



# Wyoming Section Society for Range Management



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## SRM Newsletter President's Article

I sit here on an almost 100 degree day with soft winds hoping for no fire starts today. Many of our rangelands have turned from green to brown or red and we are all aware of the potential for wildfires this time of year. We will hope for some moisture and lack of ignition sources. I was lucky enough to escape much of this heat and do some range monitoring all the way up into the Cloud Peak Wilderness this last week. It was a great opportunity to learn some new plants and get better acquainted with those folks I am working with this summer.

I mentioned in my last article that I have had the great fortune of bringing on a retired range specialist through the ACES program to help with monitoring this summer. We also have the WDA range contract position that is a young college student going to Northwest College. The three of us packed horses into this high country to complete a variety of long term monitoring including cover and frequency monitoring along with a multitude of photo points. My predecessor set up many of these monitoring sites and it has been a great pleasure to visit these sites with him taking us there and explaining why they were established, what they saw at that site 15 years ago, and what they hoped the positive change would be into the future. To stand on a stream bank in an open meadow and be able to say yes, the desired condition of fewer cut in the stream bank is occurring based on this past photo is quite satisfying. To do it with the past, present and a future range specialist is even more rewarding.

So I encourage you all to visit with HR or leadership within your agency or workplace and discuss options for completing the work load that you may have. The traditional permanent and seasonal workforce is only one way of completing the work that we plan out each year and the situation I found myself in this season is one of the most rewarding yet. I learn from others each and every day and really appreciate the questions that our WDA contract employee is willing to ask. Like what are these bumps in the ground (hummocks) and you have to try and explain it? You really have to understand the environment around you and cause/effect relationships.

If you are looking for leadership opportunities within SRM we will be needing to fill the following positions yet this year. President-Elect is a critical position and we often look to past and current council members to fill this position so if you fit this criteria and are interested please share this with the election committee. We will also be filling the southwest and northeast council positions this fall so if you are located in these areas and interested in serving Wyoming Section SRM I encourage you to also contact the election committee or someone within SRM leadership that you know.

Please bring forward nominations for those deserving folks that you know this year. Additional information on awards can be found at <https://www.wyomingrangelands.org/awards> or by contacting Clay Wood.

We are still trying to finalize Handbook edits and committee structure review. I have a hard time focusing on this important work during the busy field season and am sure that many of you do as well.

Finally I am sure that many of you are wanting to know what is going to happen with our fall Wyoming Section SRM meeting. We have been thinking about this and will have further details to follow soon with some information elsewhere in this newsletter. As most of you have already seen there will not be an annual international meeting in Boise, Idaho this winter but instead there will be virtual sessions held. This should allow many more people the opportunity to learn the latest and greatest in range research and management as travel will not be the restriction it has been in the past. Stay tuned and have a great remainder of your field season.

Sincerely,

Thad Berrett

Wyoming Section SRM President



## 2020 WY-SRM Meeting Is Going Virtual!

Given the COVID-19 pandemic, the WY-SRM leadership recently decided to host the 2020 meeting *virtually*. We had planned to hold the meeting in Douglas and will still highlight this diverse and complex region in the meeting.

With this decision, delivery methods and dates for the fall meeting are being worked out at this time.  
Stay tuned for more to come!

**Do you have ideas for the virtual meeting? If so, email [jscasta@uwyo.edu](mailto:jscasta@uwyo.edu).**

## Wyoming Section Awards Nominations

Please consider nominating someone for one of the Wyoming Section Awards! Here is a brief description of each of the awards that are open for nomination, all nominations can be sent to Awards Chair, Clay Wood at [clay.w.wood@gmail.com](mailto:clay.w.wood@gmail.com). For more detailed information about each of the awards and the nomination/selection process, please see the Awards Committee Handbook available here: [https://945fff91-210e-4198-bbed-e4698a814a80.filesusr.com/ugd/6efcbd\\_6f5c475167a042e4b496d458ef510fe2.pdf](https://945fff91-210e-4198-bbed-e4698a814a80.filesusr.com/ugd/6efcbd_6f5c475167a042e4b496d458ef510fe2.pdf)

### Outstanding Woman or Man of Range

Any member of the Wyoming Section, Society for Range Management, may submit the names of persons as candidates for the Outstanding Range Woman or Man award. A summary of the nominee's achievements that are worthy of recognition should be submitted with the name of the nominee.

### Trail Boss Award

**Nominee must be a member of SRM.** Any member of the Wyoming Section, Society for Range Management may nominate a candidate for this award. Each nomination must bear the signature of a second member of the Wyoming Section satisfying that the nominee is worthy of this award. The Awards Committee hopes to have the recipients of this award present at the annual meeting to receive the award. (There is a nomination form located at the link above)

### Excellence in Rangeland Stewardship Award

Any member of the Wyoming Section, Society for Range Management may nominate a candidate for this award. Letters of recommendations are required, as appropriate, from the Nominee's NRCS District Conservationist, BLM Area Manager, Forest Service District Ranger, County Agricultural Extension Agent or local soil and water conservation district. Letters should be attached to the application when submitted. Each nomination must bear the signatures of two section members indicating that they have satisfied themselves that the individual is worthy of the award. These section members should personally field review the operation. (There is a nomination form located at the link above)

### Award of Merit

This award can be given to any individual, SRM membership is not required, who has made a noteworthy contribution to the Wyoming Section-SRM in past year(s). The award itself is a certificate of recognition and token of appreciation.

***In addition to the Section Awards there are the following Society awards that you can nominate individuals for at the international level.***

**Frederic, G. Renner Award** - The premier Society award requires SRM membership and sustained accomplishments, eminence, and contributions to the Society during the last 10 years. Receives honorarium.

**W.R. Chapline Land Stewardship Award** - Requires SRM membership and effective maintenance or improvement of range resources with lasting efforts. Receives honorarium.

**W.R. Chapline Research Award** - Requires SRM membership and sustained research related to maintenance and restoration of rangeland. Receives honorarium.

**Fellow Award** - Requires SRM membership, continuous for at least 10 years, in recognition of service and contributions to the Society. The number of Fellow awards per year may not exceed 0.1% of the membership of the Society.

**Outstanding Achievement Award** - Does not require SRM membership. Awarded for outstanding achievement (eminently noteworthy) in any range management related area. Organizations (e.g., agencies, and commodity groups) are not eligible for this award. However, teams whose accomplishments are individually inseparable may be nominated. The number of awards is limited to 10 per year.

**Outstanding Young Range Professional Award** - Requires SRM membership and recognizes superior performance and leadership potential in any range-related area. Nominees must be less than 35 years old on January 1, 1995.

**Distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award** - Designed to recognize SRM members for long-term contributions to SRM and range management. Requires evidence of sustained outstanding lifetime contributions to the art and science of range management and continued SRM involvement at both the Section and Society level.

**Special and Distinguished Service Award** - Does not require SRM membership and is given for outstanding accomplishment in any range-related area. This award is granted only in special circumstances to recognize truly exemplary service to the profession of range management and is not meant to be an alternative to the Outstanding Achievement Award.

*Nomination forms for these awards can be completed using the form included in the week above.*

Hi everyone,

I'm your new Southeast Wyoming Council Representative. I grew up in Nebraska, so my earliest education was in football and agriculture. My father is a former professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln of rangeland ecology and management, which is a major reason why agriculture – specifically rangeland science and land conservation have played an important role in my life.

I have always enjoyed places where remoteness and natural beauty are key features of the landscape. I have lived and worked in the Natural Resource Management field in states such as Nebraska, Texas, Wyoming, Montana, and Alaska, including a position on a large private ranch in the Nebraska Sandhills. This instilled in me a love for the rural way of life, as well as a love for the art and science of rangeland management. After a variety of positions in agriculture and conservation around the country, I happily found myself as the Conservation Director at the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust (WSGLT) in 2015.

Today, I'm the Executive Director of the WSGLT, which was founded 20 years ago by a membership vote from the Wyoming Stock Growers Association (WSGA). We are a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization that was created to provide an alternative land trust option for landowners. Per our affiliation with WSGA, the WSGLT is the only agricultural land trust in Wyoming. We acquire and hold perpetual conservation easements, which are a voluntary private land conservation tool that restricts certain types of commercial develop on land.

According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, from 2012 to 2017, approximately 1.3 million acres of land were taken out of production. Rural subdivisions and other types of commercial development account for a large proportion of agricultural land conversion in Wyoming.

Since our founding, the WSGLT has completed 103 conservation easements on over 283,000 acres of farms and ranches (mostly ranches and rangeland). The Demand for our main type of perpetual conservation easement, the purchased or bargain sale easement, continues to grow. We are currently moving sixteen projects forward. My staff also stays busy stewarding all of our completed projects. The WSGA, our funding partners, and countless other supporters along the way have helped the WSGLT grow into one of the largest regional land trusts in the country.

I'm excited to bring my experience and network in the conservation and ag industries to the Wyoming SRM Section. Feel free to contact me at any time.

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How do some common rangeland grasses and an upland sedge compare in their crude protein and total digestible nutrient (TDN) contents? To assess this, samples of western/thickspike wheatgrass (AKA rhizomatous wheatgrass), needleandthread grass, green needlegrass, bluebunch wheatgrass, and threadleaf sedge, which are common throughout Wyoming’s eastern plains and western basins, were collected approximately monthly from pastures in northeast Johnson County, WY (Powder River Breaks) and along the Red Wall and foothills of the southern Big Horn mountains in northwest Natrona County between July 2015 and October 2018. The plant samples were analyzed for their crude protein and acid detergent fiber (ADF) amounts by the Texas A&M University Soil, Water, and Forage Lab. Level of TDN in the plants was determined from their ADF values.

Crude protein and TDN of the rhizomatous wheatgrasses, needleandthread grass, green needlegrass, bluebunch wheatgrass, and threadleaf sedge for January through April, May and June, July, August and September, and October through December are shown in the below table. Combining months, except July, was due to the similarity of the quality values throughout those months. Both crude protein and TDN were highest in May and June and lowest during the dormant season of October through April.

Rhizomatous wheatgrasses contained more crude protein than the other grasses and the sedge and its TDN levels were higher, except for needleandthread. However, dormant season TDN levels of all were satisfactory for a non-lactating beef cow in mid-gestation and the growing season amounts were sufficient for a late gestation cow and when lactating. Whereas crude protein levels were only adequate in late spring and early summer for cows in all stages of production, with the rhizomatous wheatgrasses containing enough in late summer to meet the needs of a dry cow in mid-gestation.

Knowing the quality of range forage throughout the year is important in ensuring that the livestock nutrient needs are being met and if not what needs to be supplemented. The results of this project indicate that if a rancher chooses to sample their rangeland grasses and upland sedges for crude protein and TDN analysis they need only to sample the predominate plants and combine them saving time and costs. In addition, sampling would only need to occur in late summer and the dormant season to assess potential nutrient shortfalls, especially for crude protein.

Grasses/Sedge	% Crude Protein					% Total Digestible Nutrients				
	Jan – Apr	May - Jun	Jul	Aug - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan – Apr	May – Jun	Jul	Aug - Sep	Oct – Dec
Rhizomatous wheatgrasses	3.71	12.36	8.71	6.36	4.25	59.0	68.3	65.8	62.5	59.5
Needleand-thread grass	3.49	10.54	7.18	5.87	4.10	57.1	67.0	64.8	61.8	58.6
Green needlegrass	3.26	11.10	6.95	4.94	3.26	55.9	67.6	64.1	59.9	56.8
Bluebunch wheatgrass	3.29	9.30	6.92	5.48	2.98	54.9	63.3	63.4	61.9	53.8
Threadleaf sedge	Not sampled	11.00	6.81	5.84	Not sampled	Not sampled	69.8	68.0	64.1	Not sampled

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