



2016 Grass Roots Award Recipient Carson Singleton with Stephen Deiss and TSSRM President Willy Conrad

## Texas Section Society for Rangeland Management Grass Roots Award-NRCS Carson Singleton

Carson Singleton, Range Management Specialist, USDA-NRCS, Caldwell, Texas

Among the many excellent young employees I have the honor to deal with in my work area, Carson Singleton stands out as a prime example of one deserving of recognition for his efforts through the TSSRM Grass Roots Award for NRCS conservationists.

Though young, Carson brings lots of experience to the table, when working with his clients. He is deeply involved in his family ranching enterprise, and though a long distance from his duty station, spends a lot of his time during weekends assisting with that operation. His keen eye for observing trends, tendencies, and the impacts of management practices (for good or bad) on his own or clients' properties equips him to provide superior technical assistance to ranchers in Burleson and Lee counties.

In addition, Carson does not hold this knowledge close to the vest. He freely shares his acumen with other young employees. During Range Trainings held in the zone, Carson takes an active role in helping us pass along information to fellow employees, and quickly becomes a leader when we break up into small groups.

Carson is a very patient technical assistance provider. As an example, I know of one ranch in his district where the landscape was basically denuded of vegetation at my first visit. I held very little hope, given the incorrect advice the owner (a novice at ranching) was receiving from other sources. The owner seemed to hold very tightly to that particular "advisor". Utilizing patience and his solid foundation of range principles, Carson has helped that ranch come a long, long way, and has positioned himself as the key source of assistance to the rancher, and though his work is incomplete to date, he continues helping that owner help the land.

Carson is also extremely well versed in planning, designing, and assisting with implementation of fence (he has built a lot of fence himself), brush management in his work area, and a key component of brush management and grazing management- plant identification. Again, Carson shares this knowledge freely with his co-workers.

A good example of Carson taking a leadership role in his work is that the very first official NRCS prescribed burn he was involved with, he served as burn boss. Though under supervision, I had no compunction with turning the reins over to Carson, and he handled the burn very well, even when there was an escape- he organized the crew, attacked the escape properly and through it all adjusted very well. I foresee an increase in the prescribed burn program in Burlison and Lee counties.

In my mind, much of our ability to pass along good information to clients lies in going back to look at the effects of past practices. I have done this with Carson, and he definitely has a good eye for the landscape.

Carson Singleton is a young man worthy of our Grass Roots Award.

Stephen Deiss 8-17-16