



Nebraska Section SRM Council Meeting
October 7th, 2025
University of Nebraska East Campus Student Union
Garden Room

Kyle Schumacher called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM CST.

Cheryl Dunn, Teyvyn Pieper, Ben Beckman, Kyle Schumacher, Mary Reece, Bob Broweleit, Daryl Cisney, Jacob Harvey, Mitch Stephenson, Sheila Luoma, Chuck Butterfield and Angie Petersen were present. Emma Barnett attended virtually.

Minutes from the June meeting were sent prior to the meeting via email for review. Motion to approve the minutes from the June council meeting was made by Bob Broweleit and seconded by Cheryl Dunn. Motion approved. The minutes of the October 2023 Annual Meeting will be reviewed and approved at tomorrow's meeting as well as the treasurer's report.

Treasurer's Report: The balances of the two checking accounts and four CDs as of October 17th, 2025 were as follows: \$9502.01 for the SRM account, \$16279.45 for the Range Judging account, \$3187.73 for the William Wester HSYF fund, \$7076.63 for the NE State Range Judging CD, and the \$9924.45 for the other Range Judging CD.

The William Wester HSYF Fund CD matured on 6/18/25, it was renewed to a 7 month CD, at a 3.58% interest rate, with a maturity date of 1/23/26. Both the NE State Range Judging CD and the Range Judging CD matured on 9/21/25, it was renewed to 7 month CDs, at a 3.58% interest rate, with a maturity date of 4/30/26.

Our insurance was paid in May. It was again \$1240.00 total, the same as last year, which is then split between the Section and Range Judging as it covers all of our activities. We may need to consider adding abuse and sexual molestation liability coverage. Prior to Range Camp there was a request from Chadron State College that this coverage is a requirement for their Facility Rental Agreement. After speaking with Chadron and our local insurance agent, it is not excluded in our general liability coverage through EMC, but our local agent said that many entities do add it on specifically. They also have entities such as ours add coverage for participants that attend our activities. So they will also price this out. They will see if we can add it on to our existing coverage or if we need to fill out new policy paperwork. I will bring all of that information forward at a future date once I have all of the information. We currently hold two policies, one through United States Liability Insurance Company (USLI) is a Directors and Officers Liability Coverage Policy, and one through EMC Insurance is a Commercial General Liability Policy.

There was a bill sent from Kristin Dickinson for \$828.18 from Rixstine Recognition for Range Judging ribbons on 10/2/25. They need a deposit, but also need to add the final shipping expenses. **So that amount will be paid shortly, with shipping added, but is currently not figured into the accounting.**

We currently have \$1000.00 from the anonymous donor and \$265.50 from the UNL and CSC Range Clubs that are all for scholarship funds. So that money may still need to be transferred to the scholarship investment fund which would come out of the checking account. Again, thank you to our anonymous donor who helps cover HSYF expenses.

The Nebraska Section CD was closed on 3/25/25. The final amount of \$7500.54 was deposited into the checking account and was used to pay the \$5000.00 committed to IYRP in September, so that increase was evident in June and the drop is reflected in the current amount.

We received the \$2000.00 from the previously discussed Range Camp committed funds for HSYF. We also received the HSYF reimbursement in the amount of \$1006.67.

In October we paid Dorrene BrownButterfield, \$497.77 for our online web expenses. We pay approximately \$600.00 to \$650.00 a year in online web expenses. It is charged by services provided for some things so it is not an exact amount every year. We greatly appreciate her services!

The decrease from March to June in the Range Judging Account was due to the insurance payment and a \$500.00 travel scholarship to Burwell Public Schools for travel to Oklahoma City for National Range Judging. Range Judging Cards were paid for from UNL Print and Copy Services for a total of \$1284.61, so that is the decrease from June to October. I received some checks from Kristi Kemp for Range Judging Contests on Friday. I have not had time to record or make any deposits, so none of that is reflected in the current totals.

If you have any questions, please let me know!

Officer's Report: Chuck Butterfield reported on behalf of the Board of Directors. The upcoming National Meeting in Monterey California is coming up. There were concerns that it may be an expensive meeting to attend for people. Registration is not open yet. There are great facilities and it is a short walk to the beach and aquarium. If flying, you may want to purchase ticket soon as it is the same weekend as the Super Bowl which will be hosted nearby. Federal partners are down this year. We are an advocacy group for our profession so we have an opportunity to encourage comment on certain issues. The transfer of our membership from Allen Press has not gone smoothly. An administrative committee is currently working on a privacy policy regarding membership information. They are making an effort to smooth out the membership process and be able to give out membership reports to the Sections, but also must be careful about what information is begin given out.

The website is undergoing work and updates. There will be a data portal for each Section and Committee to transfer information. We are only as good as the information, use, and what is put out there to the public.

IYRP- Nebraska has been exemplary for how it has handled this event. Keep up the great work!

Student activities – We are one of the few Sections that show strong support for High School, Student Enclave and Young Professionals. Great job for showing support of all levels. Letters were sent out to college and university professionals to be a part of committees and needing people to get involved. The Administrative Committee must be appointed, but others can show up and be involved in the meetings.

They are working on the Certifications offered through SRM, needing more people to get certified and also making sure the certifications are worth something to professionals.

He will be off the Board in February, please vote for a new candidate and give input moving forward.

A discussion regarding membership and the possibilities of offering just Section membership, or regional rather than national membership was brought up.

Thank you to Cheryl for planning this joint meeting and to Kyle for finding ways for people to get here and attend with the many current challenges. He is excited for the meeting and opportunity to attend our meeting. It is great to share priorities, and people who are working with the same resources, and learn new things and topics.

Committee Reports:

Newsletter:

Emma Barnett attended virtually. The mailing list has not been updated. Normally it is done in February, but due to issues with the parent society this has not happened as planned. Thank you to Emma for all of her efforts and work on the newsletter!

Annual Meeting Committee:

Cheryl Dunn reported regarding the annual meeting. She has been able to get good sponsors to support the meeting so they will not lose money to host the meeting. It has been great to work with the Game and Parks. They have a great group of speakers lined up on many topics including soils, grazing, and land management. Over 200 people have registered to attend with 110 signed up to go on the field trip.

Awards:

Two awards will be given out tonight at the banquet.

Envirothon:

Wyatt Kirwan submitted a committee report.

In 2025 the special topic was “Roots and Resiliency: Fostering Forest Stewardship in a Canopy of Change”. This year 70 teams competed in seven regional contests, and 14 teams qualified to participate in the state contest. The 33rd Annual Nebraska State Envirothon was held on April 30th at Chalco Hills Recreation Area in Omaha, NE. First Place went to Dawson County Envirothon Club, Second Place went to Concordia Lutheran High School (Omaha), and Third Place went to Tri-County Public Schools. Additional Prizes were awarded to the top teams in each testing category:

- Aquatics, Oral Presentation, Policy, Range, and Soils:
Dawson County Envirothon Club
- Forestry:
Tri-County Public Schools
- Wildlife (Tie):
Dawson County Envirothon Club & St. Paul High School

A special thank you to Nicole Strand and Devin Heusinkvelt from Nebraska NRCS for helping out with the Range Topic at State Envirothon! They made it so much easier to setup and administer the Range Topic Test portion of the State Envirothon!

The International Envirothon Competition is conducted by an organization called the National Conservation Foundation (NCF). In 2025, NCF-Envirothon hosted more than 50 teams from the United States, Canada, and China. The top three receive a total of \$30,000 between them, as well as scholarships, through the sponsorship of Smithfield Foods. The fourth through tenth place teams also receive scholarships awarded through donations from NCF and the previous year’s host. The 2025 NCF-Envirothon was held at Mount Royal University in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Nebraska was represented by the Dawson County Envirothon Club.

The Nebraska Section-SRM Envirothon Committee has the responsibility to develop the regional and state range contest questions, setting up the hands-on questions within the range portion of the state contest, and serving as the range topic contest official. The Committee is also responsible for developing and maintaining range topic study guides and conducting range topic trainings for Envirothon instructors and team participants. If you would like to view the study guides, visit <https://www.nrdnet.org/nebraska-envirothon>.

Each year in January an instructor training is held and Envirothon Field Days are held in the Fall. Envirothon Field Days were held to provide students with an opportunity to brush up on the Envirothon Study Areas while outdoors and with guest instructors. The goal is to provide students (and teachers) hands-on training with resource professionals (state and federal) in the areas of Forestry, Range, Soils, and Wildlife before the Envirothon Regional competitions in February. Students rotate through the 4 training sessions and completed a practice quiz during each session. For more information on Envirothon, please visit the website at: <https://www.nrdnet.org/nebraska-envirothon>.

Fundraising:

Vacant position. There was a brief discussion of the possibility of coming this position with the investment committee.

Historian:

Jeff Nichols provided a report. Jeff has occupied the position of committee chair for the Historian for over 25 years. With his retirement he requests to pass on this role to another interesting individual. Ben Beckman had expressed interest in this position, but they have not been able to connect. The duties of the Historian committee are outlined in the NE Section By-Laws as posted on the NE Section website. The hard copy records of committee reports and meeting minutes under my tenure reside in the NRCS office at North Platte with Mary Reece. I have a flash drive containing all previous “Did you know what happened...” newsletter articles. These would be tremendously helpful for future articles. There are older archives that reside somewhere at UNL in Lincoln through a chain of individuals such as Steve Waller, Walt Schacht, then maybe to the Center?

There was also a brief discussion on ways to digitize all of the records/data and how to back up all of the data and history.

Information and Education:

Laura Rubeck has stepped down from this position, so it is currently vacant.

Investments:

Kyle Schumacher provided a report. In April of 2024, investments were moved from traditional CD investments to brokerage accounts with Northwestern Mutual. The first initial transfer for these accounts was from the First Interstate Bank accounts that held the “Jensen” Scholarship Fund. The other initial transfer for these accounts was from the “North Platte” Fund saving account. In May of 2024, the Pinnacle Bank CD known as the “Reece” CD matured and, along with the interest received, was also transferred to Northwestern Mutual. These separate funds were established for separate purposes described below and the separation of these funds has been maintained through the change in investment strategies. The “Jensen” and “Reece” scholarship funds are now combined as the “NESRM Academic Scholarship Fund” and the “North Platte” fund is titled as the “NESRM Youth Programs Fund”. The current balance of

NESRM Academic Scholarship Fund is \$25,942.51. The current balance of the NESRM Youth Programs Fund is \$7190.86. The West Gate Bank (North Platte CD) amount is \$15,009.32. Planned investment strategies include continuing with current investment strategy for both accounts as they have been showing annual growth that is above the amounts requested from these funds over the same time periods. They will also begin to discuss with the membership to consider ways in which the Section might wish to use anticipated distributions from the 2027 Wichita meeting.

Membership:

No report.

Nominations:

Ben Beckman presented the report. Jacob Harvey is the nominee for the 2026 NE SRM Council position. He currently manages UNL's Barta Brothers Ranch in the eastern NE Sandhills. Please bring up any possible nomination for the future.

Producer Affairs:

Sheila Luoma provided a report. Nebraska rancher Homer Buell from Rose, NE, with the Shovel Dot Ranch has been elected chairman of the board of the Sand County Foundation. The Nebraska Grazing Land Coalition Activities for 2024 included several education opportunities. A Grazing School was held in Gordon in combination with the Range Short course, and in September with Jim Gerrish on the McGinn Ranch. A Ranching for Profit course for young adults was held in Burwell, NE, in June. The 2024 Grazing Tour was held on the Cooksley Ranch and the McGinn Ranch with the topic being the Cooksley Complex Wildfire, and had 150 people in attendance. Succession Planning Workshops were held in Ord and Bassett. Two employees assisted with prescribed burn work, and assisted in writing burn plans and organizing over 10,000 acres of burn work in 2024. Upcoming events include Farm and Ranch Succession Workshops in O'Neill on Nov. 12th and Hartington on Nov. 13th. The 9th National Grazing Lands Conference in Tucson, Arizona is scheduled for Dec. 4th-6th. The American Grasslands Tour is scheduled for June 24th-25th, 2025 in Kearney with the National Wildlife Federation.

Public Affairs:

Sheila Luoma provided a report. Some of the Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition Activities for 2025 included:

1. Grazing Schools with Jim Gerrish were held by Anselmo in June and Sidney in September. (42 students)
2. Ranching for Profit-Young Adult School was in Burwell NE in July with thirty-five students attending.
3. Helped organize and sponsor the National Wildlife Federation Grasslands Tour and Conference in Kearney Ne last June.
4. Farm and Ranch Transition events were held to assist families dealing with ranch transition.

Upcoming event include:

- o Webinar on Conflict Resolution Strategies for Ranch Transition October 22, 2025.
- o Ranching for Profit School for Young Adults will be held in August in 2026 in the Nebraska panhandle.

- Sign up for the NGLC mailing list to keep current with activities and opportunities.

Producers are enjoying higher cattle prices although input costs continue to rise.

Range Judging:

Ben Beckman provided a report. This year wrapped up the 71st year of range judging in Nebraska. This year, we reached 1441 participants through Area Contests and at the State Contest that was held in Keya Paha County there were 479 participants. The top senior individual and overall grand champion was Monica Chavez from West Holt, and the top junior individual was Justin Guggenmos from Wheeler Central. The top senior team was from West Holt and had members Monica Chavez, London Conrad, Cale Deseive, and Taylor Walnofer. The top junior team was from West Holt and had members Case Shane, Makenna Mitchell, Nolan Klinger, and Landri Nemetz.

Scholarships will once again be offered to the top 4 teams from the state contest. This scholarship is to be used for travel and registration for National Contest held in Oklahoma City in May. The top 4 teams in 2025 were from the following schools: West Holt (Sr. team), West Holt (Jr. team), West Holt (Sr. team) and Elgin (Sr. team).

The formal invitations to host a contest in 2026 will be sent out by the end of the calendar year. The proposals for 2027 will also be sent out to potential local committee members. We will hope to have contest dates firmed up by March so schools can get this on their activity calendars.

We continue to award medals to the champion individuals and champion teams for all the contests. The larger medal is for state champions and the smaller pin is for area champions. NARD again provided plaques for all the division winners at state.

We have picked up new State Committee members. We welcomed Evan Liable and Amy Timmerman.

It continues to be a great time for educating youth in Nebraska about the rangeland resource! Thank you to all that have assisted in one way or another with a contest or contests or helping schools to prepare for contests.

Area 6 was a huge contest this year and having lots of landowners in the score room has been great to see.

Range Research: Mitch Stephenson reported. There are several students and faculty presenting. They are always interested in feedback on what they should be focusing on for future research. The meeting is a great opportunity for students to speak and get good experience presenting.

Range Tour: Mitch Stephenson reported. The Range Tour and Short Course are every other year. Jerry and Mitch continue to plan along with many others. Nadine Bishop with the NRCS and Tim Griffin have also provided support. They are just in the beginning planning. It has been hosted in Chadron in the past. NGLC has hosted jointly in the past. Previous evaluations and feedback have guided the plans as they try to address current needs. They would like to develop the committee to include more individuals outside of just CSC and UNL. The Nebraska Grazing Conference is hosted in August. Many former committee members have retired. It is

supported by many entities in the past and he is still trying to see what that looks like in the future.

Range Camp/HSYF: Shelly Kelly sent a report. They had another successful year of Range Camp in 2025. It was our second year hosting at Chadron State College. A big thanks goes to Tony Perlinski for hosting our group and making sure that it was a successful week. We had 23 students attend.

We received great support from ranches, companies, and organizations that sponsored Range Camp. They included Natural Resources Conservation Service, University of Nebraska – Lincoln, Chadron State College, Hansen 77 Ranch, Enfield Ranch, Diamond Bar Ranch, Canyon Rim Ranch, Reed Hamilton Ranch, Patrick and Aaron Simonson, Scott and Deborah Beckman, Ridder Hereford Ranch, Adams Land and Cattle, John Maddux, Dailey Angus Ranch, Ballagh Cattle Co, 7-V Ranch, Taylor Quarter Circle T Ranch, Shovel Dot Ranch, Stallbaumer Farms, Farm Credit Services, McMillan Hairpin Ranch, Terry Licking, Adkinson, Inc, Scott and Patti Knobbe LLC, Three Bar Cattle Co., Nielson Ranch Co., TK Angus, Plum Thicket Farms, Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition, and Sandhills Task Force.

We had 8 full-time adults help with Range Camp. These people deserve a lot of recognition for their commitment to making Range Camp successful. They include Tevyn Pieper with Sandhills Task Force, Ryan Benjamin with UNL Extension, Brandon Jelinek with NRCS, Cody Trump with Sandhills Task Force, Matt Zvolanek with NRCS, Karley Dieckmann with University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Rachel Otten with Pheasants Forever, and Shelly Kelly with Sandhills Task Force. Tevyn, Shelly and KyLee Kime with Sandhills Task Force served as Co-Directors. Additional speakers came to visit and present and we are very thankful to them for their help.

Total Range Camp expenses were \$9,158.68. Total income equaled \$7,224.00. The Sandhills Task Force has secured grant funds to cover the difference. Tony secured a grant to also cover some expenses. These figures do not include the \$2,000 Range Camp pay to cover some HSYF expenses.

Many students were interested in High School Youth Forum. Lisa McMillan does a great job with them. As discussed, \$2,000 from Range Camp will go to fund HSYF.

Starting in 2026, Range Camp will rotate between NCTA and CSC.

Thank you to everyone who helps with this amazing event!

Scholarship: Jess Milby stepped down in August. Kyle is serving in the interim. Kyle received 6 applicants, but only 4 were eligible for the scholarship. He will consult with others and review the applicants to select the 2 scholarship winners. The online application needs updating so that it can be completed online.

Student Affairs:

Mary Reece provided a report. Nebraska is known for its student involvement. The last 3 HSYF presidents have been from Nebraska and this says a lot about our program and Range Camp. A huge thank you goes out to our anonymous donor who donates \$1000.00 to help cover the costs

for sending these students. Lisa has been great about encouraging students and helping them get to the meeting. We have 3 students scheduled to present tomorrow. Eli Rogers is the returning president from last year that will attend the National Meeting.

We did not have any CSC students attend the NE annual meeting this year. Scholarships were available to help them with costs to attend. The UNL Range Club will report tomorrow

A huge thank you also goes out to Lisa McMillan who travels with and helps get our students to the meeting and Mary Reece who helps with student registration and arrangements as well!

IYRP – 2026

Bob Broweleit provided a report. Tonight will be the premier of the public service announcement at the film festival. They are working on TV and Radio spots as well. The premier will be the beginning of a media blitz targeted to reach new people. They are also working to target FIFA world cup coming to America in 2026.

Committee Goal: Educate and engage the people of Nebraska concerning the value of rangelands as an economic and natural resource base of Nebraska and the world, ultimately creating an informed population that is involved in policy decision-making.

Strategic Plan Developed:

- Media Campaigns and Public Awareness – Leveraging influential public figures and educational content to amplify the ecological, cultural, and economic value of rangelands through a year-long media strategy.
- Youth and Community Engagement – Designing hands-on learning experiences, school programs, and cross-community initiatives to foster stewardship and understanding of rangelands among the next generation.
- Leveraging Art and Culture – Promoting rangelands through creative projects such as storytelling, art exhibits, and cultural events that celebrate Nebraska’s rich heritage.
- Workshops and Events – Hosting festivals, demonstrations, and educational activities that bring communities together to learn about and celebrate rangelands.

Activities Planned:

Media Campaigns and Public Awareness:

Now retired, Nebraska Volleyball Coach, John Cook appears on video promoting the importance of Nebraska’s grasslands.

Several Public Service Announcements have been produced by Platte Basin Timelapse for media release this fall.

Youth and Community Engagement

2026 Nebraska FFA Convention will feature Nebraska Grasslands as the topic of the state-wide FFA communications contest.

The Nebraska State Department of Tourism will showcase venues that feature Nebraska Grasslands and will give priority to those venues during the application process. More grassland related venues are needed and encouraged to apply at <https://nebraskapassport.com/becomeastop>

Leveraging Art and Culture

Arts for the Soul Event – Planned April 2026 – Lincoln

The IYRP committee has an ongoing fund raising campaign. Current Financial Sponsors include Wayne and Terri Licking, Hoffman Ranch, Seven Pines Ranch, Farm Credit Services of America, Hutchinson and Associates, LLC, NE SRM, and Western Nebraska Bank.

Learn more at: nebraskagrasslands.org/IYRP

Old Business:

There was discussion regarding holding the National Meeting in 2027. They hope to have updates and the logo ready by the 2026 Meeting. It will be held in Wichita, KS, “Our Enduring Grasslands”. It will be cohosted between Kansas, Nebraska, and Oklahoma. They have several individuals looking to shadow the hosts of the 2026 meeting. They are working with other entities so that there are no conflicts or competing for attendees.

Advisory Council Updates – Website concerns are being addressed. There is regional support for attendance to professional meetings. They will work to increase attendance. They need to look through the by-laws, and committees can continue to look through those.

Hopefully the updated website will help with new and lapsed membership. They would like to try to increase the number of counties represented. There are still concerns regarding privacy issues and sharing out the membership lists. They are working on a Privacy Statement.

New Business:

The next council meeting will be hosted by Cheryl Dunn

Motion to adjourn made by Ben Beckman, and seconded by Mitch Stephenson at 5:22.

Respectively submitted,

Angie Petersen