



Texas Section Society for Range Management



President's Address

Happy 2021 Friends and Colleagues!

As we take a deep breath from all that 2020 showed us, we look forward to 2021 getting us back on track!

The Texas Section certainly ended the year on a good note (considering all of 2020's surprises) with an outstanding virtual meeting hosted by Past President Deiss and BOD Dr. Megan Clayton. Congratulations to our 2020 award winners!

Jenny Pluhar and Megan Clayton are serving as co-chairs for the Victoria Annual Meeting. Contact them if you would like to help with the annual meeting committee. I would also ask that you mark the dates of **October 20-22, 2021** on your calendar. This is the date for our Victoria annual meeting. I know the annual meeting committee will put together an excellent meeting.

My focus will be on **increasing transparency, relevancy, and opportunities for Texas Section**. Since assuming this role, I have updated all of our past BOD meeting minutes on the website starting from 2018 and will post all meeting minutes within the month following each BOD meeting. Our budget will also be posted on the website as well as agendas and future meeting location/time details for any and all interested members.

Some updates:

- Our Endowment Fund is currently managed through Frost Bank and our Investment Committee. William Conrad, Corey Owens, and Kevin Derzapf serve on our 2021 Investment Committee. Each possesses unique skills, credentials, and experiences to effectively manage our investments. Rest assured that the Board of Directors and Investment Committee have worked closely with Frost Bank to ensure funds are safe and growing annually. My goal is to utilize income from these investments to provide for the continued financial security of the Texas Section along with providing for education and outreach opportunities such as summer field tours on our ORS and ORM award-winning ranches and scholarship funds.
- Under the direction of Kathryn Boyd, our Handbook is being updated and the most-up-to-date copy will be provided on the website and be made available to all members.
- One of my other goals is to increase the activity of our young professionals. For the most part, all of the TSSRM committee chairs are made up of our younger members in the organization. To my knowledge, most of these individuals have not chaired a TSSRM committee in the past. They are energetic and excited about the opportunities and will probably do some things different than we have done in the past, but it may be time for a change. If you would like to be involved with any committees, please hit the “Join” button on the newsletter and get involved! All of our committee chairs would welcome new and friendly faces who have a passion for rangelands and service. Active committees make for an active section! One area all members can and need to be involved with is to nominate deserving individuals for SRM and TSSRM awards. SRM award nominations are due by April 30 at the SRM office. Contact Nick Alejandro if you want to nominate a deserving individual. At the section level we have a number of awards to recognize section members. We also need to be nominating

outstanding ranches for the Outstanding Rangeland Management and the TSSRM-TSCRA-TXGLC Outstanding Rangeland Stewardship awards.

- We are currently soliciting bids for a website redesign as well as a logo facelift. No doubt these two tools have become powerful in the COVID-19 era, and we need to make sure the brand we are riding for is front and center. The logo redesigns will keep the Trailboss, but will consist of multiple formats for social media, digital, print, and merchandise branding.
- Our membership is down approximately 20%. Some of this may be due to the new year and SRM's recent transition of membership dues to calendar year. I intend to work closely with our membership chair, James Jackson, to personally reach out to expired members and to entice new members by highlighting the incredible value that a TSSRM member poses. There is strength and a synergy when the number of individuals interacting increases. Unless you attend our annual meetings, read our publications, and interact with our members, you will not have the opportunity to learn from the successes and mistakes of others. Get in the trenches with us! Whether its virtual or in-person, we will find a way to experience meaningful rangeland interactions!
- Youth education must be emphasized. The Texas Section remains heavily involved in Youth Education. Each summer, unless there is a second round of COVID-19, up to 40 high school students spend a week in Junction, Texas at the Youth Range Workshop. Jenny Pluhar has provided outstanding leadership on the Youth Activities Committee and has taken YRW to a new level. We look forward to her plans for 2021. In-person YRW is the plan and we will continue to roll with the COVID-19 punches as they come. But, we must continue to grow scholarship and internship funds and provide additional educational opportunities for students – of all ages.

I am honored to be serving as President of TSSRM for 2021. The board is committed to providing sound leadership to help the Texas Section meet its goals and to instill a recognition, passion, and dedication for rangelands.

-Morgan Treadwell



Officers & Board of Directors

Morgan Treadwell-
President

Bill Fox-
1st Vice President

Doug Tolleson-
2nd Vice President

Stephen Deiss-
Past President

Kathryn Brady-
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Administrative Handbook

Robert Moen-
Treasurer

Cody Scott-
Treasurer

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Megan Clayton-
Director

Rob Cook-
Director

Caitlyn Cooper-
Director

Michael Wilson-
Director

Matthew Coffman-
Director

Carrie Seiler-
Director

Deann Burson-
Newsletter Editor, Website

Jenny Pluhar-
Social Media

Carrie Seiler-
Social Media

Tanner Bryant-
Webmaster

Want to be more involved with
TSSRM?

Now is the time to join a committee!

Each issue we will be featuring information for all committees and how to join in on the meetings. Click the "Join Now!" link to e-mail the chair for additional information including meeting dates and times.

Activities & Education

This committee serves to plan and schedule tours, field days, and conferences to share information on the Texas Section. Committee members will promote policies and disseminate information about the activities, goals, and aspirations of the Section under the direction of the President and Board of Directors. The committee will also work on updates to the TSSRM display (develop different themes), update publications, etc.

Chair: Bill Fox
Board Liason: Doug Tolleson

JOIN NOW!

Awards

The primary purpose of this committee is to select recipients for the Section Awards to be honored at the Annual Meeting and to nominate Section members for SRM Honor Awards.

Co-Chair: Nicholas Alejandro

Co-Chair: Stewart Hohensee

Board Liason: Doug Tolleson

JOIN NOW!

Membership

To increase the effectiveness of each member of the Section and to provide continuity of effort within TSSRM with respect to membership retention and recruitment.

Chair: James Jackson

Board Liason: Michael Wilson

JOIN NOW!

Youth Activities

This committee serves to initiate and sustain viable educational programs for youth, especially below college age.

Chair: Jenny Pluhar

Board Liason: Caitlyn Cooper-Norris

JOIN NOW!

Don't see the committee you want to join listed? [Click here to see a full list of the 2021 Section Committees!](#)

Do You Know...Texas Section Investments?

I'm sure we all understand that Texas Section Society for Range Management is an organization dedicated to advancing the art and science of managing rangeland resources. But do you know that Texas Section is also responsible for managing its own resources? Over its history our Section and its members have worked to develop financial resources we can use to achieve our mission, goals and objectives. The Investment Committee was formed at the direction of our Board of Directors to help them evaluate the Section financial needs and advise the board about investment alternatives and performance to help meet those needs. Texas Section Investment committee for 2021 includes Corey Owens, Kevin Derzapf, and Willy Conrad.

Our investment resources include resources for our Endowment Fund, TSSRM Scholarship Fund, Wyche Scholarship Fund, and Youth Range Workshop Endowment Fund. We have these resources available to us because of Section fundraising efforts, gifts from members and friends, and bequeaths from past members. These resources also benefit from revenues from our investment portfolio that the Board of Directors established with Frost Bank. As of January 2021 our investment portfolio was valued at \$932,632.10.

It is important to understand most of the value in our investment portfolio, the corpus, is an endowment. Only the income may be used for our mission, goals, and objectives for things like scholarships and projects. The corpus is held in trust to generate revenues for the Section. It could also be reinvested and added to the corpus. How it's used is at the discretion and direction of our Board.

Texas Section's current investment strategy is considered moderately conservative. We look to achieve a reasonable income while also seeking moderate growth to allow our investments to keep up with inflation. In 2020 we earned about 3.4 % income; while we also benefited from 3.4% growth in the value of our investments. Considering the extreme fluctuations American and International financial markets experienced this year due to the COVID 19 pandemic responses, our investments have performed quite well.

Thanks to the foresight of our predecessors, leadership from officers and board members, and efforts from all of our members Texas Section Society for Range Management has sound, well managed resources we can use to benefit Texas Rangelands.

-Willy Conrad

Congratulations to our 2020

Outstanding Rangeland Stewardship Award winners!

2020 Outstanding Rangeland Stewardship (ORS) Award co-sponsored by the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association (TSCRA) and Texas Grazing Land Coalition (TXGLC)

Schlinke Dry Creek Ranch

The Dry Creek Ranch encompasses 3,840 acres of rangeland in San Angelo, Texas.

The Schlinke family has operated this ranch for 118 years.

Carl and Pat Schlinke are the embodiment of stewardship. The ranch's mission statement, "***The Pursuit of Excellence***," encompasses their dedication to not only raise exceptional quality Hereford cattle but also prioritize rangeland integrity now and for future generations. Their land and livestock reflect care and maintenance, evidence of long hours of hard work. They understand the unique resource that semi-arid grazing lands in West Texas provide and take every opportunity to implement conservation strategies to cultivate sustainable rangelands despite numerous droughts, wildfires, and climate extremes.

Their approach to brush management has saved their grassland savanna from a woody shrub brush dominated plant community, in contrast to neighboring views. These brush control efforts started in the late-90's as Carl worked a lot with NRCS and their programs. The work involved mechanical clearing of the brush, roller-chopping, seeding, and then a lot of IPT, and some aerial spraying, for maintenance. Carl enjoys working with heavy machinery, and saving money, so he did almost all of the work himself. For the IPT, he teamed up with Pat, and over the years I'm sure they covered pretty much the entire acreage. Their program of annual prescribed burns began 5 years ago and is ongoing.

The Schlinke's will leave a legacy for generations to come as they have undoubtedly extended their love and knowledge by fostering and mentoring relationships with the next generation of managers. The amount of support shown for this couple by their fellow ranchers and neighbors is a testament to their values, heritage, and character.

Pat and Carl are exemplary stewards of their land, a land they obviously love.



**2020 Outstanding Rangeland Stewardship (ORS) Award co-sponsored by the
Texas Section Society for Range Management (TSSRM)
& Texas Sheep and Goat Raiser's Association (TSGRA)**

*Hoover K Bar Ranches
(Carlton and Ann Stapper)*

Hoover K Bar Ranches contains approximately 30,000 acres of rangeland in Crockett and Menard counties. This ranch has been owned/operated by the family for 100+ years.

Carlton and Ann Stapper are an enormous asset to the ranching community. Long-standing members of TSSRM, their participation and support for the Section has not faltered. Not only have they continually invested in building and growing their skills as ranch managers, they exemplify leadership and share their knowledge with those around them.

The Stappers recognize that stewardship extends beyond themselves and are

consistently involved with a variety of activities dedicated to teaching students life-long skills. They routinely coach the Crockett County Range Team and take the time to mentor junior and intermediate level kids to carry them through the 4H program. In fact, this commitment to mentorship garnered them the Texas 4H Youth Development Salute to Excellence Award in 2017. The foundation of the Hoover K Bar Ranch, however, is their focus and emphasis on family. Although Carlon has coached award-winning plant identification and ranch evaluation teams, his greatest leadership accomplishment is raising hard-working kids who realize the importance of growing their knowledge and returning home to work at the ranch, bringing that knowledge back to Crockett County.

This range family is known for raising high quality mohair that is marketed to hand spinners and knitters through Independence Wool, a Texas company specializing in wool and mohair from legacy growers with a known "Pasture of Origin". They also have implemented a successful predator control program that their daughter, Linda, runs. The program uses livestock guardian dogs to protect their livestock in a predator friendly manner and is collaborating with AgriLife Research to use GPS location tracking for real time information on their dogs. As part of Carlon and Ann's conservation practices, they recently implemented several prescribed burns on their rangeland to manage for woody and invasive brush, particularly redberry juniper. The family has been collaborating with Texas A&M AgriLife researchers to monitor rangeland health by providing history of past and current management including stocking rates and prescribed fire history; providing information on livestock production – weaning percentage and weights; and participating in educational and outreach efforts to promote these management practices to other ranchers as well as 4H and FFA Students.

Without a doubt, we need more ranchers and stewards like the Stapper family. It is an honor to present them with this much deserved award!



**2020 Outstanding Rangeland Management (ORM) Award sponsored by the
Texas Section Society for Range Management (TSSRM)**

Taylor Properties Gray Ranch

The Taylor Ranch, as it is locally known, has been owned by the Taylor, Clayton, and Hawley families for nearly 100 years. It has been managed by Jenny Pluhar for 25 years. Managing agent for the family, John Hawley Jr., has been involved for 40+ years. Located 20 miles south of Pampa, Texas, the ranch consists of 28, 443 acres of rangeland.

The Taylor Ranch is a great example of tall grass prairie in the eastern Texas Panhandle, untouched by excessive power lines and wind turbines. Originally purchased by investors for the mineral rights, the ranch began to lease surface grazing and paid little attention to range condition and stocking rates. Mr. John Hawley Jr. took over management of the investor's assets in the early 1990's and worked with several managers and lessees but was never content with the direction the ranch was going until retaining the services of Mrs. Jenny Pluhar. A partnership between Mr. Hawley and Mrs. Pluhar was formed and the two have worked together on ambitious conservation and improvement plans for more than 25 years.

The stewardship of this ranch has truly been a team effort. The operation continues to benefit from proper stocking rates and rotational grazing. A comprehensive forage inventory was conducted as a starting point and close monitoring ensued. Mrs. Pluhar has added grazing exclosures on key areas as part of the ranch's long term monitoring plan. Although time consuming, this process has allowed the ranch to monitor trends on the land to assure they can adjust stocking rates and timing of grazing before problems become obvious.

Many other notable improvements have occurred on Taylor Ranch. They increased water sources for livestock to enhance distribution, reaching their stated goal to have water within a mile of almost everywhere on the ranch. They are also currently following an aggressive IPT mesquite program yielding positive results. Taylor Ranch allowed TPWD to transplant antelope onto the ranch in the early 1990's as they sought to develop a viable population in the eastern Panhandle. Hunting is restricted to primarily family members, but the ranch has generously donated pronghorn tags to the TSSRM annual fundraisers for many years, raising thousands of dollars.

Taylor Ranch's firm and steady commitment to "leave the ranch in better shape than they found it" has resulted in one of the finest ranches in the northern Texas Panhandle. They have continually sought improvement of native rangelands to benefit livestock enterprise and wildlife habitat. The ranch is a testament to proper rangeland management and is deserving of this prestigious award.



Texas Range is now...

RWFW STEWARDSHIP WEBINAR SERIES!

This NEW webinar series will serve as an educational tool for stewards to learn about a variety of rangeland, wildlife, and fisheries management topics. Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) licensed agricultural pesticide applicators can earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs) through the RWFM Stewardship Webinar Series every month!

Don't miss our upcoming talks!

February 16, 2021

6:00 pm-7:30 pm CST Online

Aquatic Vegetation Webinar

Brittany Chesser, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Register at: <https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/productListingDetails/3294>

March 4, 2021

Noon CST

Developing a Drought Management Plan for the Ranch

Dr. Justin Benavidez, Assistant Professor and TAMU AgriLife Extension Economist,
Amarillo

April 1, 2021

Noon CST

Toxic Plants in Grasslands and The Impact on Livestock

Dr. Cat Barr, Diagnostic Toxicologist, Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic
Laboratory, College Station

Plant of the Season

by Dr. Fake Landers

Bushy Bluestem

“It’s better to look at than to eat” might be the imaginary thoughts of a cow when viewing a stand of Bushy Bluestem. For an average person it might also be appealing in view, but for a rancher with cows to raise, and to see a pasture full of it might bring on nausea rather than appreciation. When mature it has a nutritive value of newspaper, when green and growing it might be nibble-worthy, but it is pretty picky where it grows.

It can establish and live for years on seepy ground and on soil that stays wet through the summer at the edge of water, habitats that are very few on West Texas ranches. It mixes with a cousin called Broomsedge bluestem further east that can dominate large areas and be just as

The bunched seed heads of Bushy bluestem are more attractive to me than the scattered ones of Broomsedge bluestem. It makes an attractive addition to a dried flower arrangement if the stem is cut at the right time before the fluffy seeds dry out to scatter all over the room. Grasses are just as attractive to me as other plants. I have a dried Silver bluestem (non-shedding), waving on the shelf above my desk.

The critical time to harvest a Bushy bluestem for a floral arrangement is late in the Fall when the stalks are tall and the seedheads still have some green to them. One Fall I was watching a cluster of plants growing along Hwy 83 waiting for them to get just right, and the roadside mowers

unpalatable. Bushy and Broomsedge bluestem have scientific names of *Andropogon glomeratus* and *Andropogon virginicus*, respectively, two bluestems that still retain the genus name for bluestems that I learned long ago when all bluestems were *Andropogons*, now some are *Bothriochloa* and *Schizachyrium*. Those bothersome *#&\$ taxonomists!

got to them before I did. Cutting a stem of grass or a cluster of Bluebonnets along a Texas roadside is not against the Law, it's the safety situation that might get you in trouble.

-Jake Landers



Bushy bluestem, *Andropogon glomeratus*, in winter along Kickapoo Creek in Tom Green County.

Don't forget to renew your membership for 2021!

Membership benefits include:

- Participate in leadership for the stewardship of rangelands based on sound ecological principles

- Free online access to the Society publication, *Rangelands* (published six times per year).
- Opportunities for professional development, training and networking
- Discounted registration rate to the SRM Annual conference
- Access to the SRM Membership Directory
- Exclusive Society communications

To renew online or for a printable membership application, please click the link below to visit the National Society for Range Management's website.

<https://srm.allenpress.com/srm/MEMBERSHIP.aspx>



Seasoned Veteran Member Highlight *Dan Caudle*

Education: I received my B.S. degree in Range Management from Texas Tech University in 1970. It provided me with a strong foundation and the opportunity for my future career as a range management professional. But my real education has come from working with the ranchers, conservationists, land stewards, and

others who actually manage our natural resources and apply the art and science of range management to the land.

Occupation: I retired from the Natural Resources Conservation Service as a Range Management Specialist in 2006. Since that time, I have dabbled in consulting and done volunteer work as an advisor, instructor, etc. Now my “job” is whatever I can do to stay actively involved with rangelands and the management of natural resources. I have been a Resident Research Associate at the Botanical Research Institute of Texas since 2014. I assist with field research activities as part of BRIT’s Prairie Research Program.

Tell us a little about yourself. My wife Donna and I have been married for 53 years and we have one daughter. My main hobby is anything that has to do with native grasses. Other than that, I enjoy reading about and studying Native American history and cultures, working on genealogy and family history, and writing.

How long have you been a member of TSSRM? I have been a member of TSSRM since 1972 and was honored to serve as a Director from 1982-1984 and as President in 1995.

What would you describe as your greatest accomplishment to date? During my career I think my greatest accomplishment was playing a small part in helping ranchers and other resource managers increase their awareness and understanding of natural resource management and native plants. In my retirement my greatest accomplishment has been mentoring and supporting high school students, college students, and young professionals.

What do you like most about your job? Working with ranchers, resource managers and other conservationists on the land to discuss resource needs and management options. When I retired my daughter asked me how I managed to do the same thing every day for 40 years. I told her I never did the same thing on any of the days of my career. Every day was a new challenge and a new opportunity.

How has TSSRM helped you in your career development? As a young person just starting my career TSSRM provided me with an established network of dedicated range management professionals who cared deeply about rangelands and were eager to support and assist others who shared that interest. I learned quickly that the range management profession is a small community of people who share a strong bond and genuinely care about each other and about rangelands. Through the years TSSRM has helped me stay informed and involved with ongoing research, new concepts, and emerging technologies related to range

management. It continues to help me establish new friendships and relationships with people in other occupations, work for different organizations and agencies.

What advice would you give to students pursuing a career in the range discipline? There is a difference between a career and a job. A job is something you have to have to survive until you find something better. A career is something that becomes a part of you for the rest of your life. If range management is just a job, you will be better off to choose something else as a career. If you are pursuing a career in range management it should be your passion.

What is your favorite part of TSSRM? Exchanging ideas, information, and experiences, and networking with people who share the same interests as me, even if we don't always agree.

Do you have a teacher/mentor that has played a significant role in your life? If so, who and why? I owe my whole career and whatever success I may have had to a host of mentors, instructors, role models, and professional colleagues: Mr. John Hunter, Dr. Henry Wright, Dr. Bill Dahl, and Dr. Ron Sosebee from Texas Tech; Joe Norris, Rhett Johnson, J.R. Bell, Mark Moseley, Dalton Merz, Stan Reinke, and Steve Nelle from my days as a professional range management specialist; range icons such as D.B. Polk, Don Pendleton, and John L. "Chip" Merrill; ranchers like Hap Burkett, Wendell Kent, Betty Bucy, Dick Yeager, David Daigle, and Meredith Ellis. All of these and scores of others. Alfred Lord Tenyson once wrote "I am a part of all that I have met." That pretty well sums it up for me.

What is your favorite range plant and why? I'm a grass guy, so just about any of the native, warm season, perennial grasses could fall into that category. But sideoats grama is definitely my favorite because it is the State Grass of Texas. Close behind would be big bluestem, Indiangrass, and little bluestem.



Young Gun Member Highlight *Sawyer Warick*

Education: B.S. Natural Resource Management, Angelo State University

Occupation: USDA-NRCS, Rangeland Management Specialist

Tell us a little about yourself. Married to Samantha with a 14-month-old boy named Rhyder. I enjoy watching Rhyder grow and learn new things. Some of my hobbies include spending time with family, hunting, fishing, taxidermy work, golfing, and cooking.

How long have you been a member of TSSRM? 6 years

What would you describe as your greatest accomplishment to date?

My greatest accomplishment in life is becoming a father. My greatest work accomplishment is the increased knowledge of range management and early advancement in my career, which is all due to the training I have received from many experienced range professionals.

What do you like most about your job?

Being able to experience many different types of agricultural operations throughout the state of Texas and building lasting relationships with our customers. It's a great feeling of accomplishment when a plan comes together, and you see a positive shift in range conditions.

How has TSSRM helped you in your career development?

TSSRM has introduced me to a vast network of rangeland professionals with a tremendous amount of knowledge and experience.

What advice would you give to students pursuing a career in the range discipline?

Always continue learning and don't be afraid to ask questions. There is no silver bullet when working towards managing rangelands. Be able to adapt to the situation and always learn from your mistakes.

What is your favorite part of TSSRM?

My favorite part of TSSRM is the annual meeting which allows you to meet new people who genuinely care about the stewardship of our rangelands and learn the latest topics of range management.

Do you have a teacher/mentor that has played a significant role in your life? If so, who and why?

While stationed in the Big Spring Field Office, my supervisor, Eddy Spurgin, played a significant role in my career. He helped guide and train me on my role as a rangeland management specialist and is still someone that I call upon today for advice.

What is your favorite range plant and why?

Yellow Indiangrass- The showy, golden-yellow seed head and the blue-green leaves make it an aesthetically pleasing grass along with the great forage benefits and ability to adapt to many ecological sites. Also, the fibrous root system's strength to hold the soil together and reduce soil erosion.

Have you ever wondered how "The Trail Boss" became the emblem for the Society?

Check out this article written by former Archivist Jan Wiedmann, which was printed in the July-August 1996 edition of Grass Roots!

History Notes

By Jan Wiedmann, Archivist

I have always been intrigued by the Society emblem, "The Trail Boss," and how it became the official emblem and motto of the Society. In the 1949 Annual Report to the Society, Secretary W. James Anderson suggested a need for an emblem and motto. When Fred Renner received a typewritten copy of the program for the 1950 Annual Meeting for printing he responded to Anderson's suggestion. Renner attached a photograph of Charles M. Russell's drawing of "The Trail Boss" to the program instructing the printer to reproduce it in the center of the printed program cover. This was the first use of the emblem. The 1950 program with "The Trail Boss" on the cover drew considerable, favorable attention. Board member E.H. McIlvain requested and obtained permission from Fred Renner to use "The Trail Boss" as the Society emblem. Renner, one of the first council members of the Society, was an authority on Russell's life and work.

In a letter to the Board of Directors, Section Chairmen and Journal of Range Management Editor dated September 12, 1960, Executive Secretary John G. Clouston announced that "The Trail Boss" was registered in the office of the Commissioner of Patents as the official trademark of the American Society of Range Management.

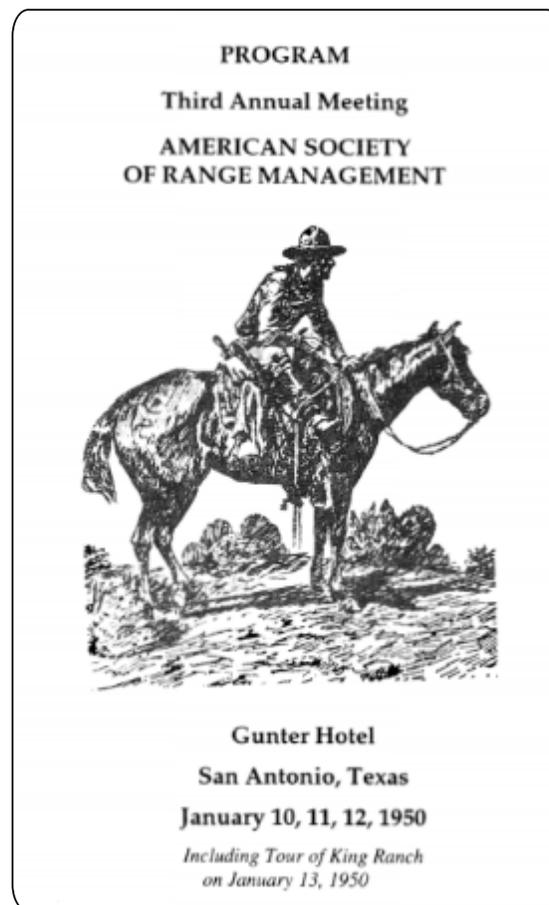
He went on to explain that no one other than the Society may use it without express permission of the Society. It also means that we must exercise care in its use for our own purposes. The application specifies use on "the publication, *Journal of Range Management*, all letterheads, stationery, pamphlets, bulletins and educational material published by or with the sponsorship of the American Society of Range Management."

In correspondence from F.G. Renner to C.H. Wasser, June 9, 1986, Renner writes, "Russell's drawing of The Trail Boss had long symbolized qualities that it occurred to me were particularly appropriate to our newly formed Society, e.g., the importance of strong leadership, the necessity of all hands working together, and a willingness to travel unchartered trails."¹

While researching this history, I found several books on Charles M. Russell and his works. One of special interest is the book, *Charles M. Russell* by Frederic G. Renner, 1976, Harry N. Abrams, Inc., publisher, in Association with the Amon Carter Museum of Western Art. *The Western Art of Charles M. Russell*, edited by Lanning Aldrich, 1975, Ballantine Books, publisher, is another good Russell reference. *Charles M. Russell, The Cowboy Artist, A Biography*, by Ramon F. Adams and Homer E. Britzman, 1948, Trail's Ending Publishing Co., Inc. would prove to be informative and entertaining reading.

I didn't mean to get carried away on reading about C.M. Russell, I just wanted to share a little of the history of our Society's emblem.

¹ A History of the Society for Range Management 1948-1985, by Wasser, Reid, and Smith, Society for Range Management, 1987, p. 5.



Charles M. Russell's drawing of The Trail Boss first used on the 1950 Annual Meeting program cover became the official emblem of the Society of Range Management.



The Society for Range Management will host their virtual annual meeting this upcoming February 15-18!

(more info here: <http://annualmeeting2021.rangelands.org/>)

There will be more than 250 oral and poster presentations, 16 symposia and 10 workshops on topics like rangeland restoration, monitoring, and education, wildlife management, livestock management and new technologies for rangeland conservation.

The SRM Annual Meeting is the leading event for the most advanced trainings, cutting edge research and innovative management techniques on rangelands. Bringing together thousands of people from around the globe, this meeting hosts the brightest minds in rangeland management. We bring together ranchers, land managers, educators, scientists and all those that are connected to rangelands. It also provides an excellent opportunity to network, and exchange ideas. We'll be hosting several live events for participants to connect.

We'll discuss Legacy Livestock Performance Data, Invasive Species Management, Managing Wildlife on the Range, Outcome-Based Grazing, Sage-Grouse Response to Wildfire, Free-roaming horsesand SO MANY MORE.

There is a full line-up of both live and pre-recorded sessions. The Plenary Session is also likely to turn heads with high profiles speakers on the hot topics of Rangeland Wildfire, Conservation Valuation & Conservation Ranching and Climate Change on Rangelands.

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-oA-nEajC4&feature=youtu.be>

Topics covered include:

- Climate Variation & Drought
- Ecosystem Restoration
- Fire on Rangelands
- Grazed Ecosystems
- Invasive Species
- Measuring & Monitoring Ecosystems
- Outreach & Education
- Range Livestock Production & Behavior
- Rangeland Habitat Diversity
- Rangeland Plants & Ecosystems
- Remote Sensing & UAV Applications
- Restoration Tools & Approaches
- Riparian & Meadow Ecosystems

Socio-Economic-Ecological Systems
Soil Carbon, Nutrients & Communities
Wildlife Habitat & Management
Rangeland Tools & Technologies

Registration is \$100 for SRM members and \$125 for non-members. Student and young professional registration begins at \$50. All can be found at:

<http://annualmeeting2021.rangelands.org/>



SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT 2021 VIRTUAL ANNUAL MEETING



Presenting the latest rangeland management research.



Connecting producers & land managers across the globe.



SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT 2021 VIRTUAL ANNUAL MEETING

Plenary Session: Valuing Ranching and Conservation

Join us for this discussion with the audience on how we can support the broad, valuable suite of cultural 'goods' produced through rangeland ranching.



Dr. Sasha Gennet,
Director, National Sustainable
Grazing Lands Program
The Nature Conservancy



Dr. Carter Kruse,
Director of Conservation and
Turner Biodiversity Divisions,
Turner Enterprises, Inc.

Moderated by 2020 SRM W.R. Chapline Research Awardee Dr. Lynn Huntsinger



Reshaping the Fire Culture in Texas

by Jeff Adams, Texas Prescribed Fire Council

When the Marquis de Aguayo of Spain brought 400 sheep and 300 cattle into the vast Texas range in 1721, little did he know the changes that would accumulate over the next 300 years. The landscape had been carved by a millennia of climate, drought, flood and fire which provided a wealth of resources. Early Spanish accounts and the narratives of the frontier naturalists such as Roemer, Olmstead, and Berlandier, described how the range was constantly influenced by fire. From these early narratives and the work of science we know fire played a crucial role in providing the fortunes of the land and that the early ranching culture relied on the abundance that a landscape enriched by fire provided. But as the frontier was settled and the open range was confined, fire needed to be controlled. Stockman could no longer move on to greener pastures but had to create sustainability in their working lands and found themselves at odds with fire as its natural role was diminished. It was perceived that fire no longer provided to the wealth of the range, it robbed from it, so it was largely managed out.

In Jacob de Cordova's 1858 book *Texas: Her Resources and Her Public Men* writes that "If any person shall willfully burn or cause to be burned any woodland or prairie, not his own, at any time between the 1st of July and the 15th of February succeeding, he shall be fined not less than fifty dollars, nor more than three hundred dollars." This account at once describes the need for protecting the land from fire, but also infers that fire in certain times of the year were acceptable. Despite the need for containing fire it appears that the role of fire was still valued, yet this fire culture continued to be diminished.

300 years after the Marquis de Aguayo sought to benefit from the abundance of the Texas range, the importance of beneficial fire to the health of the landscape both physically and culturally has been renewed. In recent years the efficacy of managed fire and its use has begun to grow. According to the recent survey of prescribed fire in Texas in the years 2018 and 2019 the number of acres treated by prescribed fire (728,431) nearly equaled the acres consumed in wildfire (787,304). With careful planning prescribed fires can reduce the risk of catastrophic fire conflagrations while benefiting the state's natural heritage. We now know that the more good fire the state can have, the less bad fire will threaten communities and our natural resources.

In February of 2019 prescribed fire practitioners and land managers from across

the state met to formally galvanize their interest into the Texas Prescribed Fire Council. In August of 2019, led by the newly elected board and a set of recently drafted by-laws, representatives from local, state, and federal agencies along with commercial prescribed fire managers, private land owners and conservation groups held the first annual meeting of the Texas Prescribed Fire Council. In its first year and through the challenges of the Covid pandemic, the Council built the foundation of the organization in order to provide a forum for its members. The Council is now tasked with advancing prescribed fire use in the state and helping to create a dynamic fire culture for the benefit of all of Texans. By providing technical and educational opportunities to land managers and prescribed fire practitioners, along with advocating for a better public understanding of fire's value, we aim to continue to reshape the fire culture in Texas.

300 years after the first efforts to stock the bountiful Texas range the Prescribed Fire Council held a virtual meeting for the second annual gathering to a diverse audience of over 100 attendees representing organizations throughout the state. This meeting in January of 2021 proved the need for the organization to increase its efforts to provide for the growing prescribed fire community. As the interest in prescribed fire continues to grow the Council will work to continue building a community of practice and provide a nexus to land managers, prescribed fire practitioners and the public in order to ensure that fire can provide to the benefit of all Texans and its landscape.

2021 Calendar & Events

- **February 15-18:** SRM Virtual Annual Meeting
- **February 16:** RWFM Stewardship Series: Aquatic Vegetation Webinar
- **February 23-25:** Southwest Beef Symposium: "Dealing with Drought" (Zoom series)
- **February 24:** Plant Party webinar: "Talking Ecology"
- **March 4:** RWFM Stewardship Series: Developing a Drought Management Plan for the Ranch
- **March 5:** Ranchers Agricultural Leasing Workshop: Online course
- **March 19:** Board of Directors Meeting (Zoom or San Angelo)
- **April 1:** RWFM Stewardship Series: Toxic Plants in Grasslands and The Impact on Livestock

- **June 20-25:** Youth Range Workshop
- **October 20-22:** Annual Meeting in Victoria, Texas

For additional events or more information, check out the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension calendar at <https://calendar.tamu.edu/agrilifeextension/>.

Letter From the Editor



Greetings TSSRM Members!

I am grateful for this moment to introduce myself as your new editor for our TSSRM newsletter. Currently, I am a graduate student at Angelo State University and I am employed by the Texas A&M AgriLife Center in San Angelo. As I study and work to be a steward of our lands, I am honored and excited to bring the latest news from our rangelands to the **Texas Section**.

Like many of you, I am in love with my work. Spraying mesquite and working on prescribed burns are like grand hobbies of mine! Yes, I could speak of all the ecological benefits of these labors, but the truth is, there is even more. You see, for me, like many of you, there is a spiritual aspect to working with the land. Being surrounded by the wonder and diversity of our great big West Texas Landscape really does stir my soul like nothing else can.

Teddy Roosevelt, an American President who was widely known as an avid conservationist once said:

“Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at something worth doing.”

That, my friends, is a shared mantra that brings us together to prioritize and promote rangeland stewardship. It is the focus that drives us to devote our energies to preserving our natural resources and to instilling the same passion in the hearts of future generations. It is what brings both meaning and reward to all our common endeavors.

All that said, my hope is that the future of this newsletter is to keep stirring the passion for rangeland management that we all share and hope to invoke in others. I am especially pleased to have the opportunity to turn attention to both positive enterprise and outcomes for the land we live on when our society has been inundated with so much negativity and uncertainty. I am committed to work *with* you and *for* you to promote the exchange of expertise, best practices, and hopefulness for the future of our lands.

Please accept this invitation to send your ideas for stories that beg to be told and articles that drive our purpose.

Cordially,

Deann Burson

deann.burson@ag.tamu.edu

(325) 201-4493

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