elks Lodge #2131, a member of the Cochise-Graham County Growers Assoc., Arizona Cattle Growers Assoc., National Cattle Growers Assoc., Farm Bureau and VFW. Billie was a rancher, with a focus on conservation. He was awarded Man of the Year in 1962 with the Society for Range Management, and was an active member of RC&D (Resource Conservation and Development).



Survivors include his sons William M. "Tra" Riggs, III and Ivan Clay Riggs, both of Willcox, and his brother-in-law John Amalong. His grandchildren April (Brian) Mahan, Travis (Trina) Riggs, Rita Riggs, Alanna Riggs and five great-grandchildren also survive him. He was preceded in death by his wife, Jean.

New Program to Educate Youth about Rangeland Ecology

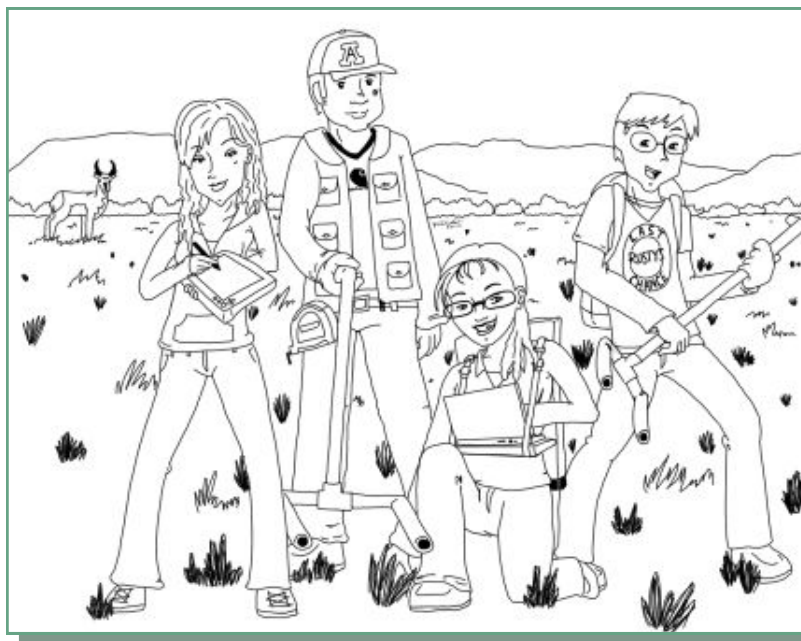
Lisa Page recently joined the University of Arizona extension family as the new Range Rocks! Program Coordinator working for Dr. Doug Tolleson at the V Bar V Ranch.

Despite growing up in a fairly urban area of Southern California, Lisa was in FFA during high school and always involved with horses. After earning an associate's degree in Livestock Management from Mount San Antonio College. Shortly thereafter Lisa continued her education at New Mexico State University and earned a bachelor's degree in Agriculture Extension and Education. After college she taught high school agriculture in Arizona and New Mexico, which included advising FFA chapters and managing the school's equine riding program. Most recently, she worked in Montana with a national nonprofit organization providing research based technical assistance to farmers and ranchers across the United States. While there she increased her knowledge about sustainable agriculture and natural resource management practices.



Lisa enjoys riding horses and quads, fishing, camping, photography, and trying not to be outsmarted by her Catahoula, Mavis.

We are excited to have Lisa back in Arizona working with our talented youth in the area of rangeland management and ecology.



Range Rocks!

Calendar of Events



2014 NAIPSC Web Course <https://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?EventID=1320350>

December 25, 2014 **Merry Christmas**

January 1, 2015 **Happy New Year!**

January 14 - 15, 2015 **Nevada Section Winter Meeting, Carson City, NV**
<http://www.rangelands.org/nevada/>

January 14 - 16, 2015 **Arizona Section Winter Meeting, Tucson**

January 30-February 7, 2015 **68th SRM Annual Meeting & Trade Show**
Sacramento, California



Arizona Section-Society For
Range Management
1195 Solar Heights Dr.
Prescott, AZ 86303

