

Range Rider

Newsletter of the Colorado Section of the Society for Range Management

- [» Hello](#)
- [» CSSRM Candidate for President](#)
- [» CSSRM Candidate for the Board of Directors](#)
- [» 2021 Annual Meeting CO Plateau Science and Management Forum/CSSRM: Avoid, Reduce, Restore](#)
- [» Youth Activities Report](#)
- [» Western Colorado High School Teachers Workshop](#)
- [» Excellence In Range Conservation Field Days](#)



Photo by J. Tashiro

Happy Trails

By Josh Tashiro, Past President

I hope you are all doing well, and I keep praying for rain for you all and that we have an excellent winter to start us out right for next years grazing season. Please checkout the website to see our updates. Some committees and roles may change in the future since we are trying to update our bylaws and the duties and responsibilities of officers and committee chairs. We just want to keep up with our changing times and clean up the documents.



Parting Message

As this is my last message to all of you as one of your board members, I have enjoyed the last 5 years serving you all. I hope I represented you well and will continue to serve in my capacity as Historian and helping with summer and fall field days.

I like to part with one of my favorite quotes:

“Nature is an open book for those who care to read. Each grass-covered hillside is a page on which is written the history of the past, conditions of the present, and the predictions of the future.” – John Ernest Weaver 🌲

Candidate for President Elect

Courtney Hurst

(Past Board of Director)

Since earning my Masters of Natural Resource Stewardship from Colorado State University in 2006, I've pursued professional opportunities in natural resource and land management. These opportunities have included a position as the Stewardship Director at the Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust, working with George Whitten and Julie Sullivan as their New Agrarian Apprentice through the Quivira Coalition, and currently working with the Colorado State Land Board as Resource Specialist in the Southwest part of the state. I'm passionate about land health, soil health, animal health and ultimately, people health.

In my spare time, I can be found with my dogs, Blue and Ranger, managing my small 240-acre cattle ranch near Monte Vista, Colorado. 🐾



Candidate for Board of Directors (2 positions up for election)

Rodney N. Smith

Born in Amarillo, Texas, Rodney was raised in an agriculture family. Rodney worked his way through high school on a horse farm and competed in rodeo through his local high school team. Upon completing high school, he joined the United States Army and traveled all over the world until his retirement in 2004. Rodney obtained the beginning of formal college education while in the Army which set him up to be recruited as a high school teacher by a program called Troops to Teachers. Upon his military retirement Rodney and his wife Robin moved to Colorado where he began teaching in a low socio-economic high school in rural Colorado. In 2007, Rodney was named the Colorado Teacher of the Year by the Troops to Teachers Program of the State. Rodney and his wife began raising cows by taking in a neighbor's replacement heifers and wintering them on their place. This began the move to building their ranch by buying and leasing property that came available around them, while building their own herd of cows. Today, with the help of many regenerative agriculture seminars, the mentorship of fellow ranchers, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, their own sons Range Land Education with the University of Wyoming and finally the opportunity to go to school at Colorado State University they have built a small sustainable cow/calf operation.

Education:

Associate of Science-Criminal Justice, Central Texas College, Killeen, Texas

Bachelor of Science – Administrative and Organizational Management, Excelsior College, Albany, NY

Master of Education – K-12 Leadership and Administration-Jones University, Centennial, Colorado

Master of Agriculture Science – Integrated Resource Management, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Co.

Work Experience:

2004-Present: High School Social Studies Teacher. Focus subjects are U.S. Government, Leadership and U.S. History.

1984-2004: Served in the United State Army culminating in position as the top 1% of the force as a Sergeant Major. Served in five different combat operations in Panama, Operations Joint Guard, Joint Forge, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

Coaching Experience:

Is a Marksmanship Coach and coached 11 Teams to Colorado State Championship Titles, 3 Teams to National Championship Titles and has set 3 National Team Records in Competitive Air Rifle.

Ranching Business:

In 2004, Rodney and his wife Robin purchased a small 50-acre parcel of land in southern Pueblo County Colorado. Today that small parcel has grown to encompass over 1,000 acres of deeded and leased range lands. They operate a cow/calf operation of Aberdeen Angus crossed with American Angus and Barzona bloodlines. They direct market most of their calves to local consumers that are looking for ranch raised custom beef. The ranch is set up into a rotational grazing system that experiments with various grazing cell systems throughout the ranch. Their main goal is to reestablish native grasslands by regenerating former farm fields into productive grazing lands for livestock and wildlife. One of their main projects is to reestablish grasslands within the pinon/juniper ecosystems that have taken over the canyon/arroyo breaks. 🌱

Photo by Andee Leininger

Candidate for Board of Directors (2 positions up for election)

Baili Foster (Current Section Secretary)

I have found community and belonging with SRM since I joined the CSU Range Club in 2010. The passion and knowledge shared among the rangeland professionals in Colorado (and beyond!) has never stopped inspiring me to broaden my learning and enthusiasm.

My current involvement with the section includes membership with the Youth Activities Committee and as the secretary for CSSRM for nearly three years. While I have enjoyed participating as secretary, I would love the opportunity to experience the section as a board member and help in making the decisions essential to progressing the health and management of rangelands.

I have spent most of my career with the Bureau of Land Management in Assessment Inventory Monitoring (AIM), range, and fuels throughout Colorado and Utah. I now work as a Soil Conservationist for the NRCS in Steamboat Springs, CO. When I'm not nerding out to plants, soil, and animals, you can find me rafting, backpacking, skiing, or cooking (while also nerding out to plants, soil, and animals). 🐾



Photo by Andee Leininger

Candidate for Board of Directors (2 positions up for election)

Dixie Crowe

Dixie became interested in rangeland management during a presentation by Dr. Paul Meiman on range monitoring at a CSU Collegiate Cattlewomen's symposium at CSU in 2014. While earning a B.S. in Equine Sciences and a B.A. in Journalism and Media Communication from CSU in 2016, she wrote for the college newspaper on livestock topics and competed on the novice Quarter Horse and Arabian National judging teams. She also worked as a student media intern for the Range Beef Cow Symposium hosted by CSU, and as a student media coordinator producing four multi-media books on equine reproduction with the Equine Reproduction Laboratory. She was a member of the 2015-2016 Seedstock Merchandising Team showing purebred Angus and Hereford bulls and heifers at the National Western Stock Show and co-producing the 40th Annual Bull Sale Catalog. Dixie continued at CSU for a Masters of Natural Resource Stewardship in rangeland ecology graduating in 2018. During her master's she served as the CSSRM Section Secretary from 2017-2018. She was also a non-competing member of the CSU Soil Judging Team, a CSU Range Club member including the 2017 2nd place Rangeland Cup Team at the St. George SRM meeting, and NRCS volunteer entering soil survey data from the 1980s in the Soil Pedon database. She also participated in two soil surveys at Dinosaur National Monument helping the National Park Service collect information to write their grazing management plan. After studying soil science for two years at the University of Wyoming, Dixie is thrilled to be back in Colorado as a new Rangeland Management Specialist for the Natural Resource Conservation Service partnering with rangeland producers in the Southeast Region. Dixie and her dog Scout are looking forward to hiking, camping and river time as they explore SE Colorado! 🐾

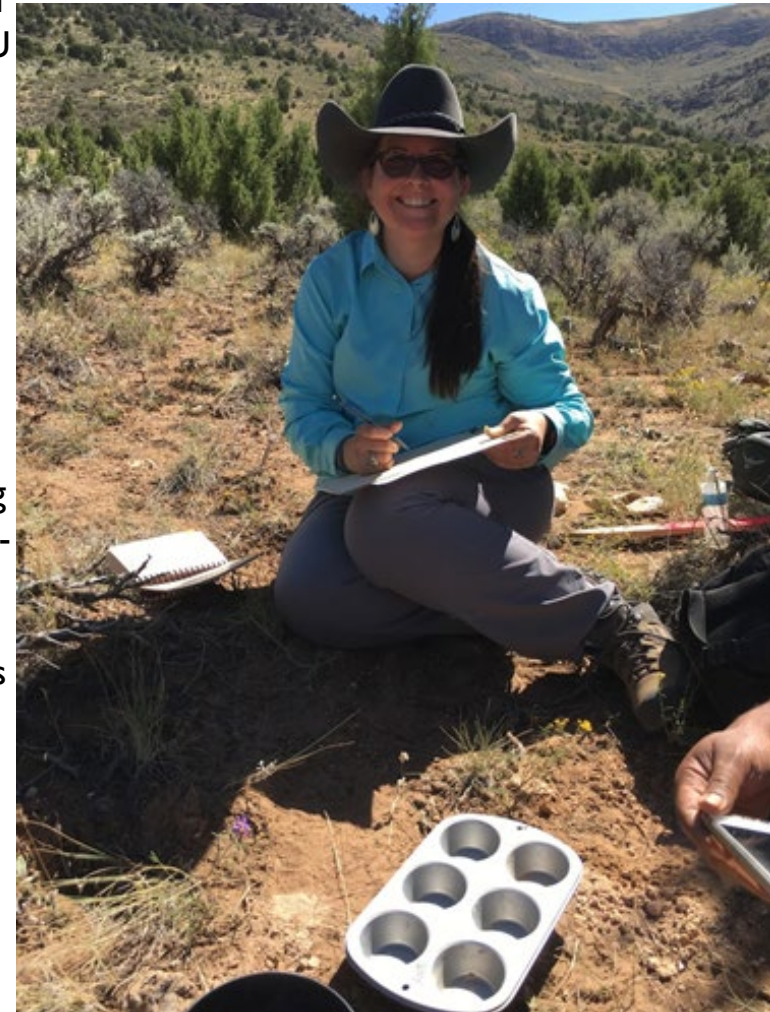
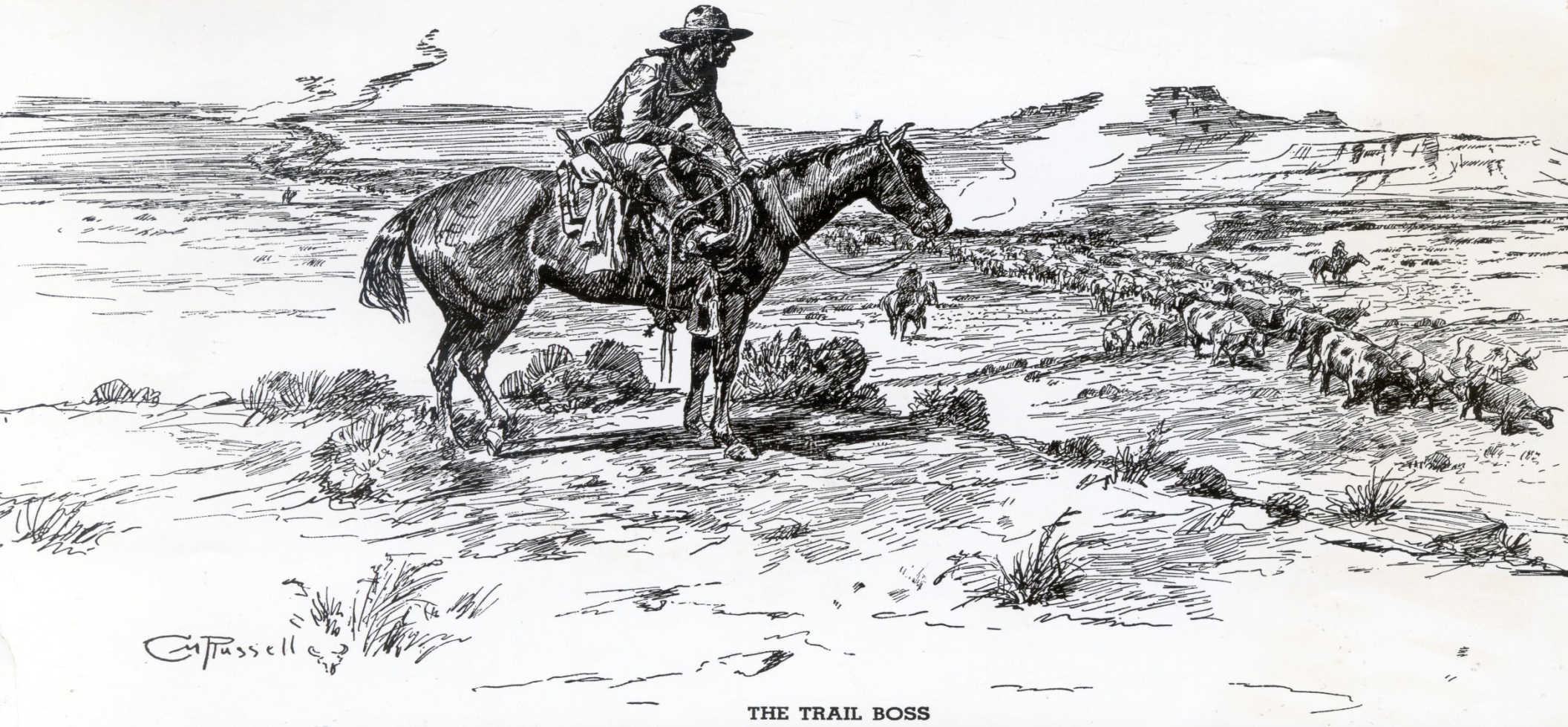


Photo by Andee Leininger

2021 CSSRM Election



[Please click this link for the voting page of our
2021 CSSRM Election](#)

Photo by Andee Leininger



Colorado Plateau Science and Management Forum + Colorado Section of the Society for Range Management 2021 Meeting

By Retta Bruegger, President Elect

It's not too late to register for the 2021 Annual Meeting!

Please join us at the 2021 Annual Meeting for the CO Section of the Society for Range Management in Grand Junction, CO Oct 6-7th.

This year, we'll have a focus on rangeland restoration, and adapting to aridification. Partnering with the Colorado Plateau Science and Management Forum, we've been able to broaden the expertise and bridge memberships. We hope for a rich environment for conversation, community building and learning for stewards, land managers, students and ranchers.

The workshop kicks off with a half-day field tour in the surrounding Grand Junction area, where we will have the opportunity to tour an innovative restoration project with CPW's Danielle Bilyeu Johnson. We then will tour nearby sites with BLM ecologist Nikki Grant-Hoffman and learn from recent research that looked at long-term restoration outcomes. Finally, we will visit a site impacted by drought and learn from each other on potential contributing factors, and brainstorm restoration methods. A meet-and-greet happy hour/ open house will follow the tour. The CSSRM Business meeting will take place immediately following the meet and greet in the same venue.

The all-day workshop on Oct 7th will dive deeper into the themes of aridification and restoration kicked off on the tour. The day will be structured around several keynote presentations and break-out discussion sessions. Attendees will leave with applicable knowledge of how aridification impacts lands they manage, more tools in the toolbox for responding. Expect a workshop that will challenge participants to think outside the box, revisit their assumptions and come away with relevant information that can inform their own land management.

COVID-19 remains a concern we have taken precautions consistent with guidance from the CDA and CSU. Learn more here, and we welcome you to join us Oct. 6-7th, 2021.

Early bird registration ends September 22nd. Learn more and register here <https://www.cssrm.org/events.html>
Contact Retta Bruegger at (970) 988 -0043 or retta.bruegger@colostate.edu for more information

CPS&M Forum + CSSRM 2021 Meeting

By Retta Bruegger, President Elect

Location: The CSSRM board meeting and field tour on Oct 6th and all-day meetings on Oct 7th both take place at the CSU's Western Colorado Research Campus, CSU's Western Colorado Research Campus 3170 B ½ Rd., Grand Junction, CO 81503

DAY	TIME	AGENDA ITEM	SPEAKER/ FACILITATOR
Wednesday, Oct. 6th		Events are at CSU's Western Colorado Research Campus 3170 B ½ Rd., Grand Junction, CO 81503 unless otherwise indicated	
	10:30:00 AM	CSSRM Board Meeting - at CSU Western Campus	
	12:00:00 PM	Lunch at CSU's Western Campus (lunch provided to field tour participants)	
	1:00:00 PM	Consolidate as possible into vehicles and depart for field tour. Stops include a site where technique was applied to increase chances of seeding success using a pothole seeder, and long-term outcomes of restoration efforts on the salt desert. Finally, we will visit a location of high drought impact and brainstorm causes and restoration strategies.	Danielle Bilyeu, Nikki Grant Hoffman
	5:00:00 AM	Meet and greet/ happy hour - location to be announced	
	6:30 PM	CSSRM Business Meeting - directly following the meet and greet	
Thursday, Oct. 7th		CSU's Western Colorado Research Campus 3170 B ½ Rd., Grand Junction, CO 81503	
	7:45:00 AM	Snacks and coffee	
	8:00:00 AM	Welcome, housekeeping, and introduction of the conference theme - avoid, reduce, restore. Presentation of Awards - Outstanding Publication and Trail Boss Awards	
	8:30:00 AM	Projected impacts of aridification to western slope ecosystems	John Bradford
	9:15:00 AM	Economic impacts of climate change to ranching	Pending
	9:45:00 AM	Sustainability and innovation in the livestock industry	Kim Stackhouse-Lawson
	10:30:00 AM	Break	
	10:45:00 AM	Discussion break-out: What stood out to you in the information presented? What surprised you in the info provided? What was confusing? What questions are you left with? How does this affect your management in your role?	Facilitated in break-out groups
	11:15:00 AM	Grazing management for resilience on the Colorado Plateau	Eric Thacker
	11:45:00 PM	Presentation of Awards: Conservation Excellence and Outstanding Young Professional Award	
	12:15:00 PM	Lunch	
	1:15:00 PM	The latest, greatest, and what we don't need to do again in rangeland restoration science	Carrie Havrilla
	2:00:00 PM	Land Knowing's, Lessons and Truths: Indigenous Tellings of Change, Adaptation and Restoration	Doreen Martinez
	2:45:00 PM	Break	
	3:00:00 PM	Strategies for collaborative conservation with the Intermountain West Join Venture	Mandi Hirsh
	3:45:00 PM	Given the topics raised by the speakers, where are the biggest gains in terms of 'reducing' or 'avoiding' in your role (research, management, stewardship, ranching, etc.)? Is actualizing these strategies different than what you are doing now? What are potential opportunities? What are the research, policy or other gaps or barriers?	Facilitated in break-out groups
	4:30:00 PM	Ending discussion and synthesis- What do we do now? What's needed?	
	5:00:00 PM	Adjourn	

Youth Activities

By Ben Berlinger, Youth Activities Committee Chair

Camp Rocky 2021

was held on July 11-16 at the Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp near Divide, CO. The attendance this year was low due to last year's cancellation. The decision was made to proceed with the camp to prevent back-to-back cancellations. This year's curriculum consisted of four major disciplines: **Range Management**, Soil and Water Conservation, Forest Management and Wildlife Management. The range management group instructors were **Dan Nosal, Josh Tashiro and Ben Berlinger**, all of whom represented the Colorado Section SRM (CSSRM).

Camp Rocky is Colorado's premier outdoor learning experience for high school students who want to learn more about and gain a better appreciation of rangelands and the natural resources of Colorado. This youth educational event sponsored by the Colorado Association of Conservation Districts, (CACD) with the help of other natural resource conservation partners.

During the week, the students are engaged in various learning activities associated with their respective disciplines. At the end of the week students were involved in field work associated with the various disciplines. The **range management group** installed portable electric fencing and got hands-on experience with fencing designed to facilitate prescribed grazing management. Additional camper activities throughout the week included volleyball games, hiking, group challenges, nightly natural resource presentations, and a talent show!

Each student in the range management group received a copy of the *Range and Pasture Management Source Unit for Colorado Teachers*

reference book to take home with them. The book was used throughout the week by the range management group as an instructional resource (see picture). Contact Ben Berlinger, CSSRM Youth Activities Chair, for further information about Camp Rocky, or if you would like to obtain a copy of the Source Unit range management book; 719-980-0518 or bberling@bresnan.net. 📖



Youth Activities

By Ben Berlinger, Youth Activities Committee Chair

2021 FFA Range Judging and Plant Identification Events

Agriculture teachers throughout Colorado are planning a full slate of FFA range judging events this fall. The schedule is as follows:

- SE CO Regional-Districts - Wednesday, September 22
 - Branson School, Branson, CO
 - FFA Hosts: Branson & Kim Chapters
- NE CO Regional-Districts - Wednesday, September 29
 - Prairie School, New Raymer, CO
 - FFA Host: New Raymer Chapter
- Eastern CO State - Wednesday, October 13
 - Seibert Community Bldg., Seibert, CO
 - FFA Hosts: High Plains, Arickaree, Flagler, Limon Chapters
- NW CO Regional-Districts - Friday, October 8
 - SoRoCo School, Oak Creek, CO
 - FFA Host: SoRoCo Chapter

FFA range judging involves the students in judging the condition of two ecological sites. Several attributes are determined by the students including ecological site name, plant composition, range condition class, vegetation basal and litter cover, suggested stocking rate, apparent rangeland trend, and recommended best management practices.

The CO Section of the Society for Range Management (CSSRM) will be facilitating these educational events for our FFA youth throughout Colorado. FFA team plaques will be awarded to the high scoring teams and the CSSRM will recognize individual high scoring students for both plant ID and range judging scores. CSSRM will select our High School Youth Forum (HSYF) delegates to the Albuquerque 2022 annual meeting from the top achieving Ag students at the state FFA range judging event.

Sponsors will be the hosting FFA Chapters and the many eastern Colorado conservation districts provide financial and clerical support. Due to the generosity of the sponsors a registration fee is not anticipated. Light breakfast and lunch will be provided. The necessary social safety precautions will be followed as directed by local health officials at all of these events. 🏹

For further information please reach out to the hosting FFA Chapter Ag Teachers or contact Ben Berlinger, CSSRM Youth Activities Chair, Bberling@bresnan.net, 719-980-0518.





Western Colorado High School Teachers Workshop

By Baili Foster, CSSRM Youth Activities Committee Member and Ben Berlinger, Youth Activities Committee Chair

Range Management Teachers Workshops Held in Western Colorado

The CSSRM Youth Activities Committee reached out to select Agriculture teachers in western Colorado; Jay Whaley and Reece Melton in Oak Creek at Southern Routt County (SOROCO) high school and Mariah Klingler at Ignacio high school. Jay Whaley had for several year been teaching range management in his classroom which made him a key player in the partnership. Both Ag teachers/FFA advisors agreed to host a range management teachers workshop/field day in their area.

The northwest CO teachers workshop/field day at Oak Creek was held July 20. Baili Foster, CSSRM member and NRCS Soil Conservationist Steamboat Springs, assisted Jay Whaley to lead the program. There were eleven participants at Oak Creek. By all accounts the workshop was a huge success!

The southwest CO workshop/field day at Ignacio took place on August 2 and was facilitated by Mariah Klingler, Ag teacher at Ignacio and Kathleen Delzell, CSSRM member, Pagosa Springs. CSSRM members Monica Klinger, Collbran, CO and Ben Berlinger, La Junta, CO facilitated the instruction. There were thirteen participants including four Ag teachers along with range management professionals from the Southern Ute reservation and NRCS.

Kathleen Delzell & Ben Berlinger discussed plant ID Range judging field practice with participants

The workshop goal was to generate interest and excitement in implementing range judging CDE's and range management curriculum in their classrooms. These workshops emphasized how to accomplish that goal at the high school level based on the following objectives:

- Develop an understanding of the significance of well managed rangelands and the benefits to humans that come from healthy rangeland ecosystems
- Become familiar with how to facilitate FFA Range Judging Career Development Events (CDE's) and lead agriculture students and 4-H clubs in rangeland science primarily through the use of the reference Range and Pasture Management: A Source Unit for Colorado Teachers
- Understand plant structure, palatability, and responses to grazing
- Practice plant identification skills and learn important plant characteristics for western Colorado range plants and pressing and mounting specimens
- Understand Ecological Site Descriptions (ESD's) and how they fit into range management
- Practice conducting FFA range judging and plant identification CDE's

The project received grants from the CSSRM and an Education Outreach Workshop grant from the Colorado Association of Conservation Districts (CACD). The Routt County, Pine River and Mancos Conservation Districts co-sponsored the workshops to manage the funding from the grants. Based on the successful outcomes of these two workshops CSSRM anticipates this education outreach to continue in other locations, reaching teachers throughout parts of western Colorado, and involving more students in range management curriculum in agriculture programs and FFA range judging CDE's.

Please see the related article by Baili Foster (previous page) talking about the Oak Creek range management field day for Ag teachers, Environmental Science teachers, natural resource professionals, ranchers, and landowners in northwest Colorado. 🐾





Photo by J. Tashiro

By Josh Tashiro, Past President

ERC Summer Field Days

Members and Non Members

From Ben Berlinger and JT we would like to thank all of you that came out to join us on both days.



Brett Gray

We sure had a lot of fun with Louis and Chris showing us around the ranch. We'd like to thank them for inviting us into their home. We'd also like to thank the High Plains Conservation District and the Colorado Chapter SWCS for their participation and support.

3 R Ranch

We sure had a lot of fun with the Brown's and Mr. Helvey showing us around their ranch. We'd like to thank them for inviting us into their home. We'd also like to thank the South Pueblo Conservation District and the Colorado Chapter SWCS for their participation and support. 🐾

