



Arizona Section Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2013



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President's Message:

Fall is in the air, and it is a time of increased activity on our Arizona rangelands. Elk and deer are moving and hunters are out in droves. Ranchers are moving the cattle down from the high country and putting them into winter pastures. Forage grasses have turned golden, and with the change in color the protein content decreases, calling for protein supplementation of livestock. Repairs are being made to water catchment systems in preparation for winter rains and snows....and let's hope this winter has enough moisture for livestock, wildlife and our grasses.



Fall for SRM is a time to prepare for our Winter Meeting. One of the most important parts of the Meeting is our annual election of officers. We are seeking nominees for two Directors positions and also for our Vice President. These three positions are part of our Board of Directors which provides the leadership for our Section. The jobs are not overwhelmingly burdensome, nor are they unusually time consuming. Please consider running for a Board position sometime during your Section membership. Contact Doug Tolleson for more information on the open positions, or to let him know you would like to run.

Another very important part of the Winter Meeting is our annual live auction. This year Kelsey Hawkes is heading up the auction team, and Rachel Williams will be helping her. The proceeds from the auction add a significant amount of money to both Section and NRCWAY budgets. NRCWAY of course, is our committee that initiates and sustains viable rangeland management information and educational programs for youth below college age. Please start thinking now about items you can donate to the auction, and come to the meeting ready to bid on items to help support the section and NRCWAY.

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Fall Tour, by Willie Sommers

The Arizona Section held a one-day Fall Tour of the Willow Springs Ranch on October 26, 2013. A total of 14 people caravanned around the ranch that is owned by the Willow Springs Cattle Company. Our tour started with a wildlife water catchment that captures rainfall on a tin apron. The water storage tank is located underneath the apron, and this particular catchment was equipped with a game camera. Our second stop was an area popular with recreationalists; we discussed off-highway vehicle use in desert washes and posting signage in high use areas.

We also looked at a wildlife water catchment that gathers surface water from a small channel. The water is piped to a buried storage tank and walk-in drinker. At this location, Katie Cline from the NRCS in Tucson talked about her ecological site inventory work on the ranch, and showed a map of the pasture fences and improvements. Lunch was eaten under the shade of an old barn at the 96 Ranch headquarters (at one time this was a separate ranch).

At our next stop we asked the U of A students what they noticed about the surrounding vegetation; the answer, "No saguaros." We had transitioned from one major land resource area (MLRA) to another after crossing over the Ninety Six Hills. Instead of saguaro, Palo Verde, cholla and jojoba we were now looking at turpentine bush, bush muhly, prickly pear cactus and mesquite. In addition, we walked around and saw Arizona cotton top and

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President's Message...continued from Page 1

Our efforts continue to bring the National SRM meeting to Arizona. I have had preliminary talks with the Phoenix Convention Center directors, but it is too early to tell if Phoenix winter rates will be low enough to meet our needs. I will keep membership informed on our progress in getting the meeting to Arizona in 2017 or 2018.

My thanks go out to President-elect Willie Sommers for organizing a Fall tour this year. The day spent on the Willow Springs ranch was the first of our one day field meetings. We hope to have many more of this type of meeting in the future.

Lastly, this is my final newsletter article as your Section President. I just want to thank you for your participation in our Section activities the past year. Your help made my role a pleasure. I have enjoyed getting to know all of you, and many of you have personally helped me become a better rancher and steward of our rangelands. I am looking forward to many more years of involvement with the Section and plan to help in any way possible.

Many thanks,

Mike Hemovich

Fall Tour... continued from Page 1

plains bristle grass.

Jock Sacksen, President of Willow Springs Cattle Company, and Nick Cline, ranch foreman, told us about their livestock grazing operation. The take home message is that their livestock numbers are down considerably due to drought and the limited availability of water sources. Many of their dirt tanks are dry, or lack sufficient water to support livestock in a pasture. In essence, the Willow Springs Ranch is using the Next Best Pasture method, and keeping livestock in areas with adequate water and forage.

I myself like the concept of ranch tours, and was glad there were students on hand to talk range management. Thank you to all who attended the tour!



Pictured from left to right: Nick Cline, Sarah Cline, Jock Sacksen, James Holden, Elizabeth Freniere, Chris Bernau, Anna Collins, Doug Tolleson, Emily Peciluna, Alanna Riggs, Mike McIntire, Kelsey Hawkes, Willie Sommers

Arizona Section Annual Meeting

“Managing Rangelands with Federally Listed Species/ Opportunities in Rangeland Consulting”

January 8 - 10 2014, Holiday Inn Hotel and Suites Tucson Airport-North

Make sure we have your email so you can receive registration and other pertinent information.

Upcoming Auction

The AZ Section SRM Winter Meeting is quickly approaching!

With the Winter Meeting comes the Auction, so dig out those check books, folks, and start practicing your hand raising skills! Remember, the proceeds from the auction directly benefit NRCWAY and the SRM.

Now is the time to start thinking about items that you would like to contribute to this year’s auction. We’ve had loads of great items donated to the auction in the past, and I have no doubt we can round up some great items again this year. We would also like to have businesses donate gift cards and other items if possible, so help spread the word.



Please feel free to contact me for additional information or if you need some good ideas for auction items. Otherwise, I’ll be in touch with regular email reminders and more information as the event approaches.

Our Winter Meeting date is set for January 8-10, 2014. I look forward to seeing you there!

Thanks,

Kelsey Hawkes

Election Candidates

Vice-President Candidate

Chris Thiel:

I have been a member of SRM on and off since the mid-1980s when I was in college. The organization has given me support, both financially when in college and through the considerable knowledge of its membership. I am prepared to give something back by volunteering for consideration as the vice president of the Arizona Section. I think I have the job I do today because of the SRM. When I was an undergraduate at Arizona State University, my range class professors encouraged me to enter the plant identification contest to be held at the national SRM meeting. I really enjoyed learning to identify plants, and I was hooked! Our team was not that successful, but I embarked on a lifelong enjoyment of rangeland ecology. I have been employed by the Forest Service for 15 years, mostly as a rangeland management specialist. I began working in Young, Arizona, and I still enjoy meeting up with those ranchers at our annual meetings. I moved to Payson, then to Prescott about 3 years ago. I am now the range program manager for the Prescott National Forest, and get to work alongside a dedicated team of 4 range managers that administer grazing permits on over 1.2 million acres. No small task! I am the team leader for developing new allotment management plans through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) procedures. Doing NEPA work can be fraught with frustration and futility at times, but then there is the good feeling of creating a successful grazing plan with the rancher that allows them to add new waters, cut some junipers, or otherwise improve grazing management over the long term. I also get to go into the field and take an inventory of the plants on the allotment, and I’m taken back to those college days studying for the contest! I enjoy hiking around Prescott with my buddies (human and canine), and have started to take some bicycle tours over the last couple of years that have taken me to Colorado and Vermont. I will work to continue the fellowship, shared learning, and dedication to responsible use of our rangelands that this section advocates.

Candidate Director South

John Hall:

I currently work as the Rangeland Management Specialist and Wild Horse and Burro Specialists for the Yuma Field Office Bureau of Land Management. I have held this position since May of 2009. I am a born and raised Arizonan and a graduate from the School of Natural Resources at the University of Arizona. The hot desert is my home and I am proud to be a land manager that can help preserve our beautiful sandy home.

The SRM has been a huge part of my range life and I owe my career to the “on the spot hiring” in Albuquerque NM during the winter national meeting in 2009. I was an active member of the U of A Tierra Secca during my stint in college and the positive outreach from the state and national SRM is what made me choose my career in Range.

As Director South I hope to extend/build partnerships and information with other federal agencies, state, and private industries. The BLM has not been well represented in the AZSRM for some time now and I would like to share the agencies' direction, management techniques, and lessons learned with our partners.

I am very honored to be considered for the Director South and I know that if elected, I will serve the SRM to my utmost ability.

Candidate Director North

Kelsey Hawkes :

Kelsey Hawkes is a native Arizonan who grew up in Tucson and now resides in Phoenix. She graduated from the University of Arizona with a degree in Natural Resources and a focus in Rangeland Ecology and Management. Kelsey was an active member of the SRM as the University of Arizona Student Chapter President for two consecutive years, leading the students in many hands-on activities to help improve students' knowledge and skills in range principles and practices. As Student Chapter President, Kelsey led the Undergraduate Range Management Exam (URME) team, which earned 5th place team and 4th place team in consecutive years at the annual Society for Range Management conference. Kelsey placed 5th individually in the URME in 2013. She also earned 1st place in the scientific research poster competition at the 2012 Research Insights for Semiarid Ecosystems (RISE) Symposium in Tucson. Kelsey has worked for the University of Arizona, helping with vegetation monitoring and repeat photography on the Santa Rita Experimental Range, organizing workshops, and assisting in rangeland related courses. She currently works as a Rangeland Resource Area Manager for the Arizona State Land Department out of Phoenix, AZ and remains an active member of the SRM.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS
**August**

Elisabeth Alden

Peach Springs, AZ

September

Christopher Jones

Sun City, AZ

Matt Kilford

Mesa, AZ

Michael Macauley

Flagstaff, AZ

October

Trevor A Chilcote

Tucson, AZ

Michael David McIntire

Chandler, AZ

Emily Elizabeth Pecilunas

Cary, IL

Field Follies Andrew Brischke



This was the start of my monitoring season this year:

I had already had what I thought was a delightful and successful first day out in the field the previous day. I stayed in the office the next morning as I had a very important meeting at 2 in the afternoon. I planned to drive my work truck to the meeting, so I had to leave the office around noon. Around 11 am, my boss went to grab something from her car and noticed that one of the tires on my work truck was completely flat. That left me an hour to change the tire, right? No worries.

Ahhh, but those who know me, know better than that.

I began by grabbing all the necessary tools to change a tire. After wrestling the jack out of a cluttered toolbox, I started loosening the lug nuts. I thought I was loosening the seemingly over-tightened lug nuts. In actuality, I was just stripping one of them smooth. I tried hammering my 4-way on the lug nut, but that wasn't getting me anywhere. I scrambled over to the usual mechanic, looking for tools and ideas, but he was closed. I raced across town to the other mechanic looking for anything I could borrow.

The backup mechanic gave me a couple different sockets to try, a breaker bar, and a *bigger hammer*. However, at the time I didn't feel like dinging up the borrowed sockets with the *bigger hammer*. The tools were returned with my charmingly gracious explanation, but he gave me permission to use the *bigger hammer* - as well as a chisel if the hammering didn't work. As my co-workers gathered around like a pit crew, I took the big hammer and, with a couple of solid whacks, drove the socket home. Working like a well-oiled "cooperation machine," we finally got the tire off of the truck.

Now it was a race against time to get the *bigger hammer*, the socket with the lug nut still inside, and the flat tire back to the mechanic. While he was patching the tire, I was rushing to the other side of town to purchase a new lug nut. The first auto shop was out of that particular size, so I scurried over to the other auto shop in town to make my purchase. I made haste back to the mechanic to pick up the patched tire, and then back to the office to put on the tire with my pit crew. We finished and, surprisingly, I ended up being only 15 minutes late to the meeting.

I was happy that I made the decision to get the tire patched instead of putting on the spare, especially now that I'm in touch with how my life goes. The next day, as we got back to the vehicles after a long and rough day on ATVs - guess what I came back to? That's right, a flat tire - on the other side.

Calendar of Events

- December 4-5, 2013 **Colorado Section 2013 Annual Meeting** Colorado Springs, CO
- December 9-11, 2013 **Sixth Western Native Plant Conference** Vancouver, Washington
- December 11-12, 2013 **Nevada Section SRM Meeting**, Reno, NV
- Jan 22 - 23, 2014 **1st Annual NAIPSC Web Course** More Info: Steve.Young@UNL.edu
- February 8 - 13, 2014 **SRM Annual Meeting**, Orlando Florida

Ecology & Management of Grazing - Online Course [More Information](#)

NAIPSC Webinar Series [More Information](#)



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