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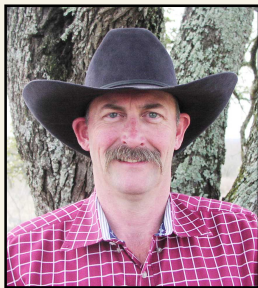
*Providing Leadership for the Stewardship of Rangelands
Based on Sound Ecological Principles*



JULY - AUGUST 2007

Volume 59, Number 4

President's Notes



Paul Loeffler
President, TSSRM

By the time you read this issue of Grass Roots, our 2007 Annual Meeting will be about 60 days away. I sincerely hope each of you have made plans to join other TSSRM members in Lubbock on October 11 and 12. As this issue of the newsletter is primarily dedicated to the annual meeting, you will find more information and registration on the following pages. Be sure to visit the revised TSSRM website www.tssrm.org for more information also. I was fortunate to meet with the annual Meeting Planning Committee a few weeks ago and was very impressed with the entire program. The committee, co-chaired by Jenny Pluhar and Ron Sosebee, have been working diligently for many months and have an outstanding tour, meeting, reception and banquet planned for us.

WHY IS THE ANNUAL MEETING IMPORTANT TO TSSRM, AND YOU???

While there are many reasons, some more important to some individuals than others, a few key ones are:

1. Renew old friendships and make new ones
2. Participate in technology and knowledge transfer
3. See a different part of the state and witness different range management practices
4. Learn more about and be involved in TSSRM
5. Participate in recognition of individuals who are making a difference on rangelands
6. Provide financial support for the activities of TSSRM
7. Opportunity to visit with SRM leadership. The President, Dennis Phillippi, First Vice President Alan Rasmussen and Executive Vice President Jason Campbell will all be at our Lubbock meeting.

Annual meetings are not only important to TSSRM, but to the parent society as well in both an informational and financial sense. I recently participated in a SRM Advisory Council Subcommittee meeting held in conjunction with the SRM Board of Director's Summer Meeting in Park City, Utah. If you think planning and hosting a TSSRM annual meeting is a task, consider the level of input necessary to put on a national meeting. Those folks who were involved in the highly successful 2005 Fort Worth meeting can testify to this fact. There is a lot of dialog going on about where annual meetings can be held, which sections are able to host those meetings; as well as such things as travel expense, room rates, return interval and others. Be looking for a more in-depth discussion of this item in a future issue of Grass Roots. The TSSRM Board of Director's will be asking for your input on the Draft Proposal in order to provide feedback to the SRM Advisory Council and Board.

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The Inside Story...

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Address inquiries to Jeff Goodwin, Editor.

TSSRM New Members

Let us welcome our new members to the section.
 Thank you for your continued support
 for rangeland stewardship.

Arthur H. Litteken..... Windthorst
 Dustin M. Ratliff..... Big Spring

TSSRM Non-Renewed Members

Dear Members,

This is a list of the latest non-renewed members for the Texas section as of August 2007. If you know anyone on this list please contact them and invite them back. Membership is the backbone and the future of our organization; maintaining our numbers will assure a strong and successful society. Thank you for your continued efforts.

JOHNATHAN R. HAMMONS
DR. DAVID D. BALTENSPERGER
KYLE A. BRAZIL
JAMES E. CROWNOVER
BILL ELLIS
ANTONIO RESENDEZ
DAVID A. SIKES
TERRI BETH TEASCHNER

PRESIDENT'S NOTES *continued*

The next few months will be busy ones for the Texas Section. Things like the Annual Meeting, range tours and field days, section officer elections, Native Lands Alliance organizational meeting and other activities will be occurring over the coming months and weeks. Please remember that YOU are the TSSRM and your involvement in the section is critical to its continued success.

Looking forward to seeing you "Out on the Range" (and in Lubbock in October).

Paul V. Loeffler

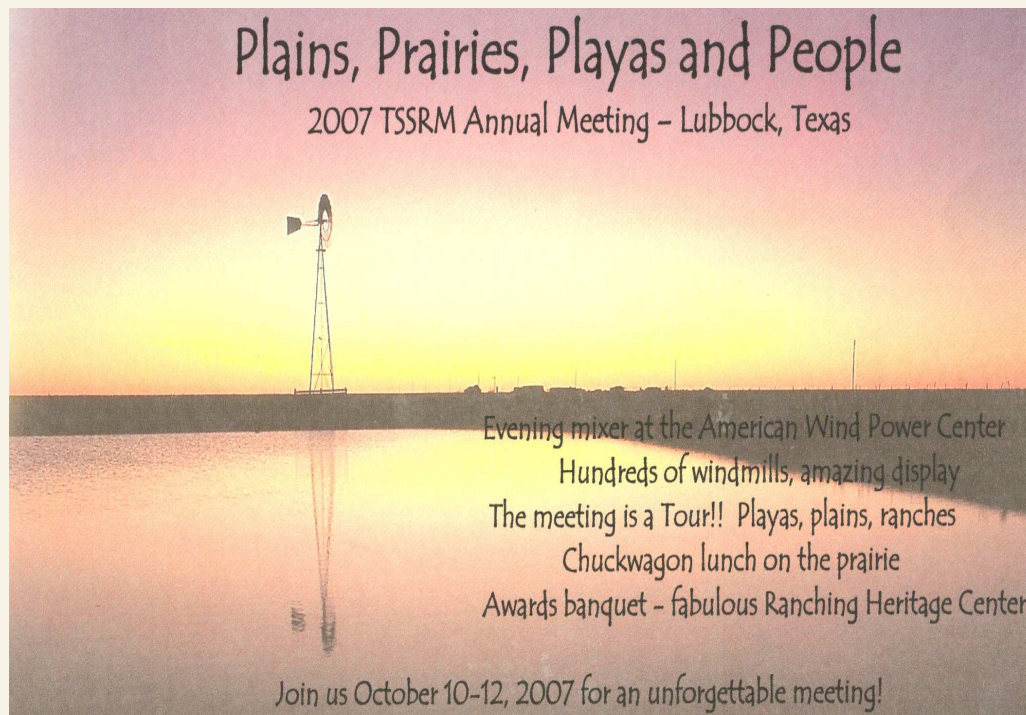
Upcoming Events

Red Buffalo Prescribed Burn School to be held in Mason or Kerr Counties
http://www.myredbuffalo.com/burn_schools.htm
"Red Buffalo" Prescribed Burn Schools
September 10-14, 2007
 Katy Prairie Conservancy, Waller, Texas
December 3-7, 2007
 Dyes Air Force Base, Abilene, Texas
January 2-6, 2008
 2nd Annual College Student Burn School.
 Blue Mountain Peak Ranch, Mason County

Oct. 10-12
TSSRM ANNUAL MEETING
 Lubbock, TX
 Dates TBD

Oct. 2008
TSSRM ANNUAL MEETING
 Nacogdoches
 Dates TBD





HEADS UP Texas Section Annual Meeting

October 10-12, 2007 - Holiday Inn Park Plaza - Lubbock, Texas

The Texas Section Annual Meeting is closer than you might realize. It is scheduled for Lubbock, October 10-12 (Wednesday-Friday). This is a big weekend for Lubbock in that the Texas Tech and Texas A&M football game will be in Lubbock on Saturday, October 13th. Therefore, may I please urge you to make your hotel room reservations early to insure that you have a room. Typically, every hotel room in Lubbock sells out for that weekend. The room rate at the **Holiday Inn Park Plaza**, located on the South Loop (not to be confused with the Holiday Inn Convention Center downtown) for Wednesday and Thursday nights, is **\$85/night plus tax**. If you opt to stay over the weekend for the football game, you especially need to make reservations early at the regular hotel rates, plus you need to purchase football tickets as soon as possible.

A block of rooms have been reserved for the meeting. The phone number for the Holiday Inn Park Plaza is **806-797-3241**. Please mention that you are with the Texas Section Society for Range Management.

The meeting will consist of a reception on Wednesday evening at the Wind Power Center, a field tour on Thursday, the banquet on Thursday evening, and the Young Professional's meeting on Friday morning. Registration is **\$100/member** and **\$50/student**. Registration includes reception on Wednesday evening, a box breakfast on Friday morning, Chuckwagon lunch on Thursday, banquet on Thursday evening, entertainment after the banquet on Thursday evening, bus transportation for the tour on Thursday, shuttle buses for Thursday evening for those interested in using them, and breaks. A tentative program is attached for your information. More information will be mailed later for early registration for the meeting.

CEU credits will be available for Certified Professionals in Rangeland Management (CPRM), Certified Range Management Consultants (CRMC), and for Texas Pesticide private applicators. A total of **8 CEU's** have been approved for both **CPRM and CRMC**; **3 CEU's** have been approved for **Texas Pesticide Private Applicator's licensees**.

If you have any questions about the meeting, please contact either Jenny Pluhar (jjpluhar@arn.net) or Ron Sosebee (ronsosabee@sbcglobal.net). We hope that you are making plans to be at the Section Meeting in October. We look forward to seeing you here.

CALL FOR PAPERS Young Professionals Session

TSSRM Annual Meeting, Lubbock, Texas - Friday, October 12, 2007 - 9:30 -11:00 am

The Young Professionals Session is open to anyone under the age of 40 interested in presenting an oral presentation over (1) research, (2) demonstration projects, or (3) management issues related to rangeland management.

Please submit abstracts electronically to:

Rob Cook

robwcook@yahoo.com

Abstracts should be submitted as a Microsoft Word document and limited to 250 words in length. Please provide a title, complete list of authors, and who will be giving the presentation.

Abstracts should be submitted by September 15, 2007

Questions: contact Rob Cook at 210-472-5527 or Cody Scott at 325-942-2027 Ext. 284

Texas Section of the Society for Range Management Photo Contest

The 2007 Texas SRM photo contest categories are as follows:

<p>Plants</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">a. Black & White b. Color</p> <p>Natural Landscape</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">a. Black & White b. Color</p>
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<p>Wildlife</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">a. Black & White b. Color</p>
--

<p>Ranching</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">a. Black & White b. Color</p> <p>Livestock</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">a. Black & White b. Color</p>
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Limit of two entries per sub-category for a total of 20 entries per member.

Size – 4x6 minimum; 8x10 maximum

Photo contest participants are encouraged to mat their photos for ease of handling. The Texas SRM is not responsible for loss or damage of any photos.

Photos entries will be accepted on Wednesday, October 10th, 2007 from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Judging will occur on Wednesday evening. Photos must be available for viewing until noon on Friday.

Awards: 1st and 2nd place will be awarded for each sub-category (b&w, color). Best of Show and Reserve will be announced at the awards presentation on Friday.

Attention, Fellow Conservationists!

This is the first call for the Texas Section SRM County Level Awards!!

Each year an important part of the TX Section's activities is the recognition of deserving individuals for various awards. As you go about your daily work, meet with committees, and hear of good work done in the field, please consider who you may want to nominate for a County Level Award.

Please take some time to visit with your co-workers as you nominate worthy candidates and most likely more candidates will surface. Anyone can nominate these good people and they don't have to be a member of SRM. There are a lot of deserving nominees in our great state. Let's bring the spotlight on them so they can shine and lead the way to inspire others.

There are 4 categories for the County Level Awards. They are 1) Natural Resources conservation Service (NRCS) employee, 2) Friend of TX Section of SRM (this could be other agencies, Ag businesses or companies, news reporters, etc), 3) County Extension Agent and 4) High School Ag Science Teacher.

As you go about your work in range and conservation, think of those that would be worthy of recognition who selflessly plug away at making the world a better place just because it is the right thing to do. Let's make the effort and recognize them by finding them and sending their qualifications to your committee representative.

Your 2007 County Level Awards Committee members are: Brad Teplicek, Eden, Chairman; Diane Arnold, Port Lavaca; Jed Elrod, Fort Stockton; Kim Stine, Tolar; Ray Schmicek, Midland; Vivian Garcia, Corpus Christi; Deeann Cameron, San Angelo; JR Bell, Amarillo; Mark Ramirez, Sterling City, and Phillip Wright, Hondo.

These submissions are due on or before September 4, 2007.

Please don't hesitate to call or e-mail any one of us with questions or nominations.

Message from the 2nd Vice President

By Melony Sikes

If you are interested in contributing to the Texas Section by serving as Chair Elect of any of our many hardworking committees for 2008, please contact me prior to the Annual Meeting in Lubbock. I will be providing Jerry Payne with a full slate of chair elects while we are in Lubbock. Please go to our wonderful home page and look through the listing of committees to see if you have a passion for helping the Section achieve our mission. Please either respond to me via email at melonytssrm@zipnet.us or call (325) 234-3236 and leave a voice message for me. Please provide me with a phone number where I can reach you. Thank you for your consideration!

The Texas Section Board of Directors has chosen Beaumont for our 2009 Annual Meeting. Though the location is pretty far removed from the homes of many of our members, it is definitely a venue that will allow us to study resource issues that we have not focused on in the past. The theme will revolve around the impacts that range management has on the marshes and estuary systems. I am very excited about the unique opportunities that this location will bring to our annual meeting.

Kickoff Award

By Dr. Jake Landers



This photo was taken at the Sonora Range Experiment Station some years ago showing one of the experimental pastures subjected to 40 years of overgrazing. All of the desirable grasses and forbs are gone, and several inches of topsoil have been lost to wind and water. Even Cedar is having a hard time.

Three range scientists by the brush are Bob Ragsdale,

Leo Merrill, and Tommy Welch, and the one sitting and thinking is Jerry Stuth. Can you imagine what they are thinking? Can you imagine the consequences of a rancher faced with this situation: No chance of range recovery in a lifetime because of the loss of the soil, and only a few grasses capable of establishing themselves on this surface to start the process. At least, there is no chance of a wildfire.

The overgrazing here was done on purpose to measure the loss of productivity. On a ranch in the area one might see such a site where livestock have been concentrated year after year for management purposes, and the rancher recognizes it as a sacrifice area. No rancher in their right mind, however, would let this happen to a significant portion of the land they are responsible for. But I've seen it. I've seen pastures on some ranches that have the same look to them, and that's why I invented the imaginary King's Kick Off Award some years ago along with a respected range specialist whose name I won't use until he retires from public service. "If I were king, I'd kick the landowner off and claim the land for the crown."

Or if that sounds too harsh and undemocratic, I would suggest we must depend on an alternate that we have been using for many years — EDUCATION. Many educational tours and workshops have been held at the Sonora overgrazed pasture for ranchers and land managers. In each county there are tours scheduled almost every year for town and country people to see what's going on, usually on the better managed ranches in the area. Seldom have I been on a tour when a heavily damaged pasture is shown, unless, perhaps, it's the one across the fence. Maybe it would be more educational if the poor management situation were seen more often on a tour. Don't you know it would be embarrassing for a rancher to be selected for a tour of his or her ranch after receiving a Kick Off Award?

Riparian Notes

Gaining Ground Through Good Land Stewardship

By Steve Nelle

In the previous *Riparian Notes*, entitled “Losing Ground”, the detrimental effects of excessive riparian and creek-bank erosion were described. Although the loss of riparian ground through erosion is a serious concern, the good news is that creeks and riparian areas are naturally able to adjust to these disturbances and heal themselves. This healing does not necessarily restore them back to their original condition, but it often allows adequate recovery to restore the basic functions of creeks and riparian areas.

It was pointed out that down-cutting of a channel often triggers the subsequent widening of that channel. In these situations, channel widening may be alarming and the landowner or manager may be determined to stop the erosion through some kind of bank stabilization project. In many cases, this widening of a down-cut channel must be allowed to take place unhindered since it is a natural and necessary adjustment. Overly deep channels and overly steep banks cannot be maintained in most cases. No matter how good the vegetation is, the stress is just too great to hold these high banks in place. Furthermore, these deeply incised creeks cannot function properly since there is no longer frequent access to a floodplain to dissipate energy. A healthy creek must have quick and easy access to its floodplain at an elevation low enough to be flooded on a frequent basis (every year or two).

As these high and steep creek banks fail, and large chunks of land fall into the channel, that material can be used by the creek to build a new floodplain down at the new lower elevation. This natural creation of a new floodplain at the proper elevation can occur ONLY if there is adequate riparian vegetation to stabilize and hold that new material in place. Colonizer species such as spikerush, knotgrass and water hyssop can quickly and efficiently put new roots down into freshly deposited soil. Stabilizer species such as switchgrass and Emory sedge can then reinforce these newly forming banks so they can withstand the next flood event. Eventually, woody plants such as willow and button bush will establish to provide even greater strength and stability to the new banks and new floodplain. In a healthy creek system, these and other riparian species will naturally establish if given the opportunity.

On most creek and river systems in Texas, grazing is the most important factor that influences riparian vegetation. Heavy grazing and/or prolonged grazing damages riparian vegetation and render it ineffective at building and holding new banks. Grazing management in riparian settings should strive to provide short grazing periods followed by long rest periods to maintain or enhance desired plant communities. In fact, only two to four weeks of grazing each year may be appropriate to maintain good riparian vegetation. Separate riparian pastures combined with an observant and diligent manager will permit this kind of specialized grazing.

Proper riparian vegetation has the ability to hold these new banks in place with the extensive matrix of strong reinforcing roots. The top-growth serves to retard water velocity and dissipate energy so that new sediment and debris will be trapped and stabilized with each high flow. Without the right vegetation, these benefits will not occur.

An ongoing program of land stewardship grounded by a strong land ethic will enable landowners to carry out the kinds of management needed to restore creeks, rivers, floodplains and riparian areas.