

# CSSRM with Colorado Plateau Science and Management Annual Meeting

By Retta Bruegger, President Elect

Save the date **Oct 6-7** for the Colorado Section of the Society for Range Management Conference in Grand Junction Colorado, hosted in conjunction with the Colorado Plateau Science and Management Forum.

With the 2020-2021 drought, many of us have experienced and seen impact to rangelands, livelihoods and communities. How, as a group of professionals, do we respond to the challenge of longer and more frequent droughts and aridification that are expected in the future?

This year's conference will explore what is known about the future impacts of aridification to western Colorado rangelands. While we know how to degrade rangelands, restoring them is much more challenging, slow, expensive, and unpredictable.

The theme of "Avoid, Reduce, Restore," is a framework for thinking about how to respond strategically to future and current challenges, like aridification and climate change. How can we maintain resilience in landscapes and ecosystems (*avoid*)? If this is not possible, how can we make decisions that reduce impacts of land use given aridification (*reduce*)? And finally, if an area has already been degraded, or avoiding and reducing impacts is not possible, what are restoration strategies one can employ (*reverse*)?

With *avoid*, we'll explore what we know about natural carbon sequestration in southwestern forests and rangelands, and where the

gains are, and where and when we can avoid or mitigate impacts of aridification. With *reduce*, we'll learn strategies and grazing management that reduce impacts of common land uses. With *reverse*, we'll explore the latest and greatest in restoration.

The conference will have a field day on Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>, followed by a full day session on Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>. The field tour on the 6<sup>th</sup> will allow us to see first-hand the impact of recent drought with a 'dead bunchgrass tour,' as well as local restoration efforts in the particularly challenging cold desert ecosystem.

By partnering with the Colorado Plateau Science and Management Forum for this in person conference, we hope to expand the connections of professionals engaged in rangeland management, and for students, provide a vision of the breadth of opportunities within the field.

It is also our hope that new relationships and collaborations emerge. While there may be an "I" in "Society for Range Management" and "CO Plateau Science and Management Forum," science and management is best practiced as a team sport.

Join us Oct 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 in Grand Junction, CO to continue building our team.

Thinking of attending? Help us plan by taking this [4-question survey](#)

[http://colostate.edu/qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_9zDGuTTA7ztDbFA](http://colostate.edu/qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9zDGuTTA7ztDbFA)