



# Society for Range Management Pacific Northwest Section

Properly functioning ecosystems provide for long-term sustainability of watersheds, plants, animals and people  
Volume 64, Number 2 July 2013

## President's Message

Bob Gillaspay, Vancouver, WA -- works in Portland, OR

NEWSLETTER

The PNW summer meeting and field workshop in **Dawson Creek, BC**, was fascinating and informative. Thanks to **Brian Haddow, Julie Robinson, Darryl Kroeker, Keith Carroll**, and the entire committee for arranging and hosting a splendid tour. Over 90 people participated, including partner members from the Peace River Forage Association who joined the PNW section members. This event was well worth the miles traveled. I look forward to the next BC event.

Like many of us from "down south", I found it hard to imagine aspen as a problem tree, until I saw the extent of the hardwood forest. This extent combined with the understory production curve over time (a reverse of the conifer understory production curve) yields a very different set of ecosystem dynamics from those encountered in Washington and Oregon.

I came away with an increased understanding of the problems BC has with multiple uses of the many natural resources on the same plot of land. While this sounds very familiar to many of us, their variations in background, tenure, and agencies lead to a different set of specific problems.

With few employees to review impacts of activities on the ground, BC Ministries rely on permit/tenure holders to monitor activities. When multiple uses are happening on the same piece of ground, coordination between permit/tenure holders is frequently a low priority. Sometimes what is a good thing for one party (natural regeneration of Aspen) leads to a negative impact for another party (rapid long-lived decline in forage production).

The main thoughts I returned with are:

- Humans are part of the environment, not just benevolent observers.
- Communication among all concerned is important (Yes, humans again).
- Flexibility is the key to sustainability. Change is ever present.
- Many sets of eyes & minds, engaged from the start, can recognize problems when they are small &

solvable.

- We must strive to recognize our own personal biases to be open to other potential solutions.

We need to match the landscape, with its inherent capabilities, with what we want from it, and we must also blend the many uses and desires into a sustainable and flexible package.

Not all is gloom and doom. The tour demonstrated that educating users about the impact their activities have on the resources which they enjoy, goes a long way to significantly reduce future negative impacts. While we humans are causing a lot of the problems, much of it is through a lack of understanding. We can change our usage patterns when we understand and are aware of negative impacts. Clear communication, while recognizing the perspectives (biases) of everyone involved, goes a long way to finding sustainable and flexible solutions.

The PNW Awards committee, chaired by **John Buckhouse**, has submitted several names to the parent society for consideration of awards at that level. Section awards will be presented at our Annual Meeting in September. The Awards committee relies on you for nominating candidates; contact John by email, phone, letter, or conversation.

**Lavona Liggins** chaired the nominations committee and has a fine slate of candidates for you to consider. Please read the nominee statements, **vote by Sept. 11** & mail ballot to Craig Obermiller (US) or Mike Malmberg (CA).

**John Williams** and his "team" have put together a wonderful workshop for our **PNW Section Annual Meeting** this fall. Register and **reserve your motel now**. Come prepared for the Silent Auction and **I'll see YOU in Enterprise, Oregon, September 19 - 21!**

**Bob**

bob.gillaspay@or.usda.gov or rangebob47@gmail.com

Vote & mail  
your ballot  
by Sept. 11

# PNW Section Elections - 2013

## Vice-President Nominees -- Vote for one (1)

Nominees are: **Pete Schreder and Mary Beth Smith**

### Pete Schreder, Lakeview, OR

I appreciate this opportunity to introduce myself. I am a Livestock Natural Resource Agent with Oregon State University in Lake County. I have worked for Oregon State University as an Extension Agent for 13 years, coming from 10 years as a US Forest Service Range Tech. I am a graduate of the OSU Range Program with a B.S. degree in Range Management and a Masters from Texas A&M in Rangeland Ecology. In Lake County, I work closely with producers on all aspects of resource management with a focus on rangelands. For the last three years, I have also been involved with international work in Germany helping develop and monitor livestock grazing systems on United States military bases there.

The Society for Range Management has become a vital resource for me as I have grown my career. It is a unique organization in that people from all facets of resource management can share and support work to better themselves and the natural resources we manage. SRM has worked hard to stay current in its offerings and true to the natural resources we manage. To remain a vital organization we need to keep growing and recruiting our young professionals. Our future is in the new recruits and I would like to see the SRM continue to put energy in recruitment and relevant programming to meet their needs for career success. In '07-'09, I was a PNW Board director; currently I work with the section High School Youth Forum.

I am an outdoors person -- one of the reasons I was drawn to Range Management in College. I love to hike, hunt and horse pack into the mountains. One of my favorite outings is an annual family pack trip into the Eagle Cap Wilderness. It is an opportunity to reconnect with the natural beauty of our environment and helps me refocus on how very important our role as natural resource managers truly is.

### Mary Beth Smith, Condon, OR

Originally from Minnesota, my family migrated to northern Illinois in the 1960s. After graduating with a BS in Plant & Soil Sciences from Southern Illinois University, I worked with Soil Conservation Service in Illinois before transferring to Condon in 1987. As District Conservationist with NRCS, I worked from the Oregon coast to Central Oregon. After 18 years of DC paperwork, it was time to get back into the field. Currently, as Basin Resource Conservationist, I work with NRCS staff and clients in 6 Central Oregon counties. My husband and I live on a wheat/cattle ranch where he and two brothers keep this 5th generation ranch a viable operation.

A few years ago, I was asked to update the prescribed grazing plan on a Central Oregon ranch, and that season was one of the highlights of my career as the ranchers & I, explored livestock health, range health, forest and wildlife management and the bane of juniper.

SRM keeps me current with issues related to our rangelands. Tours are a way to network with other range professionals, mentor students, and learn about challenges and opportunities in rangeland management. With Cici Brooks, I co-organized the PNW Section summer tour in 2009.

I would like to see SRM continue to educate members and the general public about rangeland issues, specifically, invasive species, impact of wild horses, and economically viable restoration efforts. I'd like to hear more about successes and failures from our members and find ways to transfer this knowledge to the people who design and apply restoration work.

My personal time is spent between home and visits to Portland and Tacoma where my two sons reside. My

**Vote & mail your ballot by Sept. 11**

# PNW Section Elections - 2013

## Board of Director Nominees -- Vote for two (2)

**Nominees are: Wendy Gardner, Gene Hickman, Claudia Ingham, Joe Wagner**

### Wendy Gardner, Kamloops, BC

I am an Associate Professor in the Department of Natural Resource Sciences at Thompson Rivers University where I have worked for the last 13 years. I teach courses on grassland ecology, range management, fire ecology and management, food systems, and reclamation. My husband, Russ, and I have a daughter, 8 year-old Bree.

I have been a member of SRM since 2002 and have been involved at a Chapter level as BC Vice President in '08, President in '09 and '10. I have helped organize PNW summer and fall meetings (summer '10 in Kelowna, fall '08 in Williams Lake, summer '07 in Kamloops, and summer '04 in Merritt) and was on the organizing committee for the 59th Annual SRM Meeting held in Vancouver in 2006. After learning of opportunities for students in the SRM, I formed the TRU Range Club. The first annual meeting we took part in was 2003 in Casper, Wyoming and since then I have helped to bring university students to every annual meeting.

The SRM has been a very important organization to me both professionally and personally. I am now at a place in my life and career that I can step forward and be more involved at a Section level in order to give back to the organization that has been so helpful to me. My vision for SRM moving forward would be for it to remain a strong organization that allows a diversity of people to share information and their passion for rangelands, but at the same time recognizes that change is important. SRM is currently struggling with this and there is no easy answer but my work with students has led me to believe that investing time in them is investing in our future. SRM does a wonderful job of engaging students, but we need to continue to work to retain these students as members when they move into their professional careers; they will be the future of our organization.

For fun I do "crazy" endurance events like 50-100 mile runs or adventure races. It keeps me fit and makes my day job seem so much easier! I also love to spend time with my family enjoying the beautiful outdoors.

### Gene Hickman, Bend, OR

My introduction to SRM was as an agriculture student at Oregon State University. Through the range science and natural resource curriculum, plus summer employment at the Crooked River National Grassland and in USFS wildlife habitat research, I began to appreciate the value, support and resources available to our profession through SRM.

My first major contribution to rangeland science was research for an OSU Masters thesis titled: Seasonal Trends in the Nutritive Content of Important Range Forage Species near Silver Lake, OR, published as a USFS Research paper (PNW 187) in 1975. My 35 year career as a Range Specialist for NRCS (Oregon) began at Medford, with ranch planning, field inventories and plant materials field trials for testing adaptability to SW Oregon ecosystems. In Central Oregon, I continued with inventories, ranch and watershed planning, seeding evaluations, ecological site work, soil vegetation correlation for soil surveys, and Coordinated Planning leadership. Besides authoring oral papers, technical reports and publications on range and ecology, I have worked for the USFS, BLM, and Oregon's Division of State Lands to do rangeland inventory, wildlife habitat research and National Monument ecology plot sampling.

Since retiring from USDA, I do range ecology consulting, being registered as a CPRM with SRM. Currently, this involves historic vegetation research, recovering plant data from old land survey records in SW Oregon. My wife and I manage rental properties and operate a custom cake bakery, The Cake Lady Shoppe. Other interests include old-growth and relict landscapes, old west history, travel and technical writing. If elected a PNW section director, I am willing to assist and contribute to making SRM stronger and more visible.

*Continued on page 4...*

# PNW Section Elections - 2013

*Board of Director nominees, continued from previous page...*

## **Claudia Ingham, Woodburn, OR**

Who am I? This is harder to answer than I imagined even though I stand in front of up to 125 undergraduate students at Oregon State University on a regular basis. No worries, though, I have lots to say to them and expect them to reply, even when they are part of such large groups. I teach the Animal and Rangeland Sciences courses in contentious issues, a writing-intensive course on the ethics of animal use and our foundational rangeland ecology course. In many ways, I have the ideal job. Working with students is one of the most important ways to get people thinking so that they will later be sensible 'actors' within our natural systems. Honestly, there are days when I don't sound so optimistic but that part can be written by someone else!

I grew up in true desert on the Arabian Peninsula and thus have rolling dunes, salt flats, acacia, saltbush, camels and goats in my 'mind's eye'. I joined SRM at the encouragement of Dr John Buckhouse, and contin-

ue because the annual and section meetings provide a wealth of ideas based on applied research and management efforts.

Outside the academic year, I team with Craig Madsen, of Healing Hooves LLC and a fellow SRM member, to present a Targeted Grazing workshop. We customize our presentation for the audience including our own insights based on research and years of practical experience. My research was on Himalayan blackberry and English ivy response to goat browsing, not common range plants but noxious and of great concern to us on the 'wet side'.

I would like to see future efforts in SRM include outreach to and recruitment of college students, and the inclusion of ranchers and other private land owners. Organizers of our Spokane SRM and PNW Spring meeting in 2012 set fine examples of this inclusiveness. Water moves through soil, into plants and is then consumed in the same processes no matter who owns the land. Let's walk the fence, or stream bank, together.

For fun, I ride tall horses 'through the river and over wood' and travel to foreign lands with my family.

## **PNW Section Officers**

President	Bob Gillaspy	503-414-3233
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2nd Vice Pres.	Bob Fowler	250-692-2275
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Director	Courtney Smith	509-758-8012
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HSYF	Pete Schreder	541-947-6054
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History	Joe Wagner	541-947-6175
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Student Activities	Andrea Mann	509-670-7743
Newsletter	Lynne Breese	541-447-6762
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	Teal Purrington	541-416-6772
	Matthew Braun	250-614-7526

## **Joe Wagner, Lakeview, OR**

After 30 years with BLM in range management and fire ecology, I retired. SRM is like family for me -- lots of friends, a few a little different, but all really great people. I was PNW Section president in '06-'07, and currently chair the history committee.

I would like to see SRM membership go up to 5000 members. I would like to see many more youthful members; we seem to have many collegiate members who drop out. Youth are the future of SRM, but many feel that the membership is too expensive, or they can get all the information off the Internet. We should continue the excellent Section meetings with interesting tours and make an effort to include youth. We should continue to support the University students and High School youth with assistance to travel to Parent Society meetings.

I enjoy plant ecology and fire ecology and travel locally to see what Mother Nature is doing each year. I travel to other countries to learn about foreign agriculture and natural resources, and to meet people from other countries and learn about their cultures.

## How's Your Aspen? or, 2500 miles round-trip to Dawson Creek for 2 1/2 days of meetings: Brian Haddow's Revenge



The Alaska Highway begins!

*ed. note: Two "rigs," one from the Willamette Valley and one from Eastern Oregon, traveled from Oregon to Dawson Creek, BC, picking up SRM'ers along the way. Each rig submitted a tale of their travels. Photos are by Michael Borman.*

Writing for the **OSU Van**, **John Buckhouse** says that its seven members had a wonderful time during the PNW SRM Summer tour. Everyone was impressed with the landscape, the management efforts, the knowledge base of the presenters and participants, and the wonderful wildlife along the way: Bald eagles, deer, elk, moose, bear, ravens, geese and numerous "watchable" creatures. We even set a new record for us ... 23 hours after leaving the bus on the last field stop, we rolled into Corvallis -- rummy, but safe. Specific comments follow:

**Mike Borman:** The local arrangement group really deserves commendation; what a wonderful job they did!

**Bob Gillaspay:** Weather was amazing! Downpours to bright sunlight. . . and only the latter during the field tour!

**Pat Shaver:** It was wonderful to see such strong local interest in this tour and in this subject.

**Richard Fleenor:** It sure was encouraging to see the Peace River Forage Association so deeply involved.

**Hugh Barrett:** Canadian agencies and ranchers each have a lot on their plates with the "overlapping tenures" approach to management -- which are sometimes at counter purposes with each other. I'm impressed with how well each of these groups copes with it!

**Mike:** Victoria - (maybe like too many higher-ups) is out of touch with the ground.

**Hugh:** Yeah, regulations ought to be outcome-based rather than a forced, one-size-fits-all prescription.

**Richard:** Yes, all uses on all acres is nuts . . . but thae-tractor disc that ground the aspen was AWESOME!

**Gene Fults:** We saw four very unique ecosystems. . . but did drive through a lot of aspen to see aspen.

**John:** I liked seeing how these Canadian managers coupled research and application.

**Hugh:** Me too! I particularly liked the seeding trials that were being conducted on the stockpiled soils at the drilling sites.

Overall Conclusion: **What would PNW tours be without Canadians?!!**

The Peace River country is enormous and full of opportunities! Through the local ranchers and resource management professionals, the Pioneering Spirit is alive and well. Seeing it all was an eye-opener for the **Eastside Rig riders - Courtney Smith** (compiler), **Kevin Guinn**, **Maura Laverty**, **John & Lynne Breese**, **Richard Fleenor**, and **Alf Bawtree** in BC. Aspen are continuous and extensive in northern BC, and running livestock is a challenge. None of us have considered aspen as a weed, as did local ranchers, but vigilance is required to clear aspen to maintain pastures. One pasture was disced to cut down aspen saplings on 15-year intervals, followed by aerial seeding of forages. Ranchers **Rolf & Glenn Hogberg** use livestock to control aspen suckering on their government permit grazing lands, with intensive pasture grazing and winter feeding. We can scarcely imagine how feeding cattle on those exposed, windy ridges through the long subarctic winters would be, but it definitely keeps the woody plants under control.



Cows grazing in pasture converted from aspen forest.

Graziers in the Peace River region are a hardy lot. **Brian Haddow** says most of the older ranches dated to the Great Depression of the 1930's. There is a pioneering spirit in these ranchers who face administrative obstacles in their use of crown lands. Permits for grazing, timber harvest, natural gas drilling, and wind energy overlap with what appears to be minimal planning to avoid eventual conflicts. **Fred & Liz Schneider**, originally from Switzerland, came a few years ago to find affordable ag-

*Continued on page 7...*

## Using Cattle as a Tool: Restoring the Sumpter Valley Dredge Tailings

*by Dallas Defrees, 5th generation working on the Defrees Ranch LLC. Originally written as a senior thesis for the OSU Honors College, Dallas adapted it for our newsletter. If you were on the SRM 2012 field workshop in Baker City, OR, you met Dallas. She drove one of the hay-ride wagons. Dallas wrote the paper because of the importance of the project to the land and to the work that her family has put into the land.*

The Defrees Ranch LLC sits in the shadows of the Blue Mountains in Sumpter Valley, south of Baker City, Oregon. For the last twenty years, Lyle and Dean Defrees have taken part in a restoration project on the gold dredge tailings that reside on the northern border of their land. In 1913, the first gold dredge started turning Sumpter Valley upside down. Over the next 40 years, three separate gold dredges would snake their way through the valley, in the hunt for gold, digging between 18 - 20 feet below the ground surface, churning up the rocks and gold, and flushing all the top soil downstream. In total, 2500 acres of land was altered by the three dredges; \$10,000,000 worth of gold was recovered.

Besides being an eyesore for the Defrees Ranch, the tailings were becoming overrun with weed species that were crossing over to their land, and throughout the valley. Large numbers of weeds were covering the tailings, allowing little other vegetation a chance to grow. The Defrees Ranch saw an opportunity to work with Baker County to gain land for winter feeding and summer grazing, as well as to take an active role in controlling the weed populations. A lease agreement was formed for a 10.6-acre plot in 1998.

Developing a manageable and efficient way to utilize cattle was critical in this process. Baker County and Defrees Ranch outlined the best ways in which they thought the feeding and grazing of cattle should be managed on the land in order for it to be a positive and easily executed plan. After initial leveling, fencing and seeding, the Defrees Ranch would feed cattle during the winter months, and practice controlled grazing during the summer months. Introduction of cattle provided hoof action, defecation, urination, and vegetation consumption, which could all be applied to transforming the land in a positive way. It was estimated that in the first winter of feeding, 30 pounds of manure per head per day equaled 330 tons of manure and 95 pounds of nitrogen per acre. This was integrated into the tailings.

The experimental 10-year plot provided substantial evidence of improvement over the 3-year period of wintering cattle on the dredge tailings. There was an increase in organic matter and vegetation. These results were sufficient to induce Defrees Ranch and Baker County to extend the lease agreement ten years later, to another 40-acre plot, to the northwest of the ex-

isting 10-acre plot. After 20 years of restoration, evaluating the success of the project was a plausible step to examine if this technique should continue, and could it be used in other areas with similar history and destruction. Several tests and observations were conducted to demonstrate what had changed in 20 years of treatment: soil composition, usable forage, and species diversity. Data was collected from all the tests and compiled into tables and figures that represent the data. Trends can be seen in the graphs of the rehabilitated environment in each of the plots.

Encouraging results have been shown by changes in soil composition, resulting in vegetative growth, species change over time, and the overall aesthetic value of the land in the nearly 20-year period that cattle were used as a restoration tool on mine spoils. Bare ground decreased 73% in twenty years; biomass increased over 300%; species diversity shifted to more diverse composition with more perennials. Soil analysis demonstrated that phosphorous, potassium, nitrate, ammonium, and sulfur all improved from nearly sterile conditions toward that of a healthier, more productive environment. Further encouragement lies in the fact that, to date, there is no evidence this improvement has stopped. Levels of vegetation and soil nutrients have continued to grow in the twenty years.



**Dredge tailings on Defrees Ranch with no treatment.**



**Twelve years after winter feeding on dredge tailings.**

## How's Your Aspen? Continued from page 5...

ricultural land. They now have a viable grazing operation, and daughter **Carmen** works seasonally to evaluate re-vegetation of spoils on gas permit sites.

We saw local ranchers in the **Peace River Forage Association (PRFA)** work together to support ranching by implementing pilot projects such as installation of 3-dimensional fence, livestock waste composting trials, and by soliciting grants for improvements such as water developments. Recognizing their excellent work in pasture management, the BC SRM Chapter presented the BC Rangelands Management Award to the PRFA.

In a "hands-on" range health monitoring session led by **Matthew Braun & Rae Haddow**, a good discussion between **Matthew, Pat Shaver, Bob Gillaspay** and **Jim White** illustrated the challenges of assessing different parts of the landscape. Rangeland assessment is a work in progress and it will continue to evolve as we use it on more sites and ask the hard questions.

Forester **Richard Kabzems** did his homework and provided endless insights into geology, ecology and history of the region. Trail Boss **Julie Robinson** as "official bus monitor", emphatically brought "adult supervision" to keep us on schedule! **Brian Haddow** hosted an opening BBQ for long distance



Standing at edge of aspen forest, **Carmen Schneider**, daughter of recent "pioneers", points out re-vegetation trials at a gas site.



travelers, and allowed us to use the event to mark his retirement. Bon Voyage, Brian, but you're still our PNW secretary!!

No out-of-town trip for a few days would be complete without debating with yourself whether or not you completed that one small task which you think about only after you have travelled at least 200 miles (or 321.8 kilometers) from home: was the cat locked in the garage, is the water still running out back, did I turn off the burner on the stove. . . These small uncertainties will nag on you until you finally give in and call the neighbors to stop by and check on things. With that finally done, the enthusiasm of the meeting planners, **Brian Haddow, Julie Robertson, Keith Carroll** and **Darryl Kroeker**, caught us, and led us on a fantastic adventure which then sent us homeward encouraged, renewed and energized.

**Alf Bawtree**, thanks for hosting us overnight and for the excellent dinner prepared by **Bruce and Kirsten**. Having your kid and grandkid cater, so you can freely entertain is a great lesson! It was special to hear your comments and recollections as we traveled up and back from your home. **Thanks, Alf!** And **Kevin & Becky Guinn**, thanks for putting up with us two nights, and our wishes to you for continued health & vitality!

Other travelers from "the lower 48" were **Bran-nons, Platts & friends, Bob Leonard, Joe Wagner, Alan Guttridge**, . . . BC'er **Matthew Braun** says, *We Canadians appreciated the Americans driving all that way. It was great to see such a crowd with such devotion to the SRM. Good fun!!*



Dallas' Grandfather **Lyle Defrees** watches over the winter feeding on dredge tailings.

### **Newsletter Editors**

Want to alert members to an upcoming event?  
Comment on an article? Brag about another  
member's contribution to range management? Tell us  
a story? We'd love to hear from you!

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???

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*Pacific Northwest Section, Society for Range Management — Caring for basic range resources: soil, plants and water*

### **PNW Section, Society for Rangeland Management**

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