

**Nebraska Section SRM Meeting
October 10, 2012
Quality Inn, Ogallala, NE**

Curtis Talbot called the meeting to order at 8:11 AM MT at the Quality Inn in Ogallala, NE.

Minutes: Motion to approve the minutes from the 2012 NE Section Annual Meeting was made by Daryl Cisney, seconded by Dave Cook. The minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Motion to approve the treasurer's report was made by Shelly Taylor, seconded by Mike Croxen. The treasurer's report was approved.

SRM Director Business:

Keith Klement reported for the Board of Directors. Keith has served on the Board of Directors for 3 years and will step down in 4 months. The 9 member board includes 6 directors. A term is 3 years with 3 new members each year.

- SRM is transitioning to a virtual office, as the previous office building where SRM was based out of in the past is up for sale. There have been three offers made on the building, but all of have been unacceptable so far.
- Three ESD website training workshops have been scheduled with the Annual SRM Meeting in an attempt to get NRCS, BLM, USFS, and other federal agency employees to attend the Annual Meeting. We need to work and communicate with other federal agencies and other sister societies to increase incentives to attend the Annual Meeting by offering training sessions such as these in conjunction with these meetings.
- Rangeland Ecology & Management (REM) is becoming a prime journal and both BioOne and JSTOR archive both REM and Rangelands, and are available on-line. Not every member receives the Rangeland publication. SRM is under contract to print a certain number of publications, with only half being used.
- The website continues to improve. There was some discussion as to why at times members have encountered the site not being recognized as a trusted site. There was also discussion about Rangeland News becoming available in an electronic version that could be printed off as a .pdf document. Rangleands.org has had an increase the number of hits, with over half being new visitors and with 38,000 hits in one year. Rangelands News has had fewer hits on-line with around 2000 hits in 6 months. If anyone has any suggestions for the website please let him know.
- Due to a drop in membership there has been reduced income. The Finance and Endowment Committees are working to get new investment and financial policies in plan and develop a better long term financial plan. In the past the Annual Meeting is SRMs largest source of income. This is no longer enough to cover all of the expenses and there is a need to look for new ways to generate income and cut expenses. The Financial Task Force is a new ad-hoc committee to deal with this need. Spokane did make a profit and not a loss for SRM in 2012.
- There has been an effort to revise the SRM Strategic Plan at the Oklahoma City Annual Meeting. Currently it is more of a mission statement rather than a strategic plan as it does not cite any benchmark goals or ways to quantify or judge progress. There needs to be hard, strong, quantifiable goals set. This would also allow a cost efficiency analysis to be done.
- The deadline to vote is Friday Oct 11, 2012 for new Board members. We need nominations to serve on the National Board as there are currently no candidates.

- The Endowment Fund has had a new financial policy approved and the Finance Committee is currently reviewing it. It better documents and keeps records to ensure proper use.
- Things are going well regarding planning the Annual 2012 Meeting in Oklahoma City. The registration is still open. The hotel is not full yet despite some members being told that it was. When calling the hotel you may need to say you are with SRM-A, which is how they have us documented.

Committee Reports:

Awards: Michael Croxen encouraged members to nominate individuals for next year. We have no awards being presented this year.

Jim O'Rourke encouraged everyone to attend the SRM Annual Meeting in Oklahoma City to support Daryl Cisney who will be receiving a national award.

Range Camp: Shelly Taylor reported that Range Camp was held June 11-15th this year with 59 students. Outreach was extensive with letters or emails throughout Nebraska to high schools, NRCS and NRD offices, UNL extension offices, and newspapers. There is also information up on the Nebraska Section SRM website. There is also a Facebook page maintained to promote Range Camp as well. The financial and overall support of sponsoring ranches continues to be essential to the camp's success. Thank you to all of the sponsoring ranches for supporting Range Camp. One third of the students were returning campers. This year's winning ranch crew was the Reverse S S Crew – Adkinson Inc., with team leader Jeff Nichols. The Overall Top Camper was Taylor Hornickel from Ord. The Top First Year Camper was Jared Crosley from Wilsonville. Twelve adults spent the entire week at the camp with 14 other professionals supporting Range Camp by leading tours and providing presentations on range-related information. Wayne Rodocker Ranch was the site of the Ranch Tour; a special thank you goes out to them. Also thank you to Leah Carson's crew for putting together the Range Judging Contest. All students were encouraged to compete for the HSYF. Range Camp continues as one of the Nebraska Section's most important activities and its success has been and continues to be dependent upon the involvement of Section members, Nebraska ranches, and other professionals and organizations that support the activity. Thank you to everyone who helps make Range Camp possible. Thank you to the Sandhills Task Force and the Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition who continue to sponsor Range Camp. Thank you to all of our sponsors who continue to support Range Camp and help keep costs down for individual campers.

The 2013 Range Camp is scheduled for June 10-14. Due the high number of students this year it was discussed as to how many students we may have to limit the Camp to next year and how those limitations would be placed. Having to put a limit on the number of students is a great problem to have as it shows the younger generation being interested in range management. Next year the Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition grant will run out unless they choose to renew it. We need to continue to look for additional sponsorship to keep registration costs down.

Next year is also the 50th Anniversary and we would like to have a special celebration to commemorate this anniversary. There was a brief discussion about possibilities on what could be done in regards to this celebration. Possible ideas will be further discussed in January. Shelly also agreed to get some information in Rangelands concerning the 50th Anniversary of Range Camp. There could also be a poster presentation or possible an HSYF presentation regarding the 50th Anniversary or history of Range Camp.

HSYF: Mary Reece reported for HSYF. The Nebraska Section has traditionally annually sponsored delegates to the High School Youth Forum at the winter parent Society meetings. Cassidy Linabery from Valentine, Laura Gorecke from Farwell, and Tevyn Baldwin from Mitchell represented Nebraska at the meeting in Spokane, Washington in January 2012. All three did well with Lara receiving 4th place and Cassidy receiving 5th place. This year two range campers will participate in the Section Meeting later today, Cody McBride from Burwell and Cheyenne Doremus from Polk, for the opportunity to represent Nebraska the Annual Meeting in Oklahoma City. We may only sponsor one student to the meeting this year in Oklahoma City, OK.

In the past SRM had discussed parents taking an increased supervisory role of HSYF students at the Annual Meetings. They are now encouraging SRM members or staff to have full responsibility. We are lucky to have strong members who are willing to take on this responsibility.

We have extremely strong youth program and any ideas to celebrate the 50 year anniversary of Range Camp would be appreciated. It's a great opportunity for the Section to commemorate and celebrate our youth programs.

Range Judging: Daryl Cisney, Range Judging Committee Chair presented a report. This is a standing committee of the Nebraska Section and involves many non-members who participate and work to help host these contests. Thank you to everyone who helps with these contests! Six area range judging contests are normally held across Nebraska. This year Area 5 cancelled their contest. The Old West Regional was also cancelled due to the weather and travel concerns. The combined area contest participation was reported at 1102 participants, only slightly down from last year. The State Contest was held in Stanton and had a total of 369 participants. It was reported that all the contests went really well with few problems or concerns. The Ag Ed instructors were very enthusiastic about the program and continue to support participation. Participation would not be possible without the support of the Ag Ed instructors and FFA programs across the state. We have many other partners who help in hosting our contests including the Game and Parks Commission, NRDs, NRCS, Forest Service, University of Nebraska Extension, and the landowners, who we want to recognize and thank. This year we had banners with the SRM logo welcoming students to the State Range Judging contest with our sponsors. The banners were great to publicize NE SRM.

The 2013 Area and State Range Judging Contests are already in the planning stages and they are trying to get tentative dates set earlier. Discussion was held about the possibility of increasing participation by multiple states in the Old West Regional Contest and approaching other Section presidents to redevelop communication. All the contests try to include an educational program after the students are done with the contest itself so that it will continue to be a school sponsored event. It's tough to get students to participate as other student activities and commitments continue to increase. Thank you to all who help support the Range Judging Contests and continue to encourage participation.

Envirothon: Chuck Butterfield reported. Chuck was unable to attend this year, but Austin Horn filled in for him. The Nebraska State Envirothon was held in Halsey, NE, on May 5th, 2012. Eleven schools competed with 80 students competing. The team from West Holt, coached by David Gibbens, won the State and Range competitions. They then competed at the International Envirothon in Selinsgrove, PA against 55 other teams. Next year's state competition will be in eastern NE, with the International Envirothon to be held in Montana with a focus on rangeland management. It should be noted that Nebraska was the first state to add range to the competition in 1992 there have been many questions from other states about how to add range into their programs. Many times the International competition is held on the coast. Logistically it is hard to host in Nebraska and we have not been able to do so, but would like to see it in the future.

Thank you to Austin Horn for filling in. There was also discussion concerning how to get more Ag Ed instructors and FFA sponsors trained for both Envirothon and Range Judging. There is a focus coming out of the State Legislature concerning increasing Ag Education programs in the classroom, which would be great to get youth back into some of these programs.

Scholarship: Casey Lancaster reported that the scholarship committee had received 6 qualified applications for the two \$1000.00 scholarships that will be given out this evening. Thanks to an anonymous donor who helps to provide one of these scholarships. One winner is from Chadron State College, Kristie Olmer from Madison, NE, and the other winner is from UNL, Kyra Baldwin from Mitchell, NE. Discussion was held as to the concern of lack of participation and interest in students applying for the scholarship. Discussion included handing out scholarship applications to students at the National SRM meetings and finding new ways to remind students to apply such as through e-mail or new ways such as Facebook and twitter to reach more students. This year they did have a digital form that was able to be filled out and saved on the computer, which was easier for the students. Casey also read a letter from Nick Simonson regarding his intentions to step-down from the scholarship committee as Co-Chair, but that he has enjoyed being involved in the past. Casey also expressed that he can no longer be the Chair of this committee, but would still like to serve on the committee. Discussion was held regarding the potential for a new chair to replace Nick. Thank you to both Casey and Nick for their years of involvement and service. One of these scholarships is made possible by a \$1,000 anonymous donation to the Scholarship Fund. Thank you for making this Scholarship possible, and congratulations to the recipients.

There was also discussion regarding the previous discussion about hosting a Plant Judging Contest and URME practice to help students practice for the National Annual Meeting. This was hard to get organized this year and this year's Nebraska Section meeting is during mid-term exams for college students.

Membership: Kristin reported that we currently have 102 members. It tends to fluctuate between 95 and 105. We have lost a few members that were multiple Section members. It is only \$5 for each additional Section membership. Kristin continues to maintain a list of current and expired members. Mike Croxen has been helping to contact expired members to encourage them to renew their membership. There are still a few problems regarding the transition to Allen Press, who now maintains SRM memberships, but there have been a lot less and when a concern or problem is brought forth it has been handled quickly. There was a brief discussion concerning new ways to alert members to expired membership such as through a text message. The possibility of automatic renewal of memberships for those who chose that option was also discussed. Thank you to Kristin and Mike for their efforts. She is also serving on the membership committee at the national level working to handle any issues that come up and deciding if there are any changes that need to be made regarding membership.

Keith also mentioned that overall, SRM had lost some members when switching over to Allen Press, but most have renewed and there are fewer problems than there were last year.

Newsletter: Kristin Miller reported that she has completed and gotten out one newsletter so far. There will be another one in November after the Nebraska Section meeting. There will continue to be just 2 newsletters per year with other information that does not fit the newsletter schedule to be sent out by e-mail. She currently mails out 12 copies, but would like to e-mail these if possible in the future. She continues to encourage students and members to submit articles or updates about their projects to be included in the newsletter. Allen Press has offered to provide the service of sending out mass e-mails to the membership, but they would continue to come from Kristin and responses

would be sent to Kristin. She has not used this service yet, but plans to in the future. Three businesses pay advertising fees and are included in the newsletter, but should also be included on the website. Thank you to Kristin for continuing the newsletter publication!

Producer Affiliations: Scott Cotton reported. He has been working with and is affiliated with several other groups such as NGLC, Nebraska Cattlemen, and Independent Cattlemen of Nebraska (ICON). He discussed the summer tour held on June 19th, 2012 sponsored by SRM and NGLC. Approximately 230 people attended and he has received many positive comments regarding the tour. It is a great way to get landowners engaged and discussion was held as to if we would again be involved in organizing a summer tour next year. It requires a great amount of planning, coordination, and availability of tour sites. Discussion was held about ideas that Scott could take back to the NGLC meeting as possible ideas for another tour as everyone has expressed interest in doing so. If you have any ideas for next year please bring them forward to Scott.

Historian: Jeff Nichols submitted a report. The Nebraska Section SRM 60 Year History 1952-2012 publication has been updated. Finishing out the year at the business meeting in Ogallala the publication is ready to be loaded to the section's website. The Section website will be the sole source of this publication going forward unless there is a demand for printed hard copies by the membership. It was last printed in 2008 or 2009. He will file a written report for the meeting and continue to collect and file the committee reports. He also continues to submit articles for the newsletter titled, "Do You Know What Happened in the Nebraska Section..." He welcomes any ideas or suggestions for improving this section of the newsletter, and if anyone is interested in working with the Historical affairs of the Section to please contact him.

Investments: Walt Schacht submitted a report. There are currently 3 CDs totaling \$37,514.24. The total of the two savings accounts is \$8090.13. The total in investments is \$45604.37. The scholarships are funded out of these accounts.

Range Short Course: Walt Schacht and Chuck Butterfield discussed the Nebraska Range Short Course. This course has been organized by Chuck Butterfield and Walt Schacht and is a joint project between the Chadron State College, UNL, and Nebraska Section SRM. There was not great attendance this year and they just broke-even. Some of the focus or support for the program has been lost and we need to increase support from the Nebraska Section SRM. Ideas for increasing participation and possibly changing timing of the course were discussed. The idea of also making it a summer training session was also discussed. In 2012 it was at the same time as the NGLC/SRM summer tour. We need ideas for getting greater attendance, particularly by producers. The course can also be taken for college credit. There are also scholarships available to attend the Range Short Course. They may change the program slightly to focus on drought and fire recovery next year.

Information and Education: Nadine Bishop submitted a report. The SRM display has been updated and can be altered for a specific event. These updates were greatly needed and it has been a great improvement. Thank you to everyone who has sent photos and information, please continue to do so. She continues to develop an e-mail listing of the local and regional papers and publications covering Nebraska for use in sending out press releases. However this can be a challenge as many of these contacts are constantly changing. Please send any even in at least a week before the event as they need time to get them put in their publications. Many really like the news releases we send to them and have been great about getting them included in their publications. She reminds all members that if they have any local tours, workshops, or other range activities that she would be glad

to help publicize the event. Nadine is also now the State Range Management Specialist for the NRCS, congratulations on this position.

Walt Schacht also mentioned that there are currently three Range and Forage faculty positions approved by the University System: Range Ecologist based in Lincoln opened by the retirement of James Stubbendieck, Panhandle Range Ecologist, and Forage and Beef Cattle Production Systems.

Student Activities:

President of the UNL Range Club, Chelsea Luthy presented UNL's student activities. Thank you to all who donated to the club during the 2011 NE SRM meeting in Sidney through the Crazy Auction, it is one of the biggest fund raisers members to attend the National SRM Meeting. Other fundraising activities include selling coupons at Younkers or working on range and forage research projects. The club has become active in managing the restored prairie at UNL's Prairie Pines northeast of Lincoln. Eight undergraduate and eight graduate students attended the SRM Annual Meeting in Spokane Washington. The Range Management Exam team placed 11th and team member Joe Schumacher finished 9th. Club member Jeanna Jenkins was also elected the 2012/2013 Reporter for the International Student Conclave.

Vice-President of the Chadron Ag Club Katie Whalen presented Chadron State College student activities. Some activities included hosting a Street Dance with the "Night of Country Swing Dance", and Goat Roping for Scholastic Day. For Homecoming they decorated a bed sheet, and a building on campus. They also had fish races and host a Round Robin/Livestock Judging contest. They had a float in the Homecoming parade. They hosted many fundraisers such as "Kiss the Goat". At the National SRM Meeting in Spokane they participated in URME, Plant ID, and Range Cup competitions. They placed 2nd and 3rd in Rangeland Cup and 2 students place well in Extemporaneous Speaking. One student was also elected as the Secretary for the Student Conclave. Students also took a trip to the Iditarod Dog Race in Alaska; it was an 8 day trip with Dr. Chuck Butterfield. Thank you to all those who donated through the Crazy Auction last year in Sidney.

Nominations and Elections: Dave Cook reported that we had two excellent candidates that agreed to run for the council position this year. Candidates this year were Shelly Taylor and Karla Jenkins. Electronic balloting was used again this year and worked well. Twelve paper ballots were also sent out. Participation in voting has increased from 2011. It was a very close election. Karla Jenkins will be the new council member.

Cindy Tusler is currently enlisted in the Army Reserve and will likely be deployed to Afghanistan during 2013 to serve as a member of the National Guard's Ag Development Team #4. She will serve as a Rangeland Management Specialist, with the primary mission of training the Afghani extension educators. Due to her deployment Bob Broweleit and Cindy will switch positions on the council and planning efforts on the 2013 Nebraska Section meeting. Bob Broweleit will plan for the 2013 meeting and Cindy will plan the 2014 meeting. Thank you to Cindy for your service and we look forward to your safe return and hearing about your experiences.

Curtis Talbot opened nominations for the president elect position. Bob Broweleit was elected as the new president elect.

President's Message

Curtis Talbot presented. It has been a great experience and honor to serve as president. He encouraged others to answer the call and accepted nominations. It has been a great year and Jon will do a wonderful job as President.

New Business:

Jon brought up the change that there will no longer be on-the-spot hiring done by the federal government at the SRM Annual meeting. The NRCS Human Resources personnel would like to visit students or host a program on how to get jobs with the Federal government. They are available in Lincoln to meet with UNL students in-person, but may be able to correspond with Chadron via other routes. Jon and Curtis will be contacting the advisors to set-up possible times and correspondence.

Jon Soper discussed the possibility of developing a NE Section SRM Facebook page. The parent society and Range Camp both have a Facebook page. Jon would like to develop one to reach out to the younger generations who use Facebook to correspond and get information. Jon has agreed to take on this large task to try and get younger generations involved and informed about SRM.

He also thanks Mike Croxen for the past year as Past-President as he will be moving off the council, and Curtis Talbot for his past year as President.

Motion to adjourn was made by Laura Snell and seconded by Walt Schacht.

Meeting adjourned at 9:38 am MT.

Respectively submitted,

Angie Petersen
Secretary/Treasurer