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Nebraska Section Society for Range Management Newsletter



Message from the President by Ben Beckman

Members of the Nebraska Section Society of Range Management,

With the arrival of autumn's crisp and colorful days, we hosted our annual fall meeting, a cornerstone event in our calendar. I enjoyed seeing you all in Central City this week.

This year's annual fall meeting was an enriching and informative experience for all with updates on membership activities, some wonderful presenters sharing updates on the latest innovations in range management, and the whole event capped off by a great tour on the final morning.

Whether you are a seasoned professional or a student just starting

your journey in this field, there was something for everyone. While I always look forward to expanding my knowledge of rangelands at our meeting, an even more important role is that of an engaged society member.

The success of our annual meeting and our section as a whole depends on the active participation of our members. This is the perfect occasion to get involved through a committee or leadership role, and do your part to make sure Nebraska SRM is around for years to come. Our organization thrives on member-driven efforts, and to remain valuable and relevant to you, our members, we rely on your active participation. If you have any

suggestions, ideas, or would like to contribute in any way, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or any member of the executive committee. Your input is highly valued.

Together, we can continue to advance the science and practice of range management in Nebraska, shaping the future of our profession.

Thank you for your continued support of the Nebraska Section Society of Range Management. Because of you, this annual fall meeting was a resounding success.

Ben

Historian's Report by Jeff Nichols

DO YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED IN THE NEBRASKA SECTION.....

Five Years Ago (2018)

The Nebraska Section officers were: Anthony Perlinski, President; Jeff Nichols, Past President; Mitch Stephenson, President Elect; Angie Petersen, Secretary-Treasurer; Laura Rubeck and Amanda Hefner, Newsletter Editors; Lance Schutte and Jack Arterburn were Council members.

There was a concerted "grassroots" effort among the NE Section members to recruit and

renew members to the Section.

Efforts were successful with a nearly 34% increase in membership from the previous year. There were 107 current members with 20 additional in a lapsed status.

Planning was underway for the NE Section meeting to be held in North Platte. The meeting was planned by President Elect Mitch Stephenson with the theme, "Managing Rangelands for Livestock, Wildlife and Other Ecosystem Services".

The state Range Judging Contest was held in Chase County with

488 participants. Olivia Leising of Arapahoe was the top senior individual, and Sheridan Wilson of Arthur was the top junior individual. The top senior team was from West Holt and the top junior team was from Imperial.

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2023 State Range Judging Contest Held in Gage County by Laura Rubeck, President Elect

Teams from West Holt take top honors in both the Senior and Junior Division Lily Vogel, West Holt and Hayes Plugge, Burwell take top individual honors.

Beatrice, Neb., September 26, 2023, ~ Four hundred and three students and twenty-five teachers from 47 schools from across Nebraska visited Gage County this fall to test their knowledge of rangeland management during the 68th Annual Nebraska State Range Judging Contest.

Each fall, students enrolled in agriculture or natural resources classes compete for top honors in range judging contests. Contestants compete as individuals and as teams in either the Junior or Senior Division. Six area contests are held in mid to late September in addition to the State contest. The contests are sponsored by the Nebraska Section Society for Range Management. Co-sponsors include Nebraska Extension, Natural Resources Districts (NRD), and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Volunteers from these and other natural resource agencies and groups assist local committees with organizing and conducting the contests.

Range Judging Contests test the participants' skills and knowledge of plant identification, ecological site identification and composition, rangeland conservation and grazing management. While studying for range judging competitions, students learn about one of Ne-

braska's major land uses. Rangelands cover nearly 50% of Nebraska and approximately 60% of the United States. Even if these young contest participants do not pursue a career in rangeland or natural resource management, they will gain an understanding of a major natural resource that will be remembered throughout their lifetimes.

The Junior Division included 216 individuals and 67 teams. Hayes Plugge from Burwell took first place individual honors in the Junior Division. Marek Dvorak, West Holt, placed second; Hayden Nelson, Sargent, placed third; and Reese Smith, Wheeler Central, placed fourth. Members of the first-place junior team from West Holt are Marek Dvorak, London Konrad, Madalyn Pistulka, and Cale Deseire. Members of the second-place junior team from Burwell are Hayes Plugge, Kolton Thoene, Ericka Larsen, and Ora Chafin. Members of the third-place junior team from Sargent are Hayden Nelson, LoReena Schauda, Cazen Coffman, and Carsen Vincent. Members of the fourth-place junior team from Boyd County are Mazee Johnson, Kayden Kayl, Ethan Zeisler, and Jaylee Lechtenberg.

The Senior Division included 187 individuals and 59 teams. Lily Vogel from West Holt High School took first place individual honors in the Senior Division. Colter Wright, Burwell, placed second; Carter Gotschall,

West Holt, placed third; and Abby Hirschman, St. Paul; placed fourth. Members of the first-place senior team from West Holt are Lily Vogel, Carter Gotschall, Sidney Burkinshaw, and Mason Crumrine. Members of the second place Burwell team are Colter Wright, Dillon Simpson, Cale Buss, and Cody Burson. The third place St. Paul team includes Abby Hirschman, Isaac Hagen, Gracie Ackles, and Jack Thede. Members of the fourth-place senior team from West Holt are Keaton Dowse, Grant Ottun, Tallin Schauda, and Melissa Slagle.

This year saw a general increase in student participation compared to last. The senior division marked an uptick with 19 more individuals and 17 more teams since 2022. Similarly, the junior division expanded since last September with an additional seven students and 14 teams. Overall, a new record high was set in terms of total area contest participation across state with 1450 students participating in one of the six, field-testing locations.

Participation per area testing basis and led to a new record high of 1450 for contest participation by area. Twenty-five adults also participated in the contest. Philip Simpson, Ag-Ed instructor from Burwell High School placed first in the adult competition.

Additional contest information is available on the Nebraska Section, SRM Website, <http://www.nesrm.org/RangeJudging.html>.

Range Plant ID Pop Quiz

Can you identify this Nebraska range plant?

Bonus points for scientific name, life span, origin, and growth form!

Answers on page 3.



Historian's Report *continued from page 1*

Ten Years Ago (2013)

The Nebraska Section officers were: Jon Soper, President; Cutis Talbot, Past President; Bob Broweleit, President Elect; Angie Petersen, Secretary/Treasurer; Kristin Dickenson (Miller), Newsletter Editor; Cindy Tusler and Karla Jenkins were Council Members.

On August 24, 2013, forty past participants in the Nebraska Range Youth Camp gathered to celebrate 50 successful years of the youth camp. Reunion participants gathered at the Hamilton ranch north of Thedford, who have been a cornerstone of the camp over the years. They hosted a tour of the ranch and participants tested their skills at plant identification through a mini plant contest organized by Jess Milby. Participants then traveled to the 4-H camp at near Halsey, where speakers from every decade shared their memories of the camp over the years. Speakers included: Sid Salzman, Ken Noonan, Pat Reece, Pat Peterson, Mary Reece and Shelly Kelly (Taylor). Nadine Bishop put together several displays showing memories. Mark Bishop cooked the meat for the barbeque and the crowd was presented with the special treat of Rosalee Hamilton playing the piano. A great time was had by all who celebrated this NE Section SRM success story.

Twenty Years Ago (2003)

The Nebraska Section officers were: Teri Edeal, President; Walt Schacht, Past President; Scott Willet, President Elect; Bob Sprentall, Secretary/Treasurer; Sherry Connor, Newsletter Editor; Al Steuter and Chuck Butterfield were Council members.

Dr. Jim O'Rourke was elected President of the Board of Directors for the International Rangeland Congress. The election took place in Durbin, South Africa. His term will be five years and conclude with a convention in the Inner Mongolia region of China in 2008.

The 40th annual Range Youth Camp sponsored by the NE Section was held at the 4-H Camp near Halsey June 16 - 20th. The overall Top Camper was Brady McCumber from Adkinson, Nebraska. The Second Place Camper and Top First Year Camper was Robert Froning of Sparks, Nebraska. The runner up First Year Camper was Angela Wendell from Dickens, Nebraska.

Thirty Years Ago (1993)

The Nebraska Section Officers were: Sheila Valasek (Luoma), President; James O'Rourke, President Elect; Catherine Mills, Past President; Daryl Cisney, Secretary Treasurer; Mary Schrader, Newsletter Editor; Bill Carhart and John Gross were Council Members.

The NE Section SRM was asked to assist in developing the educational components of a proposed sandhills park situated on a 15-acre site in Northern Loup County along US Hwy 183, or about 20 miles north of Taylor, very close to the former townsite of Harrop.

The parent society of SRM held a summer meeting at Springfield, Missouri, July 9-12 to discuss the role of forages and sustainable livestock agriculture. There were approximately 175 members in attendance.

Pat Reece, former UNL Range and Forage Specialist at the PREC was presented the 1993 Livestock Service Award by Walnut Grove.

The NE branch of the Center for Holistic Resource Management (HRM) held a starter course at Ogallala 9/29- 10/1/1993. The instructors were Annette and Claude Smith of Edgemont, SD.

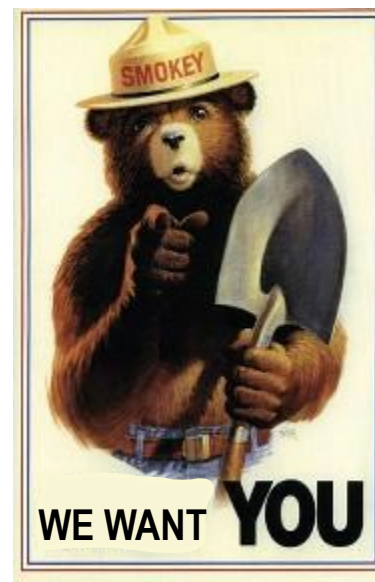
Forty Years Ago (1983)

The Nebraska Section officers were: Mick Helberg, President; Jim Stubbendieck, Past President; Pat Reece, President Elect; Lowell Moser, Secretary- Treasurer; Steve Waller, Newsletter Editor; Nadine Bishop and Brent Lathrop were Council members.

The Four Seasons of Bird Watching



birdandmoon.com



On the Nebraska Section SRM Council Board!

If you are interested in joining the Nebraska SRM Section Council Board, contact
Committee Chairman,
Bob Broweleit,
at (308) 240-0420 or
bentbarc@gmail.com.

Answers, Pop Quiz Page 2: Sandhill
amaranth, *Amaranthus arenicola*,
Annual, Native, Forb