



2016 Outstanding Contribution to Range Management Award Recipient Jenny Pluhar and TSSRM President Willy Conrad

**Texas Section Society for Rangeland Management**  
**Outstanding Contribution to Range Management Award**  
**Jenny Pluhar**

**Background**

After completing her undergraduate degree in range science from Montana State University, Jenny Pluhar left her home state and completed her master's degree in range science at Texas A&M University. She and her husband Darwin settled in their new home in Texas. She worked for four years (1984-1989) as technician with Canadian River and Moore County Soil & Water Conservation Districts assisting the Soil Conservation Service (now the NRCS) develop ranch conservation plans and assist ranchers implement those plans. In 1989, Jenny began her own rangeland consulting business which she continues today. She has never wavered in her passion for helping landowners improve their rangelands in Texas and beyond. She

accomplished outstanding results as a rangeland consultant while raising three children who became very successful, patriotic, educated, involved adults. Her interest in youth didn't stop with her own children. She has been a 4-H leader for 30 years and Director of TSSRM Youth Range Camp for 27 years.

In 2015, Jenny was an integral part of the team that led the redesign of TSSRM Youth Range Workshop to incorporate new technologies, materials and freshen the program. The team analyzed and worked on all aspects of Youth Range Workshop, from marketing to meals, curriculum to recreation, to insure the best possible experience for the youth.

Jenny was the sponsor chair for the 2016 SRM Annual Meeting in Corpus Christi, TX. Jenny raised approximately \$75,000 and successfully targeted several non-traditional sponsors, like HEB. Trying to educate SRM members that sponsors are more than a check, they are relationships that need to be nurtured.

Jenny Pluhar's contribution to rangeland management spans Texas and, in many ways, rangelands of the U.S. and the world. Her contributions affect multiple generations past, present, and future rangeland professionals currently involved in 4-H rangeland judging and Texas Section SRM youth range camp. She served as Director, Vice President, and President of the Texas Section SRM influencing our members and therefore rangeland management across the state. She didn't stop there with her contributions. She served in the parent Society for Range Management as Director, Vice President and President. In these positions, her influence reached across rangelands throughout the world through SRM policies, publications, conferences, meetings, tours, and members. Jenny speaks one-on-one with landowners and managers and to audiences of thousands with authority, comfort and ease, on rangeland and natural resource management.

### **Education**

- M.S. Range Science, Texas A&M University, 1984.
- B.S. Agriculture Production-Range Science, Montana State University, 1981.
- Numerous short courses on wetlands, hydric soils and current Sec 404 permitting issues.

### **Work Experience**

- August, 2015 – present: State Coordinator, Texas Grazing Lands Coalition
- 2000-present: Enercon Services, Inc., Senior Wetland Scientist
- 1995-present: Taylor Properties, Consultant
- 1989-present : Self employed Consultant
- 1984-1989: Canadian River and Moore County SWCD's, Technician

### **Society for Range Management Awards, Positions, and Activities**

- Texas Section Society for Range Management:
  - President
  - Vice-President
  - Director
  - Secretary
  - Youth Activities Chair
  - Chair, Task Force on Fund Raising
  - Director, TSSRM Youth Range Workshop (27 years) with multi-generational, same-family attendees during her tenure
  - Texas Section SRM Fellow Award, 1994
  
- Society for Range Management
  - *Outstanding Achievement Award*, 2008
  - *Fellow Award*, 1995
  - President
  - Vice-President
  - Director
  - Co-chair, International Plant Identification Contest
  - *Rangelands* editorial board member (12 years)
  - Association of Rangeland Consultants
  - Certified Professional Range Manager
  - Chaired numerous committees, most recently the Sponsorship Committee for the 2016 SRM International Meeting in Corpus Christi, TX
  - Life Member

### **Other Professional Memberships, Awards, and Activities**

- Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association (26 years)
- American Quarter Horse Association
- Texas 4-H Leader (31 years) with projects in range management, horse, and leadership
- Texas 4-H Coach of Award-winning Plant ID, Range Evaluation, Horse Judging and Horse Bowl Teams
- Texas 4-H Pursuit of Excellence Award 2009
- Texas 4-H Leader Legacy Award 2012
- Published author, *Texas Range Plants*, Hatch & Pluhar, Texas A&M University Press

### **Professional Consultant Activities and Accomplishments**

Jenny exhibited leadership advocating rangeland management through her SRM and other professional organizations and activities and she has directly managed and led others to manage Texas rangelands and natural resources.

She has worked all across Texas from far north to far south and west to east. As a private rangeland consultant, she has worked with ranches, energy companies, railroads, international companies, and state and federal government. Her activities as a consultant include: plant identification, grazing management advice, CRP establishment, wildlife habitat enhancement, noxious weed identification and management, NEPA assessments, cultural and historic reviews, linear utilities assessments, wetland delineations, and related activities.

Since 1995, she has managed three ranches totaling approximately 75,000 acres of rangeland and three farms on over 15 sections of land. She developed and administered Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contracts totaling \$450,000. She maintains positive working relationships between owners, surface lessors, and oil/gas interests. These ranches and farms exhibit conservation on the ground and well-managed natural resources

Recently, she negotiated a 5+ million dollar contract for preservation of Lesser Prairie Chicken habitat on behalf of landowners. The contract involves grazing management, brush management, prescribed burning, and other practices as appropriate.

She settled fire damages on huge rangeland fires in the Texas panhandle.

Her work as a professional consultant and senior scientist with Enercon Services, Inc., led to reclamation of many oil field sites and pipeline right of ways with native range plants. She worked in high plains and prairies habitat types all the way to, and including, marsh rangeland and wetland habitat types. She planned suitable site locations while meeting all Section 404 wetland and endangered species permitting requirements and satisfying landowners as well. She worked with wind energy companies on ranches to properly develop over 120 wind turbine sites with the ranch operations and range management as a primary focus. In her role with Enercon, she trained many young employees.

The Texas Grazing Lands Coalition (TXGLC) recognized Jenny's passion, skills, knowledge, abilities, and state-wide experience in working with rangelands and ranch owners and managers. In 2015, they illustrated their confidence in her and selected her to be the State Coordinator for the Texas Grazing Lands Coalition.

In her latest position with Texas Grazing Land Coalition (TXGLC) she has accomplished the following over the past year. These accomplishments have a profound effect on the management of Texas rangelands.

- Jenny has led the effort to make TXGLC independent and move in new directions not previously possible.
- She designed the rebranding of TXGLC that came with the name change from Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative to Texas Grazing Land Coalition. She led the total redesign of everything including the booth, logos, and informational materials.

- Jenny led the clarification of the mission and vision of TXGLC and explored new ways to deliver information on sound stewardship to Texas rangeland and pastureland landowners/managers.
- She redesigned the website and social media presence of TXGLC emphasizing rangeland and pastureland management.
- She works with and supports 10 NRCS TXGLC Specialists across the state.
- Jenny represents TXGLC at numerous trade shows and programs across the state, with an eye toward the future. She explores how to interact with partners to deliver information rangeland and pastureland owners and managers want and need.
- She has guided the future of TXGLC by applying for and receiving grants that represent cutting edge technologies and information delivery systems across Texas
- She supports the use of the TXGLC Rainfall Simulator with as many Texas rangeland and pastureland owners/managers and students as possible.
- Jenny has strengthened TXGLC's relationships with landowner/producer groups. She has presented many interesting programs with information useful for rangeland management.
- Immediately upon becoming the TXGLC State Coordinator, Jenny stepped in to help the team that hosted the 6th National Conference on Grazing Lands held in December in Fort Worth. She coordinated two days of programming specific to Texas rangeland and pastureland management.
- Jenny planned and organized "Making Cents of the Science" workshops, beginning with the Corpus Christi SRM Annual Meeting and is continuing with a series of five workshops across Texas that were partially funded by grant dollars.
- Working all across Texas on rangelands and pastureland is Jenny's my dream come true and she is doing an outstanding job.

### **Justification Statement from Nominator**

Jennifer Pluhar has demonstrated her lifelong passion for rangeland management with her commitment to rangelands on the land, in the Society for Range Management, in business, in state and federal legislatures, in youth activities, and TXGLC.

Jenny has represented SRM with other organizations and in Washington, DC with federal agencies, sister conservation societies, and on Capitol Hill with Senators, Members of Congress and committee staffers. She has been very successful working with large and small donors to fund Youth Range Workshop and other activities of SRM and the Texas Section. She spearheaded the creation of an endowment fund for youth activities, helping to ensure future generations are skilled and ready to make their contribution to range management.

As an educated, experienced rangeland professional and communicator, she worked successfully with landowners, energy companies, wildlife groups, governmental agencies, and others. She ensured rangelands are being managed to meet business and environmental objectives.

Jenny has been a recognized leader and passionate proponent of range management her entire adult life. She has led landowners to voluntarily implement sound range management. She has led energy companies to work cooperatively with landowners to ensure sound range management is followed in their business. She has led the Texas Section as a Director, Officer, and ultimately as President. She has led our parent society as a Board of Directors member, an officer, and as President. She has set the stage for the future by leading our youth to know and understand range management while doing everything else in her busy business and personal life. She has dedicated herself to range management with her personal time and personal resources in a manner unmatched in our times. Jenny Pluhar continues to make unselfish contributions to range management.

Jennifer (Jenny) Pluhar is certainly deserving of the Texas Section Society for Range Management's Outstanding Contribution to Range Management Award.