

# September 2020 Newsletter

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### **Zoom** in to the Summer Meeting!

Feedback from our membership helped us decide to hold the summer meeting virtually via Zoom this year.

Although we will miss the field tours, social interactions, and overall sense of community that our Section Meetings provide, the safety and health of our members must be prioritized as we navigate through this pandemic.

See Page 4 for more info on this year's Summer Meeting.

# From Biological Control Agent to Invasive Species

The Tamarisk Beetle has been discovered as far south as the Upper Gila River.



Read the story here: https://www.azcentral.com/

# Lost Resources: In Memory of Terry Wheeler

Read more on Page 9



## President's Message—Erin Thomas



The other day I had the opportunity to participate in an educational event for a small group of junior high school students. We demonstrated the rainfall simulator and talked about soils and how water flows through the landscape. We helped students identify range grasses and collect samples. We had the students figure out forage production using Ecological Site Descriptions, calculate AUMS and come up with a sustainable stocking rate. Another colleague used applied math to teach the students how to design livestock pipelines. I thought to myself that this is the way school should be. Then I thought, why shouldn't it be? This lesson took place outside on a ranch just outside of town and happened because of COVID-19. It was an opportunity to teach applied science in the field that wouldn't have happened otherwise.

I am blessed to have a job, home and healthy family and have the privilege of seeing this time as a catalyst for change. It has given me the opportunity to evaluate the systems in which I operate and recognize that things don't always have to be done the way we've always done it. I've often struggled to balance the often-competing forces in my career and job. I know there's a balance to strike between the limited timeframes we work in and delivering sound rangeland management, it's just going to take a little thinking outside of the box. The SRM, and this Section, in particular, has done so much to support my development as a professional and I will continue to look the Society to promote and advocate for innovation and science-based decision making.

The Arizona Section is having our virtual summer meeting September 24-25. We voted overwhelmingly to join the NM Section as co-hosts for the 2022 Annual Meeting in Albuquerque. Over half of the respondents indicated that they would like to join the planning committee, thank you and expect an email from me soon. Award nomination forms are now available at azrangelands.org. Please take some time to nominate your amazing colleagues, we all know plenty of members who would be deserving of recognition.

At a national level, the SRM Advocacy Webinar is available online: <a href="https://soundcloud.com/user-295063483/srm-advocacy-webinar-audio">https://soundcloud.com/user-295063483/srm-advocacy-webinar-audio</a>. The webinar details lobbying vs. advocacy, policy and position statements, and the roles of the Advisory Council, committees, Sections and the Board. Finally, the virtual annual meeting will happen February 15-18, 2021. Proposals for symposiums, workshops and alternative or unconventional sessions are due by September 18, 2020. See the national website for details.

Stay safe! Erin Thomas

# **Call for 2020 Award Nominations!**

Please send your nominations and questions to the Awards Committee Chair, Jason Martin at awards@azrangelands.org. Nomination forms and criteria for the awards can be found on our website: azrangelands.org. Special recognition awards are also welcome! **Nominations are due October 31, 2020.** 



## Student Chapter President Messages

# Jacob Brown University of Arizona/Tierra Seca

If this past 5 months were a type of eggs it would be a hard scramble. As students journey back to Tucson, Tierra Seca officers and I are beginning to put together an exciting year. It will include preparing for the international competitions at the SRM Annual meeting and focusing on involvement in the local Arizona rangeland community.

We are in the process of scheduling our bi-weekly virtual meetings and looking for speakers locally or worldwide. We are also recruiting incoming freshmen and other students beyond the Range Management emphasis to become involved in Tierra Seca. This is shaping up to be an interesting year full of opportunity.

# Emma Weiss Arizona State University/WRSA

Unfortunately, ASU's Wildlife and Restoration Student Association (WRSA), ASU's chapter of AFS, TWS and SRM, has not been able to be as active as in previous years due to COVID-19. WRSA did get the opportunity to assist the AZ Game and Fish Department with the trapping and population monitoring of black-tailed prairie dogs near Sonoita before all of our events were cancelled for the semester. Given that in-person classes and activities were cancelled, WRSA has been engaging with our student members via our newsletter, sharing coping strategies, job opportunities, and advice to keep from going stir-crazy while attending classes remotely. We remain hopeful that we can return to normal operations and get back out in the field as soon as is safely permissible.



#### **President**

Erin Thomas Erin.Thomas@usda.gov

#### **President-Elect**

Emilio Carrillo Emilio.Carrillo@usda.gov

#### **Vice President**

Joshua Grace JGrace@azland.gov

#### **Past President**

Andrew Brischke
Brischke@cals.arizona.edu

#### **Secretary Treasurer**

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JD Eddy JEddy@azgfd.gov

#### **Director North**

Andy Habgood
Andrew.Habgood@usda.gov

#### **Director South**

Kent Curley
Kent.Curley@usda.gov

#### **Director South**

Brett Myers
Brett.Myers@usda.gov

#### **U** of A Chapter President

Jacob Brown
UofATierraSeca@gmail.com

#### **ASU Chapter President**

Emma Weiss Ekweiss@asu.edu

#### **Arizona Section Website**

www.azrangelands.org/



### Arizona Section Summer Meeting 2020

#### Save the Date for the Summer Meeting!

Date: September 24-25, 2020.

Time: 10:00am—2:00 pm each day, Lunch break at noon

**Registration Fee:** \$50

Registration will be available on our website in the very near future: https://azrangelands.org/events

We are lining up presenters, and it's shaping up to be great! An agenda will be released in an email update very soon.

The summer meeting will also include a Plant ID Contest and Arizona Rangelands Photo Contest, with prizes! More details will be announced soon via email.

New to the Zoom platform? We've got you covered! After registering for the meeting, you will receive an email with instructions for how to access the full meeting by computer or smartphone, or by calling in for audio-only access.

#### Questions about the Summer Meeting or using Zoom?

Contact the BOD at info@azrangelands.org or President-Elect Emilio Carrillo at: vicepresident@azrangelands.org

Thank you for your understanding as we adapt to the current public health crisis and turn "home on the range" into "range at the home" (where the meals and lodging are free). Although we regret not being able to meet in person, get our boots dirty, or share conversations around a camp fire, the BOD is committed to bringing a quality Arizona Section Summer Meeting to the comfort of your home. We hope you can join us!



# 2021 SRM High School Youth Forum Update

Due to the ongoing uncertainties with the COVID-19 Pandemic, the 2021 SRM Annual Meeting will be a virtual meeting rather than an in-person meeting. Earlier this summer, the HSYF Subcommittee Co-Chairs met with the Idaho Section Planning Committee liaison via a teleconference. They discussed four potential options for HSYF 2021 and quickly declined options 1 and 2.

- 1. In-person in Boise
- 2. In-person elsewhere
- 3. Virtual HSYF in conjunction with virtual SRM 2021
- 4. No HSYF, return to the program in 2022

The High School Youth Forum has seven goals summarized below:

- Assist Sections in recognizing outstanding youth.
- Provide students insights into the function and workings of a Professional Society.
- Provide students with opportunities to meet and interact with Society members.
- Provide a format that encourages thinking and enhance-

- ment of communication skills.
- Provide an opportunity to learn about range management, stewardship, college, careers, through interaction with Society professionals.
- Provide an opportunity to learn about ecology and natural resources of another area of the world.
- Provide an atmosphere that fosters camaraderie, friendship, and lasting relationships.

The HSYF Subcommittee Co-Chairs sent an email to Section contacts asking them to vote on options 3 and 4. The Arizona Section Youth/NRCWAY Committee decided to support option 4, based on the seven goals of the HSYF and the importance of in-person interactions and field tours during the forum. The majority of the 15 sections that responded voted for option 4, or no High School Youth Forum in 2021, but to plan on our traditional in-person program in 2022 in New Mexico.



# Director North Report—Andy Habgood



Hope everybody is well doing and through getting these trying times. At least in the rangeland management world, social distancing comes easy as the grass, trees, wildlife, and livestock don't care if you wearing If you remask. member my last report about weather patterns in the recent dec-

ades, it seems to be holding true this summer. Following a wet winter with good spring runoff and moisture, the summer monsoons, or "nonsoons", as some have called them, have failed to put much moisture in the ground in the majority of the state. In my neck of the woods up here on the Sitgreaves National Forest, this makes for the third summer in a row of what seems to be drier than normal conditions.

I won't lie to you, I have struggled with this as a land manager. A few years back, we had places in the blue grama country that looked possibly the best they have ever looked. I mean, they brought a smile to your face when you saw them, things couldn't get much better as you thought these places had to be near potential as far as production and overall good conditions. As a range con, it gave you a sense of satisfaction, a positive return on your investment, that you were doing your job. This was the summer of 2017. Then came the dry spring of 2018, and it seemed like overnight, decades of good sound range management were wiped away when huge amounts of blue grama died off. I mean, we had entire allotments get wiped out that were monitored the year before showing the best conditions that had ever existed.

This is where I struggled, losing sleep, asking "How can this happen?, Where do we go from here? What's the time frame for recovery?" People would

say, "Hopefully it rains next summer." That's always our go-to, as if the glass is half full, it's what we say every year. I was thinking looking at all this dead blue grama, kicking it around in the dust, as it seemed to be rolling up like sod and disappearing, it's going to take more than a summer, might even take more than ten summers. Seemed like all that dedication to range management was for nothing, resulting from something that was uncontrollable, and her name was Mother Nature. I found myself wondering how I could do my job, if something out of your control, called moisture, can have the greatest influence on the land. This is a prime example that no matter how much humans think they can control the land, Mother Nature still holds the winning hand in this card game.

As land managers, whether government employees, private individuals, ranchers, farmers, and everybody in between, we have to remain flexible. When times are good and the grass is growing, our job is easy, anybody can do it. It is times like now and the last couple years, when the grass seems to be a little behind, or not growing at all, or even dead, that the work begins.

We have to remain flexible in grazing rotations, pay close attention to the land, try to understand the way that it is responding to grazing, come up with new ways to help it recover. The lack of production on most of our rangelands in Arizona the last couple years due to precipitation has left us in a position that no book, no research, and no trainings can help you with. It is going to take experience, a special kind of dedication to the land, that changes with each case, mile by mile, ranch by ranch, pasture by pasture.

Flexibility is key here, we have to think outside the box, think of new ways to do things, make things happen on the ground, not in the office. Get outdoors, take a look, take your mask off, shut your phone off, turn off the world. Put your boots in the dirt and just think, think about how we can leave our mark on the land and leave it in the best shape we can for future generations, but remember, Mother Nature always has the winning hand.

Until next time, Andy Habgood



## AZ Section Website Update—Andrew Antaya

We've been steadily adding content and features to the website since we last checked in with you in June. If you haven't recently viewed our website, please take a few minutes to visit us at <u>azrangelands.org</u>. These past few months, we've added a number of new pages. We launched a new page to view the past year's award recipients, which you can checkout at <u>azrangelands.org/awards</u>. Hopefully, this page will become an award archive where we can showcase each year's award recipients. This would be a great way to highlight the history of our organization and recognize those individuals and organizations who have made a difference.

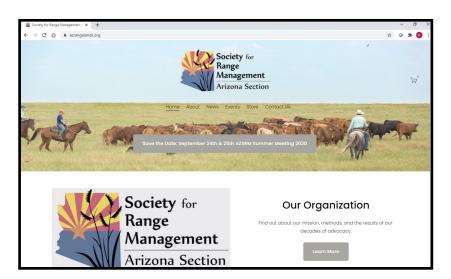
If you would like to nominate someone for an award, please visit another one of our new pages, <u>azrangelands.org/nominate</u>. This is a simple page, with a brief description of each award. Below the award description is a link to download the nomination form (in .pdf format). You can send the completed nomination forms to <u>awards@azrangelands.org</u>

We also put all of our governing documents up on the site, including our Diversity and Inclusion Statement, and a brief "About Us", all of which reside in the About section of our website. We could always use more content for the site, including photos, videos, descriptions, poems: anything you find interesting, we might too! We are constantly working to make the website a hub of our activity. If there is something you would like to see added to the website, send me an email at aantaya@azrangelands.org.

I'm also very happy to announce we now have an Events page (azrangelands.org/events), which came as

a spur-of-the-moment idea one morning and quickly developed into an interesting page by the afternoon. At the top of the Events page you will see a "Featured Events" category which we will use as an organization to promote events of special importance, such as Summer and Winter Meetings. Below Featured Events, there is an "All Events" block which contains a list of events, such as meetings and webinars, in chronological order that we would like to highlight. One nice touch that you might not notice is beside each event there is a link to Google Calendar or iCal, which will add the event date and time to your calendar automatically when you click on it. Great for folks who use electronic calendars to manage their time! We see this page as a place where we can aggregate links to meetings and webinars that we would like to promote as an organization.

Last, but certainly not least, is the upcoming launch of our webstore. We are only a few days away from the launch of the store, pending a few details. It might have even launched by the time you're reading this! We will be managing our summer and winter meeting registrations through our store, saving a considerable amount of money we were losing by managing our registrations through Eventzilla. We have designed the registration process to be as straightforward as possible, very similar to buying something online. There are more updates to come in the months ahead. As always, our website is a work-in-progress and we welcome your thoughts and suggestions. We are always looking for collaborators, too. Send us your website-related comments to web-master@azrangelands.org.



A look at the homepage of our new website!

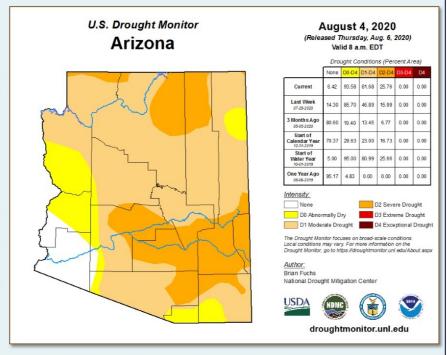


# Arizona Short-term Drought Status Report July 2020

This month has been one of the hottest and driest July on record.

The minimal and late onset of the monsoon activity was largely restricted to southeastern Arizona and caused significant deterioration of drought conditions in central and eastern Arizona.

At the beginning of July 57% of the state was free of short-term drought, while currently, only 6% of the state (Yuma and southwestern La Paz counties) remains out of drought; 82% is either in Moderate (D1) or Severe Drought (D2).



Hotter and drier than normal weather conditions will likely continue through August. Climate models still indicate that La Niña may develop during the fall and winter.

Summary produced by the State Drought Monitoring Technical Committee — August 7, 2020

### **Science Committee Featured Reads**

Monitoring tool assists ranchers and wildland managers facing drought. This article introduces readers to the recently new, free, online tool called Rangeland Production Monitoring Service (RPMS) spearheaded by Research Ecologist, Matt Reeves. The RPMS features maps and data on rangeland forage between 1984 and 2019 and is updated every year. It also projects available forage in future growing seasons to help with annual operating plans and grazing permits. It can also be useful for wildland fire managers for assessing fuel loads and wildfire potential. <a href="https://gisuser.com/2020/08/monitoring-tool-assists-ranchers-and-wildland-managers-facing-drought/">https://gisuser.com/2020/08/monitoring-tool-assists-ranchers-and-wildland-managers-facing-drought/</a>

Restoration Assessment and Monitoring Program for the Southwest Newsletter contains recent program high-lights including research updates, new projects, field updates and more: <a href="https://www.usgs.gov/center-news/ramps-newsletter-summer-2020-edition?qt-news">https://www.usgs.gov/center-news/ramps-newsletter-summer-2020-edition?qt-news\_science\_products=4#qt-news\_science\_products</a>



# Republished Here

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#### Lessons from Pastoralists for the Time of COVID-19

By: María Fernández-Giménez, SRM Director 2018-2020



A year ago, in June 2019, I was in the midst of a multi-country adventure in Spain and Morocco, following herders and their flocks as they moved from their winter pastures in the lowlands to their high mountain summer ranges. We often think of pastoralists, like ranchers, as isolated independent actors. Yet transhumant herders, who move long distances with their herds, are acutely aware of their interdependence—with each other, the farmers whose fields they graze in winter, the villagers whose towns they pass through, the buyers who purchase their animals. Reciprocity and mutual aid are guiding principles for these women and men. The farmer who lets the passing flock graze a fallow field and rest under shady oaks receives a Christmas lamb. The pastoralists of one county who welcome flocks fleeing

drought or a winter storm in another know they can expect the same treatment when they find themselves in disaster's path. They know their fates are intertwined, so they tend the bonds between them carefully.

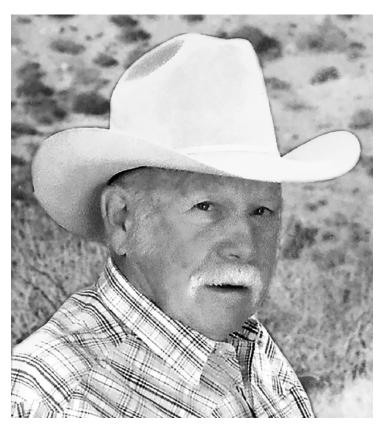
In this COVID-19 time, our own interdependence has never been so clear. My health depends on the actions of all my family, friends and co-workers. My behavior contributes to the well-being or ill-health of everyone in my community. This time also highlights how different parts of our food system are connected and who is most vulnerable. As meat packing plants close, hamburger shortages loom, and cattle prices dive, I reflect on the role of range livestock producers and the many other workers in our food system. Agricultural workers are essential workers, including ranchers, but also ranch hands, sheep herders, stockyard and packing plant workers, and farm workers. We have seen how sickness of packing plant workers, among the most vulnerable people in our supply chain, affects the entire food system. As a rangeland social scientist, my work often focuses on ranchers or pastoralists, and how their decisions are shaped by and affect the environment. COVID-19 causes me to think more broadly about how a ranch and the people on it connect to our wider food system. What does this connection and interdependence mean for me as a consumer, a researcher, a rangeland professional, a concerned citizen?

Like so much else, I don't have the answer, but one thing I know. It behooves us to behave as though our actions affect the well-being of our whole community. I also see an opportunity for SRM members to reflect and to connect with a wider circle of people we depend upon for our food and health, as well as those who rely on rangelands for all they provide, often without realizing it. The lesson from pastoralists is: we can't afford to disregard how we are all connected. We never know when we may need a neighbor's help, so we should offer our help when the neighbor needs it. In our food system, this may mean buying direct from producers, advocating for safe working conditions and health care for agricultural workers, or doing our part to stay home and cover our fac-

es when we must go out. The land is resilient and so are we. Our direct and indirect ties to one another make us so. Let's tend the bonds that make us strong and act as if what we do matters, because it does.



# Lost Resources—Terry Wheeler



Obituary

**Terence O. Wheeler**, 84, former mayor of Globe and a leader in the Arizona cattle industry for more than half a century, died on March 25, 2020 in Globe. Terry was born in Tucson on October 28, 1935 to Oswin and Catherine Wheeler. He attended SS. Peter and Paul School and graduated in 1953 from Tucson High School, where he was on the gymnastics team. He then attended the University of Arizona College of Agriculture, where he was one of the founders of the UA intercollegiate rodeo team, and received his B.S. in animal science and range/watershed management in 1958.

Terry pursued a career in cattle and range management, starting with the Bureau of Indian Affairs at San Carlos after college. His career with the BIA took him to North Dakota and then to Chinle, AZ on the Navajo Reservation. He later was the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension agent for the San Carlos Apache Tribe

and for Gila County. He subsequently worked as a consultant in range management and reclamation for ranchers, tribes, mining companies, and other landholders throughout Arizona and the Southwest. Since the 1980s he was a leading advocate for the holistic range management methodologies developed by Alan Savory for reversing desertification and reclaiming grazing lands. These activities took him as far afield as Lesotho and Niger in Southern Africa with the U.S. State Department's Agency for International Development and Jordan with the U.N. Food & Agriculture Organization.

In more recent years he managed ranches in Colorado and Arizona as well as purchasing and operating the Jones Ranch located just north of Globe. Following a total of nine years as a city councilman, Terry served as Mayor of Globe from 2011 through 2016. He was a past president of the Gila County Cattle Grower's Association and was a member of the Arizona Cattle Growers' Association, the Society for Range Management, Arizona Town Hall, and many other local, state, and national organizations. Terry was passionate about protecting the rights of western cattlemen and public land use as he took many trips to Washington D.C. to meet with congressmen on their behalf. Terry was active throughout his adult life in the Gila County community, including volunteer organizations, his parish council, schools, little league baseball, and 4-H. He served in the U.S. Navy (Reserves and Active Duty) from 1952 to 1961.

Terry is survived by his wife Diana, six children, three step-children, thirteen grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren. Also surviving are his brother, sister, and former wife. A memorial event will be scheduled once the COVID-19 is behind us. The family encourages memorial gifts to be sent to James & Mini Griffin Memorial Scholarship, in honor of Terry Wheeler. C/O Dr. Janet Cline. Given to 4H/FFA graduating seniors. 501c Non Profit. P.O. Box 1224, Globe, AZ 85502.



An additional tribute to Terry: https://www.globemiamitimes.com/man-of-the-west-terry-wheeler-passes/

# Are you looking for a seasonal position?

UA Cooperative Extension is hiring two contract positions to assist with rangeland monitoring on the Tonto National Forest from October 2020—March 2021. Preferred skills include: plant identification and knowledge of monitoring techniques (dry weight rank, frequency, fetch, utilization). Work is primarily outdoors and involves physical exertion, including hiking, standing, crouching; it also involves extended driving of 4WD vehicles/ATVs over rough terrain, exposure to variable environmental conditions, and occasional overnight camping in remote locations. Personnel can be paid \$20-25 per hour, depending on experience. If interested, email your resume to Ashley Hall at:

AshleyS3@email.arizona.edu

### 2021 SRM Annual Meeting: New Frontiers—Coming Soon to a Computer Near You!

The SRM 2021 Annual Meeting is going virtual. That's right, SRM 2021 will occur over internet connections across the globe, not in Biose, ID. We will return to our standard meeting format in Albuquerque in 2022 and we are looking at options for 2023 and beyond. The SRM virtual annual meeting will take place February 15-18, 2021. Committee Meetings are scheduled for the week prior, Feb. 08-12. The meeting will include morning plenary sessions, followed by technical sessions in 1-2 hour blocks throughout the day, with evening social events to cap off each day. Questions? Contact KarenL@rangelands.org or Kelly@wssdc.com. Watch the SRM website and RangeFlashes for updates.

### **Job Announcement**

Pima County Natural Resources Parks & Recrea-

tion Department

Range Program Coordinator Position

Location: Tucson, AZ Salary: \$48,464.00

Closing Date: September 4, 2020

More info:

https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/pima/jobs/2837677/1845-program-coordinator-

range-program-coordinator?

page=2&pagetype=jobOpportunitiesJobs

# **USDA Coronavirus Food Assistance Program Reminder**

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds farmers and ranchers that the deadline to apply for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) is Sept. 11, 2020. This program provides direct relief to producers who faced price declines and additional marketing costs due to COVID-19.

https://www.fsa.usda.gov/news-room/news-releases/2020/deadline-approaching-for-usdas-coronavirus-food-assistance-program

# WE ARE RANGELANDS

### Arizona Section Budget Track Update

	ment Budget Track, as of August 2020			
	F	Proposed	Α	ctual 2020
Income				
Winter Meeting	\$	8,000.00	\$	7,593.59
Summer Meeting	\$	4,000.00	\$	-
SRM Annual Dues	\$	1,500.00	\$ \$ \$	635.00
Winter Meeting Auction	\$	2,000.00	\$	3,580.00
TOTAL	\$	15,500.00	\$	11,808.59
Expenses				
Awards	\$	800.00	\$	820.74
ASU/UA scholarships	\$ \$ \$	950.00	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$	950.00
AZ Corp. Comm. Fee	\$	10.00	\$	10.00
ASU student chapter	\$	1,000.00	\$	1,000.00
UA student chapter	\$	1,000.00	\$	1,000.00
HSYF Student	\$	1,000.00	\$	381.96
Section newsletter	\$	800.00	\$	26.60
Misc.	\$	300.00	\$	87.78
SquareSpace (Website)			\$	94.57
NRCWAY donation	\$	500.00	\$	500.00
NRCWAY 1/2 auction	\$	1,000.00	\$	1,790.00
Winter Meeting	\$	6,000.00		12,137.21
Summer Meeting	\$	2,000.00	\$	-
TOTAL	\$	15,360.00	\$	18,798.86
Balance	\$	140.00	\$	(6,990.27)

# Call for 2021 Arizona Section Officer and Director Nominations!

Are you or someone you know interested in giving back to the Arizona Section? Please send your nominations for Vice President, Director North, and Director South to Past-President, Andrew Brischke (Brischke@cals.arizona.edu), by November 30, 2020 so that we can feature candidate biographies in the December 2020 newsletter. Nominations will still be accepted until the 2021 winter meeting election.

#### **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

December 12

#### 2020

September 26 The Native Oaks of Southeastern Arizona, with Petey Mesquitey, 9:00-10:30am, Waterwise Virtual Workshop September 28 Altar Valley Watershed Working Group, Virtual Meeting October 13 RiversEdge West Webinar: Main Steps and Considerations for Developing Stream Restoration October 26-30 Quivira Coalition Conference Part 1 (three other parts in November: 02-06, 09-13, and 16-20 November 07 17th RISE Symposium, Tucson, AZ November 12-13 Utah Section Winter Annual Meeting, Wellsville, UT

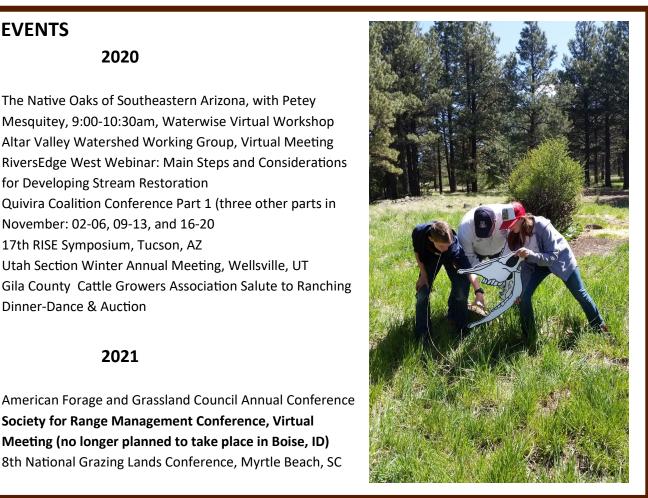
**Dinner-Dance & Auction** 

#### 2021

January 03-06 American Forage and Grassland Council Annual Conference

February 07-11 Society for Range Management Conference, Virtual Meeting (no longer planned to take place in Boise, ID)

December 06-09 8th National Grazing Lands Conference, Myrtle Beach, SC



Arizona Section Society for Range Management c/o: Ashley Hall Gila County Cooperative Extension University of Arizona 5515 S. Apache Ave Ste. 600 Globe, AZ 85501

