



Arizona Section Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2016



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President's Message:

The days are getting shorter and we are entering into the season where we gather with family and friends and celebrate those relationships and the enrichment they bring to our lives. Fittingly, we will be gathering as the Arizona Section in early January at our annual winter meeting to celebrate our network, our “range family”. We had some discussion at our summer meeting about keeping the Arizona Section relevant to the membership, and sustaining membership numbers. With a robust membership representing differing areas of expertise, viewpoints, and backgrounds, we are stronger as a whole. In my experience, I have learned the most from those people that I didn't necessarily think I shared any commonality. Those relationships stretched my boundaries and opened my mind. I challenge this membership to envision where the range management profession will evolve in the next decade, and identify what partnerships we should develop to get us there. How are we informing youth about the profession so they enter the curriculum when they pursue higher education? The NRCWAY camp is an excellent educational venue, but are there other local education efforts we should be promoting as a society? I will make another solicitation for a committee that would represent public relations and outreach. This committee could identify opportunities to occasionally partner with other professional societies to increase the opportunity for education for our membership, or identify ways we can outreach more effectively on social media. Opportunities to participate in the Arizona Section are also available on the Board of Directors as either Director North or Director South, or Vice-president. Please consider taking a leadership role in perpetuating our success as a professional society by joining our Board of Directors. You can contact me to get on the ballot. I look forward to seeing you all in Tucson in January. Enjoy the holiday season and take care of one another!



SAVE THE DATE!
AZSRM Summer Meeting
January 4 - 6 2017
in Tucson, Arizona.

AWARDS – UPCOMING WINTER MEETING

A huge thank you to all who submitted nominations for awards this year! The awards are an integral component of our Section and allow us to recognize the outstanding and inspiring achievements within our rangeland community. Don't miss the presentation of the 2016 Arizona Section SRM awards at the upcoming winter meeting, January 5th, 2017. We have awards to present for Range Manager of the Year, Outstanding Professional and Technical, Outstanding Service, and Outstanding Young Professional.

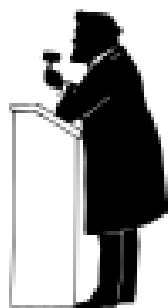


As always, we are looking for volunteers to assist with our committees. If you are interested in helping out with the awards committee or another committee, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

-The Awards Committee

CALL FOR AUCTION FUNDRAISER ITEMS!

Howdy Rangers!



It's that time of year again to begin thinking about items to donate to our annual fundraiser auction. Each year, the auction helps the Arizona Section raise money that supports our annual meetings and tours. In addition, the proceeds from the auction also go directly toward supporting our very own Natural Resources Conservation Workshop for Arizona Youth (NRCWAY). Since the AZ Section SRM is a non-profit organization, all donated auction items qualify as tax-deductible. The auction will be held during the winter meeting, January 4-6, 2017. Please feel free to contact Kelsey Hawkes with any questions about the auction: khawkes@email.arizona.edu

Summer and Winter Meeting Discussion

We had a great turn out of more than 70 registrants for the Annual Summer meeting this year. We toured several sites that used a few different approaches for restoring rangelands including watershed structures, mesquite removal and broadcast burning. The meeting wrapped up with a great panel discussion about re-stocking the burned allotments on the Douglas Ranger District following the Horseshoe 2 fire in 2011. I would like to thank everyone who contributed to the meeting and helped make it a huge success. This year's Winter Meeting is something of a spin off from the summer meeting as it will dive deeper into strategies for managing around such disturbances as fire, drought, and threatened/endangered species. Fittingly so, the theme this year is Adaptive Management Strategies on Rangelands in Arizona and a Workshop: Hands on Use of New Tools for Increasing Preparation for Drought. The meeting will be held in Tucson at the Double Tree Hotel at the Tucson Airport on January 4-6, 2017. A room block under "The Society for Range Management" has been set aside at the hotel for the \$113 government rate. There are other hotels nearby if needed. Registration and a Draft Agenda will be available soon. The hotel information is below. For more information please contact James Heitholt at 520-388-8372 or by email at jheitholt@fs.fed.us.

Double Tree by Hilton Tucson Airport
7051 S Tucson Blvd.
Tucson AZ 85756
520-225-0800

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Director North Report

The seasons are changing here in northeastern Arizona and it's always a busy time of year. I was able to attend the Apache and Navajo County Cattlemens annual meeting during the Navajo County Fair in the middle of September. I enjoy attending this meeting because I am able to catch up on issues that affect ranchers in this part of the state. We are also busy with an area wide planning initiative that would address juniper encroachment in Apache and Navajo counties as a part of the Arizona Conservation Partnership. The Apache and Navajo County Natural Resource Conservation Districts took the early initiative to work with our ranchers, and the local staff from BLM, NRCS, Apache and Navajo County, State Land Department, Arizona Game and Fish Department, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service to solicit proposals for addressing juniper encroachment in the Navajo and Apache County focal area. Two brush management projects on two ranches will be started over the winter. It is exciting to see locally led, landscape scale partnerships be effective.

In Native Rangeland news, a group of natural resources professionals met at Salish Kootenai College in Pablo, Montana for the Native American Rangeland Management Training

Initiative planning meeting. The goals of this meeting were to develop a "train the trainer" tribal rangeland management workshop series, rangeland management outreach toolkits for Native land based communities, an accredited soil and rangeland ecology course for tribal students, and an inter-tribal informational website about rangeland management. We were able to identify disconnects in each of these areas, I'm excited to present these to the Native Range committee at our Section's winter meeting in Tucson. The next national planning meeting is scheduled during the Annual Intertribal Indian Agriculture (IAC) Meeting in Las Vegas on December.

I am very excited for the winter meeting in Tucson and look forward to meeting with rangeland managers working with Arizona tribes. We'll be getting an update from Delane Atcitty, Chair for the National Native Rangeland Committee and looking at what has been accomplished so far with the national initiative and discuss the future of our local committee.

See you in Tucson!



From a day of field work in Chilchinbeto, Arizona, Navajo Nation

Newsletter Committee Chair Needed

I will be stepping down as newsletter chairperson following the winter meeting in January. If you have an interest in serving as chair please contact me at marques.munis@az.usda.gov. The duties of the position include coordinating the development of a quarterly newsletter with AZ SRM board members and Lisa Gerber who puts everything together into the seamless format you are all so familiar with reading. If you believe the newsletter is an important source of information for the society please consider volunteering for the position, I am more than happy to help get you up and running with everything you need to be successful. Thanks!!!

Marques Munis

Newsletter Committee



Director South Report

I have had the pleasure recently of spending a great deal of time out in the field since finishing my master's degree, which itself didn't involve much outdoors time. Although it's been scorching hot this summer, getting outside on our southern Arizona rangelands has been a relief for me! Southeast Arizona generally saw above normal amounts of precipitation this summer. The monsoon storms were certainly fun this year! At my house alone, which is west of Tucson, I received over 8 inches between July 1 and October 1, putting me at almost the 90th percentile relative to the current 30 year "normal" period (1981-2015). I have a brand new rain gauge at my house (designed by UA Climate Extension Specialist, Dr. Mike Crimmins), which I've been using to keep track of the rain. What I like most about my rain gauge is that it uses a clear PVC with inches marked on the outside – therefore, no dipstick-ing around.

I also had the pleasure of participating in a data collection effort for a cooperative global arid lands climate and piosphere study, known as BIODESERT, for which one of the field sites was located on the Santa Rita Experimental Range south of Tucson, AZ. "Piosphere" is a term that refers to the localized impact that livestock grazing may have on vegetation and soils in a radiating zone of attenuating impact



Lightning from my backyard, July 29



Sunflowers, Santa Rita Experimental Range, October 04

around a concentrator, e.g. water source (Washington-Allen et al. 2004). Through that field campaign I spent several weeks this summer getting up close and personal and reconnecting with our desert grassland rangeland. Throughout September, our perennial grasses in southeast Arizona were still vibrant green, mesquite pods were abundant, and the landscape still resembled Ireland. By mid-October, at elevations higher than 3500 feet, most perennial grasses still had plentiful green leaves. The wildflowers also put on a good show this year (see photos). And forget about packing a lunch, because the desert hackberries (*Celtis pallida*) are abundant and sweet! Add those to some pigweed (*Amaranthus palmeri*) leaves with prickly pear fruit juice squeezed on top, and you've got an instant, beautiful desert grassland salad. No joke – I did this and it was delicious! I can see a desert hackberry margarita in my future. ;-)



Pincushion cactus, Tucson Mountains, July 04

On another note, if you didn't get a chance to attend the 13th annual RISE (Research Insights for Semi-Arid Ecosystems) Symposium on Saturday October 8, it was a great program that covered a variety interesting rangeland and watershed projects occurring on the Santa Rita Experimental Range, Walnut Gulch Experimental Watershed, and other locations throughout Arizona. The presentations ranged from aerial herbicide application projects for buffelgrass control in Saguaro National Park, to public data sharing by the National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON), to using drones to estimate livestock utilization of perennial grasses, to brush management, arthropods, erosion rates, and more. The full archive of presentations and posters from the Symposium can be found at: <http://www.tucson.ars.ag.gov/rise/index.htm>.

Director South Report....*continued*

My term as Director South is at last coming to a close. I have truly enjoyed giving back to the Arizona Section all of the benefits it has given me as a student and young professional. Thank you for having me, and thank you to all of the incredible people I have met through the Section and the kindness and knowledge you've shared with me – aka my “Range family”.

On that note, we are in need of finding new candidates to take over for Director South and Director North beginning January 2017. Please spread the word and encourage others to consider the position.

Lastly, I want to wish everyone a happy holiday season! I'm looking forward to seeing you all at the winter meeting January 4-6, 2017.

Best,

Kelsey Hawkes
Director South



Fishhook barrel, Santa Ritas, Sept 09



Flameflower, Chiricahuas, August 18



Windmill, north of Sonoita, AZ, August 10

Washington-Allen, Robert A., Thomas G. Van Niel, R Douglas Ramsey, and Neil E. West (2004). Remote Sensing-Based Piosphere Analysis. *GIScience & Remote Sensing* 41(2): 136-154.

Don't forget about our Arizona Section Website!

Have you ever wondered what the board of Directors has been up to between our general meeting? Have you ever wondered how to get in contact with a member of the board, but don't have their contact information?

You can find all that and more at <http://azrangelands.org/>

Our website has copies of the recent meeting minutes from our Board of Director meetings, a contact list of all of the members of the board, copies of our recent newsletters, and much, much more!

Check it out!



PLANT ID CONTEST - SUMMER MEETING AUGUST 2016

At the recent 2016 summer meeting, we held our 6th annual AZ Section SRM Plant Identification Contest. The contest consisted of 20 live plants collected from around the Chiricahua Mountain region of southeastern, Arizona where the summer meeting was held. Among the specimens were fourwing saltbush (*Atriplex canescens*), velvetpod mesquite (*Prosopis velutina*), red dome blanketflower (*Gaillardia crassifolia*), Apache plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*), green sprangletop (*Leptochloa dubia*), bush mushly (*Muhlenbergia porteri*), skunkbrush sumac (*Rhus aromatica*), Mexican blue oak (*Quercus oblongifolia*), Rocky Mountain zinnia (*Zinnia grandiflora*), and more. We had five contestants, though unfortunately we had to disqualify one going by the pseudonym “VGS Cheater” J



Tied for second place were Joshua Sutter and Rachel Turner. Josh is the President of the University of Arizona Chapter SRM (aka “Tierra Seca”), and Rachel is the Treasurer of Tierra Seca as well as a Master’s student at the UofA. Josh and Rachel each received the second place prize of an illuminated LED hand lens, perfect for all of their future plant identification needs. (Photo bottom left).

And earning first place this year, taking home all the marbles, was Ariana Gloria (Photo bottom right). Congrats, Ariana!!! Ariana is a research technician for the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension in Kingman, AZ. She is the proud new owner of a 2016 trophy belt buckle, going from zero to cool in 3.5 seconds. Wear it proud!

Congrats to all of our winners, and a big thank you to everyone who participated (even our own VGS Cheater).



Joshua Sutter and Rachel Turner



Ariana Gloria

SRM Student Chapter Activities at ASU

Hello Arizona Section Members of SRM,

I feel like just yesterday we were all together for the summer meeting, and now finals, graduation, and the winter meeting are all in sight. The range students at Arizona State University (ASU) have been very busy this semester with our club, Wildlife and Restoration Student Association (WRSA) and class field activities.

We have gone to Munds Park, AZ to discuss the importance and role of several forbs, shrubs, and trees located in the Ponderosa pine ecosystem. During our trip, we took the opportunity to collect, press, and mount herbarium specimens. These specimens will then be used to help us prepare for the Plant ID exam at the annual meeting in St. George. In addition to class field trip, several of us are learning and improving on vegetative monitoring techniques. Some of these techniques include Parker three-step, belt transects, measuring density and cover, etc.

Our student club (WRSA) is proactive with range and ecology related activities. We have had several guest speakers, including a permittee on Tonto National Forest, come to speak with the club about animal nutrition, geographic information system (GIS) related studies, wildlife surveys, etc. This upcoming weekend, October 22, a few of us are going to the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy to discuss restoration projects that they are conducting. Some of these projects relate directly to invasive species control, soil eradication, watershed restoration techniques, and more.

We have a total of four students who will be attending the annual meeting in St. George, Utah. We are devoting dozens of hours per week to studying rangeland plants that will be on the plant identification exam. Also, we have started to look at our older undergraduate range management exams (URME) in hopes of improving our scores.

Thank you again for letting ASU be a part of a great group of range individuals!
Jacob Draper
Jdraper4@asu.edu



Wildlife & Restoration Student Association

ASU Polytechnic



NRCWAY

The 2016 workshop was a success with 23 students and many staff members enjoying the outdoors while learning about Arizona’s natural resources. The theme this year was water and watersheds. Students learned the importance of water quality and quantity, the physical properties of water, and how watersheds function. The students worked in groups throughout the week studying, measuring, and photographing their area of a wetland. They developed a presentation on the health of their wetland and some had recommendations to improve the state of the wetland.

The students learned a little about forest health as part of their service project this year. The James 4-H Camp had received a grant to do some forest thinning to improve the health of the timber stand, reducing the number of trees per acre and opening up the forest canopy. NRCWAY students piled slash from the thinning for burning to be done this winter. Swimming and fishing in the pond were popular free time activities, along with birdwatching, and photography.



FIELD FOLLIES by Andrew Brischke**It Was Too Late When We Remembered That We Forgot**

Welcome back, me! It's been a while.

The Coronado NF Monitoring Week in September is a fun, unofficial kick-off to the monitoring season, but as you've read before, bad events tend to domino on me quite often.

We started the week off with my partner having a flat tire on his trailer. Not typically a major problem, but not exactly how you want to start what is supposed to be an extremely productive week. While waiting for my partner I began to think...it was too late when I remembered that I had forgotten the only food item I was responsible to bring for my assigned meal. I had left two dozen ears of corn in my fridge. Fortunately, there was going to be plenty of other food there so it wasn't a big issue.

When my partner arrived, we headed out to start work for the day. Neither of us had been to the first site we were assigned, but we had a map and a GPS point. What we didn't know was the last time anyone was on the road we had to take they were still using white-top schooners and mule-power. We turned a sharp corner and headed down a short, steep hillside into a small drainage where we were met with about 4 or 5 fallen oak trees. It would've been easy clear our way with a chainsaw, but we were only armed with our aging, aching muscles. After some time and scratches our path was finally cleared. The second road we needed to travel however was not.

Our second site was a typical hike out with your GPS location. We looked at the photos, hiked around some more and tried to match anything in the photos. Finally, we came to the conclusion that the site was on the next ridge across a deep gorge. So, we hiked back to the truck and drove over to the next ridge. We hiked down the next ridge and found the key area. While getting our equipment ready, it occurred to me that I had forgotten to bring the stylus for the tablet and my pencil required for data collection back in the truck. Luckily I had a paper sheet and my partner had a pen. Now, if we could only remember how to use a paper data sheet! Thanks, VGS! About a third of the way through we noticed we had strayed off the ecological site and decided that we were going to have to resample the site from the beginning. Starting over, it was already too late when we remembered that we had forgotten that pen doesn't erase. A little field ingenuity and a big black sharpie solved this problem and we ended up with a "just like new" paper data sheet.

The third site was not nearly as bad. When we finally reached the site, it was too late when both of us remembered that we had forgotten to grab the file which would tell us which direction the transects would run. Luckily my partner had a photographic memory (and a great guess) for the correct direction.

The fourth site was only a half mile away but the clock was ticking. My partner was one of the primary event organizers and needed to make sure everybody was settled into their living quarters (Canelo) for the week. There was a locked gate close to our last site but we didn't know who to contact to unlock it. After a few phone calls, we were informed that the man with the key had just left about 15 minutes prior to attend a meeting and could not return to unlock the gate. Our 5-minute route to the highway turned into an hour and a half of retracing our steps from where we had just came. At the end of the day, the majority arrived to Canelo at about the same time as us and hardly anyone even noticed how late we really were.

Calendar of Events

- January 4 - 6 AZSRM Winter Meeting, Tucson Airport Double Tree by Hilton
- January 22 - January 24, 2017 American Forage and Grassland Council Annual Conference, Roanoke, VA.
- January 29 - February 2, 2017 2017 SRM Annual Meeting, Technical Training & Trade Show St. George, UT.
- February 6 - 9, 2017 Weed Science Society of America Annual Meeting, Tucson.



Arizona Section-Society For
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