



Arizona Section Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2013



Inside this issue:

President's Message	1-2
Summer Meeting Synopsis	2
Upcoming Elections	3
Summer Meeting Pictures	4-5
NRCWAY	6
Director South Report	7
Welcome New Members	7
Young and New Professionals Report	8
Proper Functioning Condition Report	9
AZ Meeting Comments	11
Field Follies	11
Calendar of Events	12



President's Message:

Greetings,

I overheard someone describe this year's summer meeting as perfect. The Nordic Center was an ideal venue to be out under the tall pines of Flagstaff, enjoying the cool northern Arizona mountain air. The meeting presentations and the U of A workshop on Wednesday added greatly to our knowledge of Arizona rangelands and our efforts to improve their health and sustainability. Thanks to Willie Sommers, all the presenters, the UA and ASU students who contributed to the meeting.



One of the topics that was covered in detail during our membership meeting in Flagstaff was the need for a location for the national SRM meeting in 2017. All members should be aware that the AZ section was asked if we would host the meeting, but out of Arizona, perhaps Nebraska. The Board of Directors rejected this idea but proposed that we continue our efforts to hold the 2017 or 2018 meeting here in Arizona. The reasons we have not been able to bring the meeting to Arizona have been that Phoenix is too costly in the winter, and Tucson does not have adequate facilities to handle over 2,000 people at this time. Doug Tolleson, who has been handling this issue, and I will continue to search for a suitable venue in Arizona.

As many of you remember our winter meeting contained an interesting five hour session, "Excess Horses on Arizona Rangelands". This topic continues to generate attention nationally, and as we learned during the workshop, the large number of excess horses on the Navajo Nation was having a significant detrimental effect on the Navajo rangelands. Recently

Continued on Page 2

Summer Meeting Synopsis – by Willie Sommers

First, let me give many thanks to those who attended and presented during the Summer Meeting in Flagstaff. Just like I had planned (wink wink), the weather turned out great for all three days. We had about a 10 minute rain following the U of A Cooperative Extension workshop; the remainder of the week was mostly clear. The Flagstaff Nordic Center turned out to be a fine place to hold a meeting; we used the pavilion tent for presentations and dining, and had access to some open forest for camping.

In recapping the meeting, I will start with the last day and work back to the beginning, so bear with me. On Friday we listened to a presentation about the Four Forest Restoration Initiative ('4FRI' for short) and some of the planned thinning work to be done. Henry Provencio started his talk with a compelling video about Ponderosa Pine Forests, and what we have to lose through catastrophic wildfire. There were photos of plants, wildlife, streams and lastly, a pair of boots and a helmet from a firefighter. Mr. Provencio paused, and stated that this was the first time he had given this talk since the tragedy at Yarnell Hill. That video certainly reinforced the dangers associated with wildfire.

We also heard from Mandy Roesch, who works closely with the Babbitt Ranches on their Wild Bill forest allotment that includes the area around Flagstaff Nordic Center.

Continued on Page 2

Board of Directors*President*

Mike Hemovich
Mh520@aol.com

President-Elect

Willie Sommers
wsommers@azland.gov

Past President

Doug Tolleson
dougf@cals.arizona.edu

Vice President

Eric Burden
Eric.Burden@az.usda.gov

Secretary

Ashley Shepherd
AshleyS3@email.arizona.edu

Secretary

Sarah Noelle
smnoelle@email.arizona.edu

Treasurer

Ernie Gipson
egipson@fs.fed.us

Director North

Alvin Whitehair
alvin.whitehair@blm.gov

Director North

Shai Schendel
Shai.schendel@az.usda.gov

Director South

Dan Robinnett
dgrobinett@gmail.com

Director South

Steve Barker
SteveBarker.az@gmail.com

U of A Student President

Alanna Riggs
agr1@email.arizona.edu

ASU Student President

Kelly Bedson
kbedson@asu.edu

President's Message...continued from Page 1

however, the Nation passed legislation and funding to address the problem, and perhaps the AZ section can claim just a little credit for focusing on this issue at our winter meeting.

I would like everyone to know that the Section is continuing to focus on our youth this year. Our NRCWAY camp was again a big success and our Young Professionals Committee (with Vanessa Prileson as its new leader) put on a well attended plant ID contest in Flagstaff. Willie Sommers is planning a Fall ranch tour that is aimed at garnering as much student attendance as possible. We will also be looking forward to hearing from our student members and Young Professionals at the winter meeting.

Lastly, as with any organization, a strong growing membership is a key to success. Please reach out to coworkers, friends and others interested in all rangeland matters, and bring them into our Society. Print this newsletter and pass it around!

Regards,

Mike Hemovich

Summer Meeting Synopsis... continued from Page 1

I appreciated that she discussed adaptive management as a part of the allotment management plan.

The main day of the meeting was quite enjoyable. Our Vice President, Eric Burden, talked about the Cataract and Espee Ranches and the most common ecological site present on both. He is currently working on the inventory of the CO Bar Ranch, and expects to find similar soil/vegetation characteristics. The field tour started with a view of an area treated for juniper encroachment; we learned that over the years Babbitt Ranches has received several

different state and federal grants for grassland restoration work. We then proceeded to a grassland area near Tub Ranch (a camp on the CO Bar Ranch) where we discussed rangeland health, the wildlife habitat evaluation guide, and the benefits/justification for grassland restoration. The field tour concluded with a demonstration of the grinder machine clearing some juniper trees (see photo).

Back at the Nordic Center, we heard about the creation of a range plant handbook for the Cataract and Espee Ranches by Greg Goodwin. Mr. Goodwin spent many years on these ranches documenting native grasses, forbs and shrubs. He also described the Fickeisen plains cactus (*Pediocactus peeblesianus* var. *fickeiseniae*), a very small cactus that grows on limestone outcrops. Interestingly, the cactus is the size of a quarter, and during drought conditions it will shrink below-ground until conditions improve. The range plant handbook was intended for Babbitt Ranch cowboys who could learn plants as they went about their daily business.

Some other items that I should mention – it was great to carry on the plant ID contest for the third consecutive year. Way to go Young Professionals Committee! I also want to thank the ASU and U of A student chapters for bringing fellow students and for providing meals. Flagstaff was a great location for our summer meeting, and from what I hear, we will be back there again next year!



Upcoming Elections



Howdy, well it is almost that time of year again. Time to start thinking about our fall elections and where you can best serve the section. As usual, we will elect a Vice President and two new Directors, one for the North and one for the South. Over the next couple months, I will be contacting some of you to ask you consider running for these offices. Below are the job descriptions of each position.

VICE PRESIDENT

Serve as an understudy to the President and President-Elect and be available for special assignments as needed.

Will serve as a member of the International Advisory Council - SRM at the summer and annual SRM meetings to represent the Arizona Section (see SRM bylaws <http://rangelands.org/pdf/Bylaws.pdf> for specific responsibilities).

Will serve as a direct liaison between the Historian, Science, and Young Professionals Committees and the Board of Directors.

DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

The Directors-at-Large are described as Positions 1, 2, 3, and 4. Positions 1 and 3 are directors installed in odd years. Positions 2 and 4 are Directors installed in even years. Position numbers for newly elected directors will be determined by the current Board of Directors.

DIRECTOR SOUTH, POSITION 1:

Will serve as a direct liaison between the Honors and Awards and NRCWAY Committees and the Board of Directors. Will serve as a member of the Nominations and Elections Committee in even years.

DIRECTOR SOUTH, POSITION 2:

Will serve as a direct liaison between the Youth Activities and Auction Committees and the Board of Directors. Will serve as a member of the Nominations and Elections Committee in odd years.

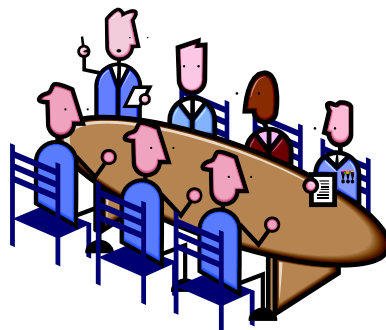
DIRECTOR NORTH, POSITION 3:

Will serve as a direct liaison between the Rangeland Practices and Youth Activities Committees and the Board of Directors. Will serve as a member of the Nominations and Elections Committee in even years.

DIRECTOR NORTH, POSITION 4:

Will serve as a direct liaison between the Honors and Awards and NRCWAY Committees and the Board of Directors. Will serve as a member of the Nominations and Elections Committee in odd years.

Doug Tolleson
Past President



Scenes from the Summer Meeting



Scenes from the Summer Meeting



NRCWAY

The 2013 workshop was a success with 24 students and many staff members enjoying the outdoors while learning about Arizona's natural resources. The theme this year was wildlife. Students learned about wildlife habitat and biomes, how hydrology affects habitat, participated in activities that taught concepts such as food chains, carrying capacity, components of habitat, animal nutrition and grazing behavior. The students worked in groups throughout the week studying these subjects. Each group was given a biotic community in Arizona and researched the elevation, climate, plants and animals of their particular community. Groups then developed posters highlighting what they had learned and presented the information to staff and family members at the end of the week.



The students did a great job on their service projects this year. Students cleared moss from approximately half of the swimming pond to allow for more oxygen for the fish. Some students constructed a rock and wire gabion along the stream bank near the recreation center, while others picked up rocks and debris in the baseball field (an area of severe flooding in August 2012). Swimming, fishing, and making plaster casts of wildlife prints were popular free time activities. Florescent powder was set out at night around bird seed to see what kind of wildlife might inhabit the area. Using a black light, tracks could be seen - the most exciting found were wild turkey tracks!

We hope that you will help us in recruiting young people to attend NRCWAY in 2014.



Director South Report by Steve Barker

Rangeland Resource Management Systems

Last issue Steve outlined why a conservation plan is important, and how to begin with an inventory of the resources based on ecological sites. Rancher involvement is key to a successful plan.

The key to a good resource management system is to develop a specific prescription for each and every pasture or grazing area on the ranch. If there are clear management goals for each grazing area, then the day to day grazing management decisions will be based on achieving the specific goals for that area. The resource management system will include the grazing management strategy, and any additional structural, vegetative, or management practices that are needed to implement the grazing strategy. Other conservation practices may be needed to address other resource concerns. Accelerating practices like brush management might be planned, but they should wait until the basic grazing management has been in place for a few years, and any critical issues with the rotation have been worked out.

It is also important to build up a seed bank of the desirable species in the pasture before you give the system a kick. You will get back whatever species have been putting out seed.

If the livestock numbers are not in balance with the long term average amount of forage the ranch produces, then the resource management system will not work. If animal production does not support an economically viable livestock operation the resource management system will not work. This is the where the real art of range management happens. Only the rancher has a vested interest in making it work. Only the rancher will work on it their whole career. If the resource management system succeeds, it will be because the rancher did it.

Every resource management system needs to include wildlife, endangered species, water quality and other environmental considerations. Every rancher needs to have a good understanding of their environmental compliance requirements and potential issues, and address them in their plan.

Coordinated Resource Management plans are critically important to managing Arizona's rangelands, and we all must be committed to make them work better for the good of the resources. If a state or federal agency or tribe is part of the land ownership, the plan should be developed with them. I recommend getting help from Extension Service, Arizona



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

July

Elisabeth Alden - Peach Springs

August

Christopher Jones - Sun City

Matt Kilford - Mesa

Michael Macauley - Flagstaff



Young & New Professionals Report

Welcome all young and new professionals to the Arizona section of the Society for Range Management! More than 25 young professionals attended the Young Professional Conclave (YPC) committee meeting at the 2013 summer meeting in Flagstaff at the Nordic Center, representing all three Arizona universities and their associated Range Clubs, federal agencies, cooperative extension, non-profit and ranch entities. More than 45 young professionals are on the e-mailing list now. YPC members, this is your young professional Range network, your opportunities just multiplied by 45! Below are some of the topics we covered in the committee meeting, including short term and long term goals for YPC.

- ◆ Two to four YPCs volunteered to lead a moderated discussion on rotational and continuous grazing at the Summer 2014 meeting in Flagstaff in an effort to bring YPC into the main schedule of the AZ section. Amber Dalke (UA Research Specialist) and others volunteered to post relevant papers and seminars on the topic on the AZ SRM Facebook page throughout the year to update our backgrounds.
- ◆ Chris Lowman (AZ State Land Dept.) volunteered to provide live nursery plants for the Summer 2014 Plant ID contest, so we might be identifying live plants next year!
- ◆ We also discussed sending some YPC members to help teach at the Natural Resource Conservation Workshop for AZ Youth (NRCWAY) on Mingus Mountain in coordination with camp director Kim McReynolds.
- ◆ The YPC is working on putting together a video of photographs and video footage of what we do in each of our range careers throughout 2013-2014 in time to present at the Winter 2015 meeting! Please send relevant video footage and photographs to me (vprielson@gmail.com) to include in the presentation.

Plant Identification Contest Winners 2013 – thank you for participating!

1st Place: Rachel Williams

2nd Place: Mike McIntire (UA Tierra Seca Range Club)

Participation: Kelly Bedson (USFS Pathways Student Intern/ASU Range Club)

Kimberly Cole (ASU graduate student/Range Club)



Proper Functioning Condition Course

By: John Kava



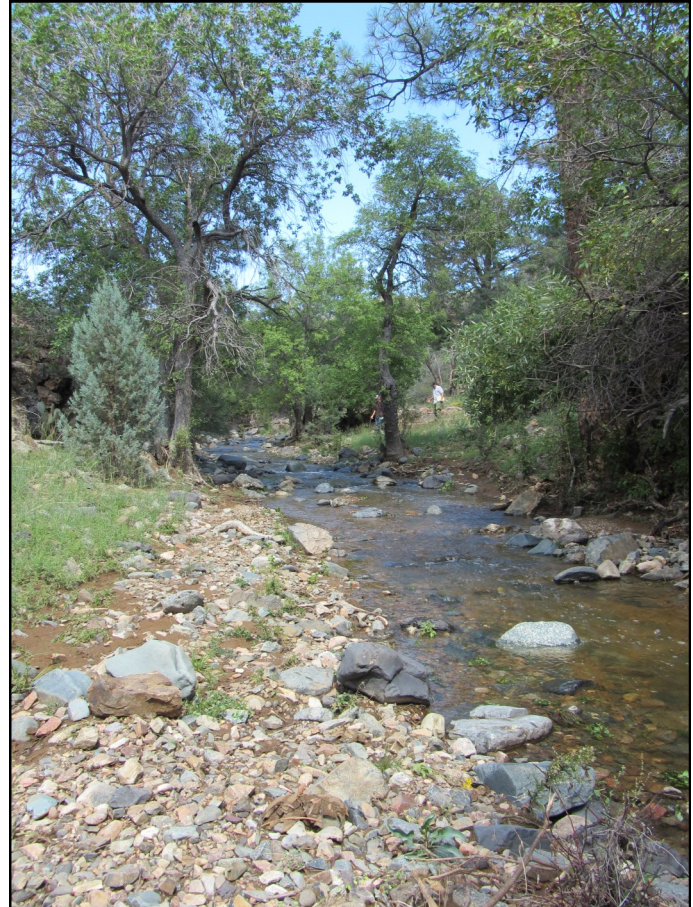
Rangeland Management Specialists from Arizona National Forests and Bureau of Land Management regions attended *Proper Functioning Condition assessment (PFC) for Resource Professionals* held in Prescott September 9-13. Proper Functioning Condition assessment or PFC is an assessment used by federal agencies to assess riparian areas. It was developed by identifying common and important attributes and processes that can be assessed visually. This course was put on by the National Riparian Service Team.

In addition to Rangeland specialists, hydrologists, ecologists, and soil scientists participated in the course. Day one and two consisted of classroom instruction. Participants heard the science behind PFC, what pre-work is necessary, and the details used to, to properly perform an assessment. During two days in the field participants formed Interdisciplinary Teams (IDT). The first day was spent on the Verde River where all the groups rated this reach in properly functioning condition. The IDT were able to see those attributes that are required to achieve a proper functioning condition rating. Day two was not as easy. The riparian area was in a shrub dominated ecosystem, had a steeper gradient, and varied historical management. Each team spent extra time in discussion over the 17 assessed items. The biggest value of the workshop was hearing the varied responses and justifications for each item from the various teams at the end of field day 2.

The last day of the course covered how to use the assessment to prepare IDT/specialists reports, determine resource values, develop and prioritize actions, collect baseline data, establish goals and objectives, implement planned actions, monitor effectiveness of planned actions, implement adaptive actions, and outline appropriate uses of PFC results. In attendance for the Integrated Riparian Management Process portion of the assessment were three District Rangers from the Prescott National Forest. Each team was tasked with:

- 1) identifying resource issues from the previous day
- 2) define a broad, general management goal and propose a plan to collect baseline data
- 3) define a single management objective,
- 4) describe range management action or activity that could result in a desired future condition,
- 5) propose an effectiveness monitoring plan to track progress,
- 6) describe potential adaptive management steps.

It was a full week of learning and honing the use of this tool to assess the riparian resources of the southwest.



AZSRM Summer Meeting Comments

There are many things you can do with 8,400 acres; unfortunately, we only had an hour to pick one. The six of us chosen to work together mused over the possibilities. We represented different agencies and professions, but we focused on the common goal of maximizing the allowable use on our given allotment. It was this workshop during August's AZ Section SRM meeting that proved to be most memorable for me because it provided a small taste as to what it might be like to solve similar problems on the job.

In addition, I found that the different lectures and workshops held during the meeting provided valuable information about techniques and resources currently being employed by professionals in the field. These topics go hand-in-hand with classes I've taken at ASU, like Range Management, while providing a more concentrated look at how different agencies worked.

The social aspects of the meeting also presented me with opportunities to meet both new and established professionals who work in the field. My interactions with varied professionals, offered me a window on some of the management challenges, and successes, that different agencies are currently focusing on.

Kelly Bedson, ASU student and Pathways intern with the Tonto National Forest

This year's Arizona's SRM meeting was my first SRM meet ever. For being a student in rangeland management, I thought it was very beneficial to me to attend the meeting. It was a great eye opener to me because I was able to talk to professionals in the rangeland management field and learn about what they do everyday at work. From hearing this, I am very excited to be working as a rangeland manager because it will be a job that I will enjoy going everyday. I also liked that we were able to go out in the field and get a hands on experience on a grassland restoration project as well as doing the determining rangeland health activity was a great learning experience. What else was fun was that I was able to test my plant ID skills against other range management students and see how I compared to them. I was very surprised I placed second in the contest considering there were plants in the contest I have never seen before. Overall, I really enjoyed my time out in the wilderness at the SRM meeting and I was disappointed that I had to go back to urban Phoenix. From that I am very excited and looking forward to going to next year's meet. I cant wait to be out in the field again and learn some new things about being a rangeland manager.

Michael McIntire, UA student and Tierra Seca member



Field Follies

By Andrew Brischke



It Always Happens In Three

I don't like to touch objects of impending disaster. I learned this during my budding rugby career at the international level. About a month before a U-19 National rugby camp, I decided to take my more than healthy legs for a spin on my friend's crutches for a bit of fun. Two weeks later, and 10 days before the camp, I tore what is so far my first of three ACL's in a pick-up rugby game. I blame the injury on that needless crutches joy ride.

I bring this up because of what happened my first weeks in rangeland at the USFS as a college student. I was unknowledgeable, inexperienced, few skills, less qualifications - basically just an extra pair of hands. Armed with this extra set of hands, my supervisor tasked me with taking a blown out tire to the shop to get it replaced and then to go pick them up in the field after they had done actual work. No problem, right?

As many would know by now, nothing in my life comes this easy. The hours at the tire shop I went to were more of a suggestion and opened up at least an hour late. No worries, I'll have time. Because they were so busy, it took them another two hours to put a new tire on. Now I'm under the pump for time, especially since I only have a circle on a map and have never been to where I'm supposed to pick them up. Shockingly, I get lost and add another hour. I was just in time to pick them up 45 minutes late. Not the best first impression, but not devastating. I had excuses.

Two days later I was going to show them what I was capable of out in the field. So I went out to the yard, hooked up the horse trailer and thought, "What a nice gesture it would be to pick them up curbside." I did, and so did one of the trailer tires. The curb put an impressive slash through the sidewall of the tire (#1). Fortunately it was in the yard and only took us about 10 minutes to fix. Not the best second impression, but not the worst.

Early the next week they sent me off on my own. I thought, "Now I can show them I don't screw up everything." All went splendid out in the field until I blew out a tire on the ATV trailer on the way back (#2). I pulled over, grabbed the jack and the wrench and went to work. One slight problem...the wrench fit the truck tires, but not the trailer tires. As luck always plays for the other team in my life, I also found myself in a dead spot with both my cell phone and radio. I pouted. Then walked back to flag somebody down and pick up my tire pieces. As luck would have it, the next vehicle to pass was an ADOT vehicle picking up the same rubber I was, but his wrench didn't fit either. Thankfully he could reach his coworker that was following him on his nifty little radio - but did he have a wrench that would fit? Luck swapped teams, we fixed it together and I continued on my merry way. That Friday, I found another flat tire, but this time on my personal vehicle (#3).

Not a great week overall, but particularly not your worst first weeks on the job. My supervisor started to get suspicious that I just may be cursed; my new supervisor thinks the very same way. I think the jury is still out, I blame touching that first tire. I still try not to touch objects of impending disaster, ever! It brings on the bad...in three.



Calendar of Events

- September 28 Yavapai County Cattle Growers 81st Annual Calf Sale & BBQ, Peeples Valley
- October 5 Southern Arizona Cattlemen’s Protective Association Meeting & BBQ, UA Meats Lab
- October 12 Research Insights in Semiarid Ecosystems Symposium, UA Marley Auditorium
- October 24 60th Anniversary of the Walnut Gulch Experimental Watershed, Tombstone
- October 26 Fall Tour Willow Springs Ranch
- February 8 - 13 SRM Annual Meeting, Orlando Florida



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

