



2015 Outstanding Contribution to Range Management recipient Steve Hartman and TSSRM President Cody Scott

Texas Section Society for Rangeland Management
Outstanding Contribution to Rangeland Management
Steve Hartman

Name: F. Stephen (Steve) Hartman

TSSRM Membership Status: Active, Chairman of Investment Committee

SRM Member: since 1967

Education:

- Southwest Texas State University (now Texas State University), B.S., Range Management, 1970
- Texas A&M University, M.S., Range Science, 1973

Work Experience:

- Retired, Executive Director, University Lands – University of Texas System (1992 - 2010)
- Manager of Surface Interests, University Lands (1982 – 1991)

- Field Representative, University Lands (1976 – 1982)
- District Conservationist, USDA Soil Conservation Service (1974 – 1976)
- Range Conservationist, USDA Soil Conservation Service (1970 – 1973)

Recent Activities - Civic or Others:

Steve and Georgia Hartmann are active in the Blanco Catholic Church and anything related to their grandchildren.

Membership and significant activities in other Professional Societies:

- Texas Wildlife Society
- Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association
- Texas Sheep and Goat Raisers Association
- Permian Basin Petroleum Association
- International Right-of-Way Association

Society for Range Management Activities:

- 1993, 1998, 2001, and 2010 Chairman – Texas Section Annual Meeting Committee
- 1985 – 1988 Director, Texas Section
- 1987 – 1988 2nd Vice President, Texas Section
- 1988 – 1989 1st Vice President, Texas Section
- 1989 – 1990 President, Texas Section
- 1990 – 1991 Past President, Texas Section
- 1991 – 1992 Chairman, Finance Committee
- 2007 - 2008 Chairman, Endowment Committee
- 2014 - 2015 Chairman, Investment Committee

Awards and other recognition received:

- Society for Range Management – W.R. Chapline Land Stewardship Award (2009)

Major Contribution to Rangeland Management or Section:

Steve Hartman, retired Executive Director of University Lands, University of Texas System, is a well deserving candidate for the Texas Section – Society for Range Management’s Outstanding Contribution to Range Management (OCRM) Award. University Lands operates under the direction of Office of Business Affairs, The University of Texas System, and is responsible for managing the 2.1 million acres of Permanent University Fund (PUF) lands. These arid to semiarid lands are located in 19 West Texas counties. Steve, as executive director from 1992 to 2010, was directly responsible for the surface estate, mineral estate, and accounting for all PUF lands.

The Permanent University Fund (PUF) is a public endowment established by the *Texas Constitution* of 1876 to support institutions of The University of Texas System and The Texas A&M University System. As of September 1, 2014, University Lands had deposited a total of \$9.4 billion into the PUF since its inception and the total market value was approximately \$17.4 billion. Investment income from the PUF is used to finance construction, renovations, library acquisitions, educational and research equipment, and academic excellence programs for the two university systems.

The mission of University Lands is: "To maximize the revenue from the Permanent University Fund (PUF) lands by applying intensive management, accounting, conservation, and environmental programs which improve and sustain the productivity of PUF lands, protect the interests of The University of Texas System, and promote awareness and sensitivity for the environment." With this in mind, the breadth of responsibilities and knowledge for these lands requires an individual with the acumen for a variety of skills in administration, business management, rangeland management, public relations, and personnel management. Steve Hartman certainly demonstrated this unique combination of knowledge and skills.

Although the mineral estate generates the primary source of revenue for the PUF, it was Steve's adeptness at negotiating and recognizing the potential value of various surface activities to add to the diversity of the University Lands' portfolio. Steve insured that these multi-purpose lands were afforded equal access to a variety of customers. These other surface activities include such things as: grazing, hunting, and recreation leases; pipeline, transmission, and utility easements; commercial leases; wind turbines; and a vineyard and winery. "He was a tough negotiator but a fair one," is how one surface lessee described Steve.

Hartman was instrumental in promoting University Lands' adoption of a flexible grazing lease policy that was initiated for the PUF lands in the 1970s, which is designed for long-term leasing to help foster sustainable rangeland production. The leaseholder signs a 10-year lease, which includes the hunting and recreational rights and is generally renewed at the end of the 10-year period. Grazing fees are paid on the actual livestock numbers and are based on the average market value obtained from the preceding year from July through October for 400 to 500 pound steers and 60 to 70 pound feeder lambs. Although lease infrastructure improvements such as fencing, water development, and brush control are the responsibility of the grazing lessee, Steve was able to utilize money from surface damages obtained from energy development to help cost-share many of the improvement projects.

Through Steve's leadership University Lands developed sound range and wildlife improvement plans with the help of the USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). In 2009, University Lands entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the NRCS State Office, which helped outline conservation objectives and plans, as well as promote financial assistance through various USDA programs. Through this partnership the NRCS will develop conservation plans for all 112 University grazing leases to help implement sound rangeland principals such as proper grazing, proper stocking rates, and best management conservation practices.

The value of research for improving productivity of the rangeland resources that benefitted West Texas ranchers and operators was long recognized by Steve. Funding was provided through inter-agency agreements with Texas A&M University, Texas AgriLife Research, Texas Tech University, and Angelo State University, to support research for brush management, grazing management, restoration of

energy reserve pits, quail nesting ecology, pronghorn predation, bitterweed toxicity, and many other important range and wildlife issues.

During Steve's tenure the PUF lands expanded their sources of income through the leasing for commercial generation of electricity from wind power. Ninety-eight wind turbines were established on two wind farms in 2001 and generate 65.3 megawatts of electricity for Texas citizens. Also, a 1,000-acre commercial grape vineyard and winery operated by Ste. Genevieve was established in Pecos County. It is Texas's largest winery and one of the largest Texas grape producers with wine distribution around the state.

Because of the variety and amount of development on PUF lands, Steve initiated a program to locate and protect sensitive archeological sites. University Lands' field representatives receive training to assist professional archeologists identify these important site and to preserve Texas history.

By any measureable standard, Steve Hartman's stewardship and oversight of the 2.1 million acres of Permanent University Fund lands is considered exceptional and exemplary. His managerial skills led to many significant improvements of the land but also the recognition that these multi-use lands were not the exclusive rights of any one group. He wanted to ensure that all lease holders, whether it was agriculture or energy based, had the opportunity to be successful. The passion Steve had for these lands and the purpose they serve was constant but it was the people he served and worked with during those years that fueled his passion.

Steve Hartman has been an active Society for Range Management member for nearly 40 years, serving in nearly every capacity possible, including Texas Section President in 1989 – 1990. He was instrumental in establishing the Bill Wyche, Jr. Memorial Scholarship, which the Texas Section – SRM awards annually to two college students pursuing degrees in rangeland management or related fields. It was primarily through his efforts that a grant for an additional \$25,000 was received last year from the Scharbauer Foundation. Even in retirement, Hartmann continues to be an active Texas Section member and currently chairs the Investment Committee, overseeing investments of monetary gifts and funds for the Section. There is no doubt that Steve Hartmann is highly deserving of the 2015 Society for Range Management - Texas Section Outstanding Contribution to Range Management Award.