



**Nebraska Section SRM Council Meeting
October 18, 2017
Chadron, NE**

Jeff Nichols called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. MT at the Chadron State College Student Center in Chadron, NE.

Minutes: Minutes from the previous annual meeting was distributed and reviewed. The minutes were reviewed and approved.

Treasurer's Report: The balances of the two checking accounts and three CDs as of October 17th, 2017 were as follows: \$5567.29 for the SRM account, \$8826.34 for the Range Judging account, \$6957.48 for the Nebraska Section CD, \$2617.51 for the HSYF fund, and \$6424.21 for the NE State Range Judging CD. The NE Section CD and the Range Judging CD will mature in July 2018. In the past we have simply rolled these CDs over to continue to gain interest, checking to see if we can get a better interest rate if possible, even though interest rates have been really low. The William Wester HSYF Fund will mature in December 2018 as well.

Committee Reports:

Annual Meeting:

Anthony Perlinski welcomed everyone to the meeting. There will be presentations on unmanned aerial surveying and low-stress livestock handling. The crazy auction and banquet will be held at the Winery.

Awards: A report was offered by Karla Jenkins. We are glad to have both nominations filled and grateful for deserving people to be recognized. They will be presented tonight at the banquet. Please continue to keep people in mind for future years that you may want to nominate.

Envirothon: Nadine Bishop presented the committee report. They are not sure yet where next year's contest will be, but possibly Central Nebraska. The 2017 regional competition was held on April 26th in the Wildcat Hills. Concordia High School placed first in the state Envirothon for the 5th straight year. An on-line Envirothon Study Guide is made available for students. Plans are to update the study guide before the 2018 tests are developed. The NFC Special Topic for 2018 is: Rangeland Management, Wide Open Spaces for All, and the North American Competition will be in Idaho

Fundraising: Please think of new ideas for fundraising. Possibly think of volunteering activities.

Historian: Jeff presented a report. The Nebraska Section SRM 65 Year History 1952-2017 publication has been updated. The publication should be ready for the Section's website after the business meeting in Chadron. The Section website will be the sole source of this publication going forward unless there is a demand for printed copies by the membership. If there is anyone with an interest in working with the Historical aspects of the Section, please let Jeff know.

Information and Education: Nadine Bishop presented a report. Currently the email database for newspapers and other media is 144 different publications. News releases include 2017 Range Youth Camp, 2017 State Range Judging results, the 2017 Old West Regional Range Judging results, and the 2017 Annual Meeting.

She is looking to redo the display and is looking for photos, especially from Range Judging. She has an electronic template that can be easily edited and changed depending on the audience. She would like to develop a Section photo library which includes all of the Section activities. If you have any photos please submit them to her at nadine.bishop@ne.unda.gov.

Investments: Walter Schacht reported on our investments. We currently have 3 CDs for a total of \$37514.24. We also have savings accounts for a total of \$5562.34. We use interest from these accounts to fund one of the scholarships. An anonymous donor provides for our second scholarship. Our CDs do not currently make enough interest to cover the scholarship costs. We may need to discuss other ways to fund the scholarship if we wish to continue giving out both scholarships.

If anyone would like to take over as chair or provide advice on increasing our investments, please feel free to contact Walt.

Membership: Lance Schutte reported for the membership committee. The Nebraska Section currently has 86 current members, the highest in 9 months. There are currently 20 members who have let their membership lapse.

There were some issues with Allen Press regarding memberships and members indicating Nebraska as their primary section membership. We believe this issue has been resolved.

Since memberships renew in January now, many memberships will expire at the end of the year. He encourages members to renew memberships early to avoid possible lapses and avoid financial strain with the Holiday season. Student members are always the most difficult members to retain, please encourage them to consider Apprentice memberships after graduation.

Nominations: Bob Broweleit reported for the nominations committee. Jack Arterburn will be nominated to the Advisory Council. Bob is always seeking individuals willing to serve on the board. If anyone is interested in serving in these leadership positions, or have skills, passion and values that they wish to help in any way, please visit Bob about positions or responsibilities that you be willing to be a part of.

Producer Affairs: Sheila Luoma presented a report. There are several activities in conjunction with the NGLC. There are upcoming tours to Plum Thicket Farms in Gordon, NE.

Public Affairs: Vacant

Range Judging: Kristin Dickinson, Range Judging Committee Chair presented a report. This year was the 63rd year of range judging in Nebraska. This year there were 1234 participants though Area Contests, and had the largest contest ever held, with 536 participants in the State Contest held in Keith County. Nebraska hosted the Old West Regional Contest this year as well

with 180 participants from 16 schools. A huge thank you goes out to the State Committee and all of the local contest committees for putting together some outstanding contests!

Formal invitations to host a contest in 2018 will be sent out within the next couple of weeks. The proposals for 2019 will also be sent out to potential local committee members. They hope to have contest dates set by March so schools can get it on their calendars.

The committee has worked hard to prepare a major update to the Range Judging Handbook which has finally been published. The update transitions from the range site concept to Ecological Site Descriptions. The transition to the new handbook has gone very well. Minor updates will continue to happen on an annual basis, with most of the changes being to the tables used in completing similarity index.

This year they also implemented a change to how the teams were comprised for the contests. This change was implemented at the request of the instructors. Teams are now not designated prior to the contest but are made up of the top 4 scores. This has eliminated changes to teams the morning of the contest and registration goes much smoother.

Thank you to Nadine and Jess working on Handbook changes. Also Daryl Cisney has been involved since 1985 and has turned in his resignation. Thank you to him for all of his years of service. Also thank you to the State Range Judging Committee for paying for half of the insurance premiums. Thank you to all those who continue to assist in one way or another to help educate youth in Nebraska about our rangeland resources!

Range Research: Vacant

Range Tour: Vacant

Range Camp: Range Camp was held June 5-9th this year at the Nebraska State 4-H Camp at Halsey. It was the 54th year for Range Camp.

Outreach was greatly increased this year, which included emails about Range Camp to all high school agricultural education and science instructors in the State of Nebraska, all NRCS offices, all UNL Extension Service offices, and all NRD offices. Emails were also sent to NE Game and Parks employees, The Nature Conservancy Nebraska employees, and the GCLC email list. News releases were e-mailed to nearly all Nebraska newspapers announcing the Camp. We also provided outreach through social media. We continue to have information on the Nebraska Section SRM website thanks to Dorrene updating the site with the latest information that we e-mail to her. A Facebook page has been maintained to promote Range Camp as well.

Thirty high school students from across the state attended this year's camp. This year attendance was down 35% from last year, but only 7% down from the year before. We would like to ask Nebraska SRM members to play more of an active role in recruiting students. There are a few members that do an excellent job, but we would like to encourage others to join in the office.

The students attending camp are divided into "Ranch Crews" which are sponsored by Nebraska ranches. Each Crew elects a "Wrangler" to serve as a peer leader, and they compete with each Crew for Top Crew Honors and recreational events.

Funds were drastically increased and received from ranch sponsors this year. This year we received \$3100 from ranch sponsors. They did this by creating a new sponsorship form that encourages ranches to sponsor at different levels and we mailed out the sponsorship request to many more ranches. We would like NE SRM members to help seek ranch sponsorship for next year by either sending the form directly to ranches or by sending contact information to Shelly or Sara. Thank you to all the ranches for their support!

This year's winning ranch crew was T. Tecker Ranch Inc. The Crew Boss or team leader was Lisa McMillian. The Sandhills Task Force and the NGLC continue to be additional sponsors of our Camp through funds provided by the Nebraska Environmental Trust and the National Fish and

Wildlife Foundation. We greatly appreciate this continued support. We need to continue to look for additional sponsorship to keep registration costs down. There were also a couple of grants received this year. We did not use all of the funds this year, and the Sandhills Task Force Grants are multi-year grants, so the funds will be available to use next year.

Campers receive a number of publications. Ten adult volunteers spent the entire week at the camp with 17 other professionals supporting Range Camp by leading tours and providing presentations on range-related information. 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. Thank you to everyone who helps make Range Camp possible.

Thank you to Sara Winslow and Shelly Kelly for serving as Co-directors for the camp. Campers go home with numerous publications and educational material.

Registration rates dropped to \$200.00. Due to the increased sponsorship this year, students paid \$100.00 or less for their registration. Registration was taken fully online for the first year. We hope to continue to improve the online registration process. Students are responsible for contacting their NRDs or other sponsoring agencies for sponsorship.

The 2018 camp is scheduled for June 11-14. Thank you to all individuals, ranches, and organizations who continue to provide support and make Range Camp possible. Additional information on Range Camp is available by contacting Shelly or Sara and information will be posted on the web at www.nesrm.org.

HSYF: The Nebraska Section has traditionally annually sponsored delegates to the High School Youth Forum at the National Society meetings. A huge thank you goes out to an Anonymous Donor who continues to sponsor HSYF expenses and make this trip to the Annual Meeting possible. Shelly and Sara are looking for an individual to take over responsibilities of HSYF. This would include planning their travel and chaperoning them to the meeting. This is becoming more and more of an issue that needs to be addressed as we are limited on the number of people who are allowed to or can chaperone these individuals. We will have two presenters for tomorrow's meeting competing to attend present at the National Meeting. Kasey VanWinkle was elected at the 2018 High School Youth Forum President and will therefore be the other student sponsored to attend.

Scholarship: Two \$1000.00 scholarships will be awarded at the banquet.

Old Business:

Jeff Nichols received the PIE Grant to cover some of the costs of last year's meeting in Gothenburg. This really helped to increase the funds received from the meeting.

Finding an individual to take over HSYF activities was discussed as well as covering rising costs of HSYF attendance.

New Business:

The cost of a Board Member attending the Section meetings was discussed. Board Members are charging large costs to the Sections to attend their meetings. Sections cannot always afford to cover these costs. A resolution was put forth to limit the amount of money charged to the Sections for travel. There should be a discussion at the Advisory Council to discuss this issue. It

is important to have the Board attend the Section Meetings, but their job descriptions need to be reviewed and how much can be charged to the Sections for travel expense needs to be reviewed.

Our newly elected council member is Jack Arterburn. Mitch Stephenson is president elect. Our new president is Anthony Perlinski, thank you for planning the meeting. Thank you to Jeff Nichols for his service this past year!

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:15.

Respectively submitted,

Angie Petersen
Secretary-Treasurer