



Arizona Section Newsletter

September 2012

President's message:

Time for a little adaptive management maybe?

Those of you who attended the summer meeting in Young may recall that one of the last items we discussed in the Wednesday evening membership meeting was... attendance and membership. We all have friends and colleagues who would like to stay active in the Arizona Section of SRM but who just can't for a variety of reasons. Somebody we always camp by, eat with, swap stories and experiences with, or get advice from weren't there this time. Many of us are facing challenges to staying active ourselves. We talked briefly about the observation that we are in a "membership drought" and because of that, we may need to adapt our management of the section. Let me rephrase that last statement; we will adapt our management of the section, or we will cease to be. We as an organization are not alone in this drought; groups as diverse as the local Rotary Club to the Little League Boosters are facing similar situations. There are many reasons; the economy, changing demographics of membership, and changing perspectives on the importance of membership in such groups are but a few. Just as ecosystems and the plants and animals inhabiting them change when conditions are plentiful or sparse; successful individuals and organizations do the same. They adapt. They survive.

Now if my sons were reading this they would be thinking "OK here it comes... this is where he says **"adversity doesn't build character, it reveals it... or, this is not an obstacle, it is just an opportunity to excel..."** which they have heard me say over and over. But I don't say these things to hear myself speak, I say them because I have found them to be true. So, from what I have observed of our collective character over the last ~5 years, I think that the Arizona Section of SRM will not only adapt but will likely excel in this drought. To illustrate; adapting would be keeping our perennial grass cover intact and our livestock and wildlife in good body condition. To excel, we

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**Summer Meeting 2012
Rangelands Under the Rim**

The venue for this year's summer meeting was Pleasant Valley which is located about 70 miles southeast of Payson. While the valley's weather usually lives up to its name, this year temperatures reached into the low 90's, making Thursday's field session a little uncomfortable. Of course, compared to Valley temperatures that soared to 114 during that time, we shouldn't complain.

The meeting got underway on Wednesday afternoon with a general membership meeting. President Doug Tolleson brought us up to speed on current AZ Section matters and informed us of National SRM issues. The membership meeting adjourned just in time to line up for hamburgers and hotdogs, the traditional dinner put on the NRCWAY committee. Proceeds from the dinner go directly to help fund the NRCWAY summer camp which had over 30 campers this year. Dinner was followed by two captivating speakers. Dr John Hohman gave a

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Movers and Shakers



- ◆ Willie Sommers is the new Range Section Manager, Arizona State Land Department. Willie has been Range Resource Area Manager for the last 5 years. Congratulations Willie!
- ◆ Alvin Whitehair is now a Rangeland Management Specialist with the BLM in the Hanksville Field Office in Utah.
- ◆ 2008 Arizona Section President Bill Edwards has moved to Grand Junction, Colorado to serve as District Ranger on the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forest. We wish Bill the very best in Colorado and thank him for his support of our section.
- ◆ Jamie Wages is the new Chairperson of the Honors and Awards Committee.

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will need to do the previous, improve soil organic matter, and get our 2-year old first calf heifers bred back too... get the picture? No problem, right?

I am sure this all sounds like a pie-in-the-sky pep talk from your enthusiastic but disillusioned president right about now but let me assure I have no delusions of grandeur. After 30 years in this business I am well aware of the difficulties of running a diverse professional organization with an all volunteer leadership corps. I have seen the SRM and other societies wax and wane with the times. But, I do think we are in a little different situation than we may have seen before. So, I think we need to look at some different solutions, or maybe at some old solutions that we got away from that may fit again. At this point I would like to share a few excerpts and quotes from other groups I found that are addressing the same sort of drought as we, and see if their experience applies to ours. And then, as any respectable extension agent would do, I will try to propose some practical actions that we can take to adapt and excel.

From Peter Senge, MIT Professor: "Don't



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

JUNE

Gregg A. Vinson Oracle, AZ
Benjamin W. Smith Peoria, AZ

AUGUST

Maria Williams Willcox, AZ
George Vensel Patagonia, AZ



push growth; remove the factors limiting growth"

I think this is a key issue and one that we can address by simply continuing to do what we do well (e.g. training, professional development, networking), making the range profession in the state aware of what we do (e.g. website, newsletter, **word of mouth**), as well as re-naming and coordinating what we do to better fit with annual planning and budgeting for the agencies (e.g. Summer Meeting and Field Training? or, Winter Conference and Workshop?).

From the American Society of Women Accountants: "Every year, members of the Executive Committee meet to review ASWA's Strategic Plan. The plan is adjusted annually, new goals and measurements are set, and hard data is reviewed to determine whether we've made progress on the plan. Center to the strategic plan is increasing membership – ensuring that ASWA conveys a strong brand as the home for all women accounting and financial professionals at all levels of their career."

Sound familiar? So maybe we need to collect some monitoring

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Director South Report



Linda and I attended the summer meeting of the Arizona Section SRM in Young, Az. on August 8, 9 and 10, 2012. The meeting was well attended and very informative.

Wednesday afternoon, after a general membership meeting, we had an interesting session with talks about the archaeology of the Pleasant Valley area and the Pleasant Valley war. Dinner consisted of great burgers (meat donated by Greg Vinson of the A Diamond Ranch in eastern Pinal county and owner of Jojoba Natural Beef) and pie ala mode. Music provided by "The Youngsters" was the evening entertainment.

On Thursday we began with an indoor presentation by Phil Heilman, the director of the Southwest Watershed Research Center, ARS, in Tucson. His talk looked at state of the art work in using remote sensed information to help land users and managers stay abreast of range conditions throughout the year. Then the group travelled to Key Area #3 on the Bar X Ranch for a morning of talks about the soil, plant community, climate and grazing history of the site (Grasshopper pasture). Jeff Stone and his crew, also from ARS in Tucson, ran their rainfall simulator to gather data from KA #3 on erosion and runoff. The crowd was able to witness the equipment in action but this was not a demonstration; it was a real simulation run which Jeff and crew finished later that afternoon. For lunch we met at Alderwood Campground on Haigler creek for sandwiches and talks about Ecological sites and TES sites by NRCS and USFS respectively, big game in unit 23 by AZGFD and a tour of a stream renovation effort along Haigler creek led by AZ Game and Fish biologists. In the late afternoon the group met again at the Young Community Center for a talk on Habimap GIS applications. Dinner that evening was a great steak fry with more mountain music.

On Friday the USFS put on an overview of its operations by discipline at the Community Center. The meeting finished after lunch. It was one of the best summer meetings we have been to. Linda and I enjoyed the sessions and meeting with old friends and making new acquaintances.



On another note rainfall in our area (along the border in Santa Cruz County) has been very good this summer. Many areas have had 10-12 inches of rain since the end of June. About 20 miles north of the border the rains get spotty with some areas green and lush and others brown and dry. We had 0.7 inches of rain on June 24th this summer. June 24th is the feast day of St. John the Baptist and all my life I've heard from old timers, especially the vaqueros, that if it rains on "Dia de San Juan" it is going to be a real good summer. Well, this is the first time in my range career of 40 years that we had rain on that day and it sure came true for us.

AZ Section Winter Meeting 2013

In order to make our meetings responsive to member needs, we are soliciting ideas from you for our Winter Meeting. Please let me know what topics or general themes you would like to see presented in January. With your ideas we can make our meetings as meaningful and educational as possible. We have not set a location yet, but the tentative dates are January 23-25. Send your ideas to Mike Hemovich at Mh520@aol.com.

Director North Report

New Horizons, Applying for Jobs in this economy.

While I serve as Chair for Young Professionals, act as Director North, and new Chair of Awards Committee, in my normal job, I serve as manager of our Forest wide student program. Of course this is my "other duties as assigned" but one of my favorite parts of my job. I am constantly impressed with the quality of our student employees, and I take it upon myself to help them find jobs once they have graduated. Several of them have put in for numerous jobs, with great resumes and wonderful job skills, but time after time, no phone call.

I know this isn't just a problem with these students, but students and new professionals across the country. One job may have dozens of applications, how do you make yours stand out.

One of the benefits of our SRM meetings is contact that students can make with potential employers. Always have your resume handy, for other professionals, whom you trust, to look over it and give you advice. These meetings provide great opportunities.

Express your interest, especially in a professional and approachable manner. If a potential employer knows your interest, it is more likely they will think of you when a job does come up. You are always on your game at these meetings, make sure you are professional and courteous.

When you meet a potential employer, it is good to have a cross walk of classes and your degree. Showing a potential employer you have answers to many preliminary questions says a lot about how you will be as an employee.

And lastly, never give up on online applications. Consider opportunities that might be outside your focus, it may be your perfect job. And flexibility to move is essential, employees like to hear you are willing to go the distance. Check out non-government or state jobs, keep your eye out for everything.

I know it seems like a daunting task, but it is well worth the effort when you land that first great job!

Good luck!
Jamie Wages



We Want YOU!

Seeking Nominations for Vice President, Director North and Director South
Send nominations go to dluhrsen@fs.fed.us

There are always four Directors, they are responsible for . . .

- ◆ liaison between the NRCWAY Committee and the Board of Directors
- ◆ liaison between the Honors and Awards Committee and the Board of Directors
- ◆ liaison between the Youth Activities and the Board of Directors
- ◆ liaison between the Fundraising Committee and the Board of Directors
- ◆ liaison between the Auction Committee and the Board of Directors
- ◆ liaison between the Ranchers Committee and the Board of Directors
- ◆ liaison between the Youth Activities Committees and the Board of Directors
- ◆ member of the Nominations and Elections Committee

What a great way to get to know your Section. Further details may be found online at <http://azrangelands.org/docs/index.html> "Guidelines for Section Officers and Committee Chairpersons."



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data on ourselves, as well as from former and potential members to determine condition and trend? Then adapt as needed. A full blown membership assessment survey is probably not practical for us right now but each of us can ask those we work with and around such questions as: 1) do you know about SRM? 2) what would interest you in a group like SRM? or, 3) what do you have to offer a group like SRM? I propose we try a grassroots informal survey in our own circle then feedback to your board of directors, committee chairs, etc... with ideas, suggestions, and an offer to help see them through. Note that last statement; "at all levels of their career." And hold that thought.

From Grantmakers in the Arts: "As funders we have three main challenges: first, getting a handle on the extent and impact of the recession; second, exerting leadership — being bold, positive, and opportunistic without being insensitive; and third — and most important — asking ourselves the same tough questions that we are asking grantees: how do we slip the vice-like grip of old mindsets and behaviors and adapt so we increase our relevance, resilience, and meaningful contributions to our community?"

One comment here; I don't think we need to throw away the "old" stuff because it is old, nor adopt the latest thing just because it is new. I am for doing what works and makes sense. Somewhere there is a picture of me horseback in a mesquite thicket holding the reins and a GPS in one hand with a radio antenna in the other hand. I was tracking radio-collared cows in a large pasture in the Rolling Plains of northwest Texas. Each of those tools, old and new, were the best for the job to be done. We may decide we need a Facebook page to effectively communicate to a significant segment of our membership, not just because it is the cool thing to do. We may also need to continue mailing hard copies of the newsletter to those who want/need that form of communication. Take home message is let's be innovative and keep an eye on the past.

From Rottman Creative: "Item 3. Increase membership value. Every household in America examining their budget is weighing the value and benefit of the expenses they have placed on the chopping block. Associations cannot ignore this fact, and must attempt to increase the value of membership to their current members."

Probably a little redundant at this point but repetition helps drive home the concept. We have been trying to

keep costs down on our meetings and also to provide relevant meaningful information on topics that you can take home and use. We need to keep doing that. We also need to look for new sponsors who could help defray the costs of our trainings (easier said than done with tight budgets) while getting some value for their contribution. I think we can accomplish this by partnering with an agency such as NRCS for example to tag-team an ecological site description training with one of our meetings, or with Extension or Cattlemen's or Game and Fish... and lastly, I think we can add value for our members by not just providing training by providing a place to contribute. A new younger member may want to take on a Facebook page or a blog, a more seasoned member might provide mentorship for one of our undergraduate plant ID teams. A rancher could help conduct training on practical grazing management at one of our meetings/workshops, our native range committee could host the section or contribute to the national SRM. The opportunities are there for those of us "at all levels of their career."

If you go back and read newsletters from the previous few years, you will see that we have talked about membership and attendance before. We have done a better job than some sections in retaining members. I will say again that this speaks to our character and commitment in Arizona. But obviously there is more to do. So let's keep talking about it, but above that let's do something. Recruit a co-worker, solicit ideas for training, talk to a sponsor, step up and volunteer. After all this is an opportunity to excel. See y'all at the winter meeting/workshop/training/networking/mentoring...

Doug

We need photos for our newsletter banner! Each issue will feature a picture from a section member capturing our wonderful Arizona rangelands. This issue's photo was submitted by John Kava taken in the Prescott National Forest north of Camp Wood..



Submit your photo to:
AZSRMnewsletter@gmail.com

Tierra Seca Range Management Club

Four students from the University of Arizona represented the student chapter at the AZ SRM Summer meeting this year. This included undergraduate students Kelsey Hawkes (UA chapter President), Erin Boyd, and Matthew Lee, as well as master's student, Doug Whitbeck.

The UA students took on the task of serving breakfast to the attendees two days in a row. Thankfully, hot coffee was received by happy faces at precisely 6 o'clock in the morning on both days, unlike the panicked cowboy coffee extravaganza from last year's meeting. Along with scrambled eggs and hash browns, the students served delicious pork breakfast sausage from the University of Arizona Meat Science Laboratory at the Campus Agricultural Center. Many thanks were received from the AZ Section for two wonderful meals that really hit the spot!



Although there were very few participants in the plant identification contest, the University of Arizona took first place again this year, with the winner being UA President Kelsey Hawkes. She can be seen sporting the shiny new trophy belt buckle at future academic and SRM related events!

Overall, the UA students greatly enjoyed participating in the 2012 Summer meeting. The field trip presentations were particularly enjoyable in that they allowed students to stretch their legs and experience the presentations on site. Two of the students were experiencing an AZ Section Summer meeting for the first time, and were pleased by the ability to interact with professionals as well as meet UA alumni.

As a club, the University of Arizona chapter is searching for paid and volunteer opportunities to gain experience in the field of Rangeland Ecology and Management and raise money to send undergraduate students to the 66th annual Society for Range Management meeting in Oklahoma City in 2013. Please contact Kelsey Hawkes (khawkes@email.arizona.edu) with any suggestions! The UA students look forward to meeting with the Society again next January at the Winter Meeting.



A peek behind the curtain . . .

Did you miss it? Maybe you looked at the proposed agenda for the Section Summer meeting and decided it didn't interest you. You would spend those days at your job and get a few things done while others went. I don't need more lecture on that. . .

You did miss it! Take a peek of what was not on the agenda. There were little huddles of range professionals discussing the processes of their trade, sharing experiences with some of the younger folks. Some met for the second time and connected at a level they didn't think possible the first time around. At the campsite right there in the dark of night with only the Milky Way providing a soft glow, we heard firsthand about burro management within the BLM. You may have even witnessed a shooting star or two. There was also that rooster and donkey waking people



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Summer Meeting Continued from Page 1

presentation detailing the lifestyle of the Indians who inhabited Pleasant Valley for centuries before the arrival of the first white pioneers. He outlined his 17 years of work on the nearby Q ranch pueblo. His wonderful presentation was followed by Pat Murdoch's scholarly talk on the infamous Pleasant Valley War of the 1880's. His talk makes the Grahams and Tewksburys come alive. Those who were not ready to call it a day enjoyed music by the "Youngsters" for an hour or so in the Community center.

Thursday morning started off at 6 A.M. with our UA students firing up the coffee pot. Breakfast was on the table by 7 A.M. The students once again outdid themselves with the variety of foods available. Dr. Phil Heilman was the first presenter and he really set the stage for the rest of the morning presentations which all focused on "merging science with management". Phil took us on a remote sensing look at the key area and allotment where we would be spending the rest of the day. We then drove out to the key area and listened to Dan Robinett give us a detailed, in depth soil analysis. Dr. Jim Sprinkle followed with a presentation of the data he has collected on the site for the past 6 years. He was followed by Dr. Jeff Stone and his rainfall simulation and erosion monitoring study. Everyone enjoyed watching him and his team put varying amounts of rainfall on the ground and then scientifically measure amounts of erosion. The morning talks clearly demonstrated how science can be used to influence and direct management decisions on the range. After lunch, provided by ASU students, at Haigler Creek we turned our attention to a subject several SRM members wanted addressed: Arizona Game and

Fish activities in the Pleasant Valley area. Dave Daniels brought the group up to speed on big game issues and focused his talk on elk. Curt Gill took us on a short walk along Haigler Creek and pointed out how his proposed project would improve trout habitat. We returned to the Community center and Reuban Teran, AZGF, demonstrated the new "Habimap" software that contains a huge amount of information on Arizona wildlife. He pointed out that this software program is available to everyone with a computer and internet access. Thursday ended with a steak fry and more music by the, (augmented with local talent), "Youngsters".

The Friday morning session was devoted to rangelands under the rim and how they are managed. Each of our District Ranger station disciplines was covered by the District staff. Range, fire, recreation, timber and wildlife subjects were presented by Vanessa Prileson, John Whatley, Chris Lacosse, Jeff Leonard and Julia Camp. Each of these offices has a close and continuing relationship with management of our rangelands.

Of special note: Congratulations to Kelsey Hawkes for winning the plant ID contest. I'm sure we will see her wearing that belt buckle at the next SRM meeting. Jaime Wages came in second. Hats off to our student chapters from the UA and ASU for turning out top notch meals, without them I'm afraid we would be hard pressed to find volunteers to get the coffee going by 6 A.M. A big thanks to all of you Rangers who attended.....we hope you learned much and enjoyed Pleasant Valley.

Mike Hemovich
President Elect

Peek Behind the Curtain.....Continued from Page 6

up in the morning. Or maybe a neighbor tent dweller shared a cup of fresh brewed joe while catching up.

Too mild? A group of Young Professionals made their way to the Antlers - Café and Bar for some professional development and relationship building. The atmosphere was filled with just enough competition around the pool table to not be boring. I went along to supervise and be the designated driver. I can report: these young Pros are of the right breed.

So next time a meeting announcement comes across your computer screen or in *the* mail. Think twice. Events behind the curtain are not always advertised or scripted, that is what makes them special.

John Kava, Editor



AZ-SRM Native Range Committee Update to General Membership

By

Alvin L. Medina, Co-Chairman

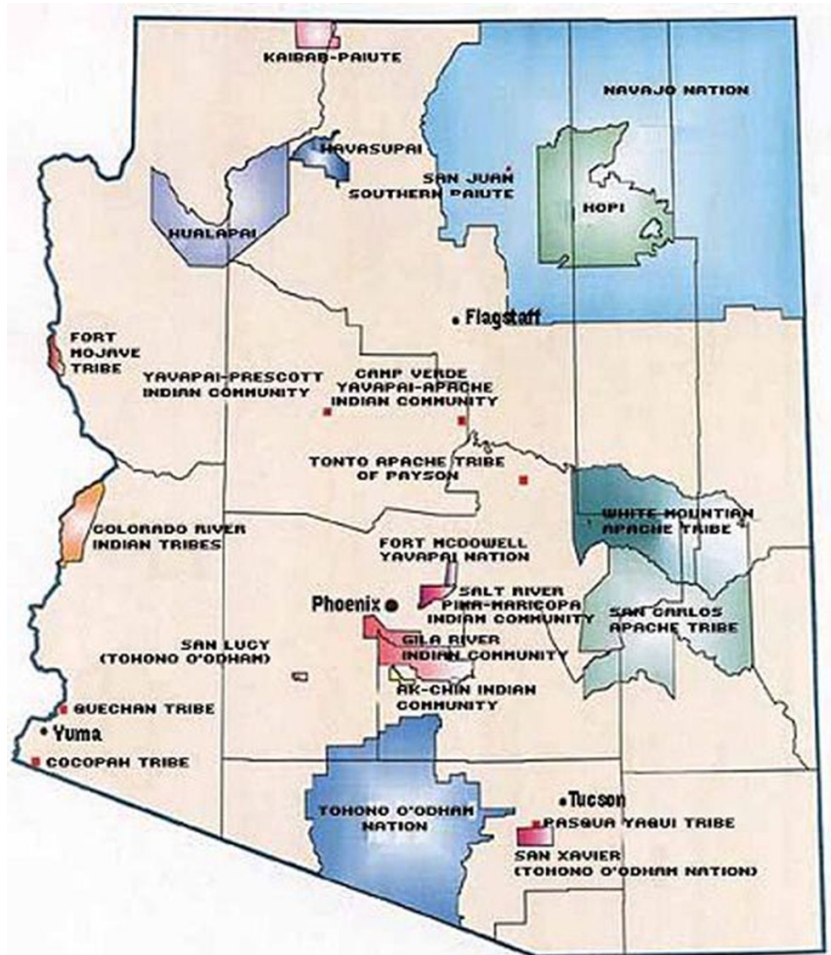
Since its creation in March 2011, NRC has been plowing ground to establish a new emphasis group within the Section intended to focus on rangeland management issues on Tribal lands. In Arizona, Native American Indian rangelands constitute approximately ¼ of Arizona's rangelands. In some instances, rangeland issues are much different from those on public lands, and warrant unique approaches to problem resolution. Agency, e.g. BIA and BLM, and Tribal range managers are facing highly controversial issues such as management of excess horses, drought, wildfires, and Threatened-Endangered and Sensitive species management. These issues are difficult enough, often politically charged, much less trying to work within a Tribe's resource management framework and cultural traditions.

NRC seeks to unify this unique group of range managers, understand their technical needs, and provide technical assistance through the Section. Initial technical assistance can be provided through training and information sources at our winter and summer meetings, as well as special field tours to witness practical solutions. In short, the Section can help facilitate meetings and information exchange. NRC held its first planning meeting on August 7, 2012, in conjunction with New Mexico's Native Range Committee led by Bob Alexander from the Laguna Tribe. Bob is co-chairman of the National Native Range Committee, charged with organizing the national program for the national meeting in Oklahoma. The meeting focus was on "excess horses on Tribal lands" and over 23 different entities consisting of Tribes, agencies and private interests attended the meeting. We were able to capture a full spectrum of the various factors contributing to management of feral horses on Tribal lands. We selected the topic of excess horses because it is considered by Tribal managers to be an emergency resource issue. One thing I learned – the range managers dealing with the feral horse issues are a unique group, highly skilled and dedicated to resource conservation.

Bob Alexander and I will digest the information and

work towards developing technical sessions at the forthcoming winter meeting. Topics will certainly include feral horse management, as well as other specialized topics of interest to NRC. Opportunities will be sought to have joint AZ-NM Section meetings as well as field workshops.

I believe it is vitally important for the Arizona Section to continually outreach to professional range managers and practitioners and identify their technology needs, then find ways to enhance their skills. The parent Society, i.e. SRM, is looking towards Arizona for providing the leadership in developing the Native Range Program. NRC needs your support to be successful. "By Gosh" – we can do it!



This recent article provide insight into the magnitude of the "Excess Horse" issue on western rangelands, although there are many contrasting opinions : <http://mag.audubon.org/articles/conservation/saddle-sores>

Seeking Nominations

The Olympics are over but it is not too late
to get that special someone their own GOLD!

You know who.

They have completed the trials!

They are consistently the best at what they do!

They strive for excellence in all aspects of Range Management!

*Don't wait submit them **NOW** for one of these Honors or Awards!*

Range Manager of the Year

Professional and Technical Guidance

Outstanding Service

Outstanding Young Professional

Submit to ajwages@usda.gov by November 1st 2012. Guidance and criteria for each of these awards may be found online at <http://azrangelands.org> click on Governing Documents, and then Guidelines for Section Officers and Committee Chairpersons. These awards are in no way associated with the Greek Olympics so keep your clothes on but start working on that package today!



NRCS Announcing Grants to Help Farmers, Ranchers Adapt to Drought

WASHINGTON, Aug. 15, 2012 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) today announced the availability of up to \$5 million in grants to evaluate and demonstrate agricultural practices that help farmers and ranchers adapt to drought. NRCS is taking applications for Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) to help producers build resiliency into their production systems so they can adapt to climatic extremes, such as the historic drought impacting the nation.

NRCS is offering the grants to partnering entities to evaluate innovative, field-based conservation technologies and approaches. These technologies and/or approaches should lead to improvements such as enhancing the water-holding capacity in soils and installing drought-tolerant grazing systems, which will help farms and ranches become more resilient to drought.

Grant applications are due Oct. 15, 2012. Private individuals, Tribes, local and state governments and non-governmental organizations can apply.

Funds will be awarded through a competitive grants process for projects lasting for one to three years. Apply electronically at www.grants.gov or contact the NRCS National CIG office at (703) 235-8065.

And a little bit of history.....

In 1996 the Arizona Section had their summer meeting on mine reclamation. The meeting included a tour of the Black Mesa Mining Complex, which has operated since the early 1970s southwest of Kayenta, Arizona. The Black Mesa Mining Complex was two different mines, the Black Mesa Mine and Kayenta Mine, which at the time supplied coal to generating stations in Page, AZ and Laughlin, NV. Anyway, I received some photos from Posy Piper and thought they were great to share. Plus, it may have been the first time hard hats were required during an Arizona range management tour. But I might be wrong. Thank you Posy for the photos."

Willie Sommers



SRM 2013 Annual Meeting

Oklahoma is more than crazy weather, open plains and Outlaw country. The SRM 2013 Annual Meeting will be held, Feb. 3-7, 2013, in the heart of Oklahoma City, specifically in Bricktown, a progressive, culturally diverse part of Oklahoma City. The name of the Oklahoma City Annual Mtg will be officially known as the "2013 SRM Annual Meeting, Technical Training, and Tradeshow."



Technical tours of Oklahoma include the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve and others. Located southwest of Oklahoma City in the heart of the Mixed-grass prairie, the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge is a unique part of Oklahoma. Managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the 60,000 acre refuge provides habitat to deer, elk, bison as well as a grazing land to Texas longhorn cattle. Learn about current research being conducted on the refuge and experience the Oklahoma "mountains."

Start planning your trip to Oklahoma in 2013 for the 66th Annual Meeting of the Society for Range Management. There will be activities galore to suit every attendee. Come ready to experience the history, heritage and culture of Oklahoma. We will be looking forward to meeting everyone and showcasing our great state to all!

Visit <http://rangelands.org/> for more information.

Registration will be open September 15th
 Early registration will be due December 12th
 Late registration begins December 13th



Field Follies

By Andrew Brischke

I realize I bring much of my misfortune upon myself, I really do. And in keeping with the theme of summarizing the recent summer SRM meeting in this issue, I would like to share another occurrence of self-induced calamity that happened to me during the meeting.

I arrived in Young early enough to find that I could set up my living quarters in just about any spot I wished in the camping area. The spot I chose probably had the hardest ground of the entire lot and bent every last one of my paper clip-sized tent stakes. Instead of doing the sensible thing and finding a different area I simply said to myself, "This will do, what's the worst that could happen?"

After coming back from dinner on the first night to see my tent standing firm, my worries about my tent blowing around drifted away with the gusty winds that we had had during the BBQ. The next morning I thought I would put some extra weight in the tent just to be on the safe side. Luckily, I had a cooler full of ice and sodas that would do just the trick.

I decided to come back to the campsite after the day's talks to collect my cooler full of goodies and relax for the remainder of the evening. When I pulled up to where had I left my tent that morning, I clearly witnessed the evidence of a localized tornado that whipped through the campsite. I saw other tents tipped over, but ostensibly the eye of the tornado went right through where I had placed my weighted down tent and the gale force winds sailed it a good 100 ft. from where it had originally had been placed.

As I was straightening out my collapsed tent I noticed that I had broken a tent pole. No big deal as it was just at the joint and quickly transformed from a broken tent pole to a shortened tent pole. Then, as I like to make everything difficult on myself, I dragged my "weighted down" tent back to its original location. You may be asking yourself why I didn't take anything out to make it lighter to drag, or even better, just set my tent up where it docked itself? The answer my friends is simple-I don't think all the time and some would argue I rarely think.

At the time I didn't think of using the real tent stakes I regularly use for monitoring that were in my truck the entire time. I didn't think that my "heavy," cheap, Styrofoam cooler full of goodness would've tumbled about and emptied either. I didn't think the now melted ice would soak everything in my tent. I didn't think of taking everything out of my tent before we finally put the real stakes in. I didn't even think of dumping the small puddles of water left behind in the bottom of my tent before we staked it down. Indeed I could've pulled the stakes and emptied the water out of my tent, and in hindsight would've been far less effort. But I do things the hard way and decided to mop up and wring out what I could with my already soaked clothes.

That evening was the first time I was pleased that it got so hot over the weekend. The inside of my tent was dry, my air mattress was dry, and my sleeping was...damp. I know I brought this on myself, I really do. But I'm also blaming Mother Nature-and Mother Nature, I'm putting you on notice! (That statement ought to really boost my karma for the future.)



EVENT CALENDAR



- * September 11-14 The Nation Possessed: The Conflicting Claims on America's Public Lands. University of Colorado, Boulder
- * September 29 Yavapai Cattle Growers 80th Annual Calf Sale and BBQ, Peoples Valley
- * September 27 Rangeland Monitoring Workshop based on the *Guidebook to Rangeland Monitoring and Assessment*. Sonoita. 8am - 4pm. Contact George Ruyle (928) 621-1384.
- * October 4 Rangeland Monitoring Workshop based on the *Guidebook to Rangeland Monitoring and Assessment*. Mormon Lake Forest Service Office 4373 S. Lake Mary Rd. Flagstaff. 8am - 4pm. Contact Doug Tolleson (928) 554-8991.
- * October 13 Research Insights in Semiarid Ecosystems (RISE) Symposium. University of Arizona. Registration Deadline 10/08/12
- * January 23-25 Tentative Arizona Section Winter Meeting. Location TBD
- * February 3-7 SRM Annual Meeting Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

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