



# Society for Range Management

## Pacific Northwest Section

*Properly functioning ecosystems provide for long-term sustainability of watersheds, plants, animals and people*  
Volume 67 Number 3  
December 2016



### President's Message

*Sandy Wyman, Prineville, Oregon*

It is quite intimidating to follow in the footsteps of my fellow Central Oregonian, **Tim Deboodt!**

Thanks Tim, for all your hard work and time spent as our President the past year! Taking over the mantle of helping guide our fellow PNW members to make informed decisions on rangelands by providing local opportunities to see and hear about the latest science and active management for professional development, does not get easier with each passing year - but we do persevere!

A big thank you to outgoing Directors **Gene Hickman** and **Wendy Gardner** for your hard work, dedication, and input into the business of the Section. Your active feedback was appreciated. **Maura Laverly** moved up to 1st Vice President, and **Wendy** will continue to serve as newly elected 2nd Vice President. Welcome our new board members **Kurt Moffitt** and **Andrew Volo**; thank you for your willingness to be involved in Section decisions and activities. Thank you to **John Williams** for agreeing

to serve another year on the board. **Sonja Leverkus** resigned from the board due to work commitments. Thanks, Sonja, for your service to the section and we hope you can hop back on in the future.

Our PNW fall workshop & meeting in Corvallis, OR was outstanding. **Bob Ehrhart** and **Yvette Gibson** co-chaired the event to make it great. Thanks to all who helped make the meeting run smoothly and to all of our speakers! Very informative and interesting to see and hear how oak savannahs and wetlands were an important component of west Oregon rangelands. We were "blessed" with rain during the field tour, but the rain did not dampen the interest and questions asked by our fellow SRM'ers.

We congratulate **Bob Ehrhart**, who received the PNW Section **Exemplary Service Award**. I've known and worked with Bob since our years in Montana, and cannot think of anyone who is more deserving of the award. **Fred Hall** received the Jim A. Brunner **In for the Long Haul Award**. John Williams received the **Trail Boss Award**. Congrats to all of our 2016 award winners!

After feedback from newsletter editor Lynne Breese and those attending the BOD meeting, it was decided to continue the electronic newsletter format and posting on the PNW Section website. Paper copies will be sent to those who do not have email. Thanks Lynne & Brooke, for continuing in one of the busiest jobs in the section. You do a great job!

While continuing as Section secretary, Mary Jo Foley-Birrenkott has accepted a part-time position with the parent society. She will continue work with the Young Professionals Conclave (YPC), building a YPC at the PNW Section level, and working on maintaining membership in the parent society. Don't hesitate to contact Mary Jo with any ideas for maintaining membership, or if you'd like to help out! Our membership is our Society!

Planning has begun for next year's PNW workshops. The summer workshop will be in Ephrata, WA, June 6 - 8. The fall workshop & meeting will be in British Columbia. AND, don't forget the Annual Meeting in St. George, UT, Jan. 29 - Feb. 2. Information and registration is at [www.rangelands.org](http://www.rangelands.org).

Remember to renew your SRM membership! We need all of you to continue learning about our rangeland resources and management. Thanks to all!!! Sandy

## PNW "Heros"

Through the years, **Linda Hardesty, Pullman, WA**, Rangeland Extension Specialist, has introduced us to dogs-in-training. This fall we met **Hanford** at the PNW workshop and he instantly had 50 + new friends! Linda writes: "Hanford is 18 months old. We got him, like his 12 predecessors, at age 8 weeks. Baby Jared, his successor arrived in October. Hanford moved to Santa Rosa, CA on Nov. 3 to start his advanced training and placement process. He will graduate with his new partner in May or August. [Canine Companions for Independence](#) provides highly trained service dogs to children, adults and veterans free of charge, and has been doing so for 40 years! CCI is the largest service dog organization in the country and has 5 national training centers. They breed all their own puppies, selecting the finest of their dogs as breeders, who live with families in the Santa Rosa area where they are served by CCIs accredited vet hospital. The weaned babies are shipped all over the country to puppy raisers like us. Many puppy raisers are 4-H kids. There is an active prison program: Coffee Creek Women's prison in Wilsonville, OR has raised over 100 pups. The joint Lewis-McChord military base in WA is in the program, as is a WA residential youth treatment facility. CCI has a motto we love:

*'Some people wait a lifetime for a miracle - we raise them one at a time.'*

Learn more at [cci.org](http://cci.org)

*Ed. Note:* Thanks, Linda & Dan, for the love, patience and time which you give to puppies and people.

You have sent cards from Osoyoos & Corvallis to **Joe Wagner, Lakeview, OR**, who continues to heal from a ladder fall. From a Wisconsin rehab facility (near a niece), he writes: *Thanks for the card from PNW-SRM folks. Wow! A lot of folks attended. I loved the photo of Linda, Puppy, Buckhouse & Barrett. That photo certainly proved it was raining. Hope all is well for all of you - be safe! Joe Wagner*



**Vic Wright, BC; Tip Hudson, WA; and Brenda Smith, OR** have lined up high school students to represent PNW SRM at the High School Youth Forum during the International SRM Meeting in St. George, Utah. HSYF'ers will be **Christian Boyd, Burns, OR; Ashley Oswald, Chelan, WA; Brianne Mikulasik, Kamloops, BC**. If you are there, be sure to welcome our new SRM student members!

**Kevin Guinn, Ephrata, WA**, officially turns in his key on January 3, 2017, concluding 40 years of service to the USDA SCS/NRCS. Kevin was one of Three Amigos who co-chaired the best ever 65th SRM Annual Meeting in Spokane in 2012. He plans to hike the Pacific Crest Trail, and will serve up real Texas Chili to other folks traveling the trail! :) (*ed. note:* be forewarned, Kevin's chili is REAL!!)

If you were on the "Spokane 2012 Team", you knew **Neil Rimbey, University of Idaho, Caldwell, ID**. Neil shocked us with news that he is retiring December 31, 2016. Neil's energy, questions & ideas were "contagious"; our 2012 team was stronger because of him. Thanks Neil!

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## SRM Corvallis - Restoring "Rangeland" in the Willamette Valley Meet & Greet to Grow SRM Friendships

*by Maureen Malenstyn, Delta, BC. I'm Wendy's Mum, and I keep busy on our farm.*

It was another enjoyable SRM fall meeting and field trip with 50 PNW SRM'ers. After getting to Corvallis by plane & HUT, I had a 2-hour visit (while sipping a great brew pub beer) with **Lea Condon**, a researcher whom Wendy and I met at the Saskatoon International Grasslands Convention. I introduced Lea to **Hugh Barrett** so that she might follow up to become a member of SRM - a great addition to the younger group of members! At the Meet & Greet, I met a really



enthusiastic young man from San Diego, and got a non-stop diatribe about his reasons for following this vocation at OSU! Then, I met the rest of the clan, including **Mike Borman** who has recovered wonderfully from his heart problems. However, after hearing from Mike about his experience, I told him he could act in one of those u-tube videos where someone takes two hours to realize they have a "BIG MEDICAL PROBLEM"! It was great to catch up with everyone, including **Maura Laverty** who sat with me on the Penticton field trip. Due to schedule conflicts, Wendy couldn't come to Corvallis, but I was told that she called in to the Board business meeting, and gave instructions to keep her Mum in order. Nobody has managed that yet!

### **Out on the "Range" of Oak Woodlands & Savannahs**

by Carrie Gordon, Prineville, OR, Ochoco NF Geologist. For fun, I dye/spin/knit/weave fiber into fabric and play hand bells. Assisted by John & Lynne Breese, ranchers/foresters. For us, fun is SRM for family, fun, seeing the "world", and learning together!

We readily saw the results of the cooperation to restore two of the critical pre-settlement (1840) native vegetation communities, oak woodlands & oak savannahs. It clearly took a "team" working together to head towards the goal. The "team" started with the landowner and included both state and federal agencies: National Wildlife Reserve, SWCD, USFW, ODFW, OSU, .

The Oak Woodland/Savannah forest can be amazingly dense, but with appropriate treatment, it can be safely opened. Walking through one private property which had been treated, we saw apple trees and a great diversity of vegetation. At another stop, where soils could be highly erosive, the coordinated treatment opened up the ridges to maintain vegetation, while maintaining the soil stability in the drainage. At another stop, which combined National Wildlife Refuge land with adjacent private land, the wetland marsh was responding and we saw elk up on the hillside.

Oak stands are labor-intensive projects; the initial entry takes several specific machines and all the slash must be removed, including the stumps. Once the land has been cleared there are continuing labor and machine costs to keep the stands open. This was an impressive workload to protect the woodland values.

Lastly, we "eastside folks" immediately learned (but not soon enough) that we not only don't know what good raingear is, but whatever raingear we do have was back home in the closet!

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## **Student Posters, Plant ID and Silent Auction**

*by Andrea Mann, Pendleton, OR, who recently retired from USDA NRCS and volunteers "full-time" with non-profit organizations which serve locally and around the world. Assisted by Carrie Gordon.*

Three OSU students presented posters on very interesting subjects.

*"Physiological Impacts of Groundwater and Surface Water Application on Desert Graminoides of Different Geographic Origin"* by **Mohamed Abdallah**. Mohamed is looking at specific grasses in a lab setting, then watching them grow under controlled settings. We talked about the variations of soil conditions on the ground.

*"Expand Your Range"* by **Tracy Koenig**. Tracy is exploring ways to integrate the concept of rangelands into the social network. She received the PNW 2016 SRM Student Educational Scholarship.

*"Vegetation, Soil and Groundwater interactions in Western Juniper"* by **Phil Caruso**. Phil is examining how groundwater in a desert environment moves through different soils and geologic conditions. His geographic study area is in the paired watersheds, north of Brothers, OR. The initial paired watershed study was begun by John Buckhouse, Michael Fisher and Tim Deboodt in the early 1990's.

Andrea comments, *"The 'No Risk' **plant identification (ID)** table was very educational for myself. So many names have changed since I was on the plant ID team!"*

The **Silent Auction** which supports students was huge. Items included chain saw, Mike Malmberg pies, beer, alpaca mitts, art and other beautiful items. Thanks to **Mary Jo Foley-Birrenkott** and **Pat Shaver** for organizing the auction which earned \$1153. Eighty percent of that supports student travel to the international meeting; 20% is shared with the Endowment Fund. (*ed. note: the silent auction is a great place to start your Christmas gift shopping; we found 4 gifts! Come prepared next year, AND we will "fight" over the delicious Malmberg pies for eating, not for giving!! :)*)

### **Banquet & Awards**

by Mike Malmberg, Fort Steele, BC. As a retired extension Agrologist, I now work in our family farm Market Garden business, and do contract work on beef cattle & forage production projects in B.C. I enjoy involvement with local ranchers, helping with ranch work, & livestock association projects.

PNW Section Awards is a very important function of our section; **thanks to John Buckhouse** for keeping this event lively and on track - **Thanks John!**

Three awards were presented at the October 2016 meeting. Excerpts from the citations follow.

#### **2016 Trail Boss Award: John**

**Williams.** John is an Associate Professor at OSU in the Department of Animal and Rangeland Sciences. He has spent 29 years as an Extension Agent for OSU, this following 15 years as an independent rancher. John is always ready to help any individual with a rangeland issue, be they students or "old hands". His work is honest, rational and therefore always well received. Congratulations to John Williams, recipient of the 2016 PNW Section Trail Boss Award.



#### **2016 Exemplary Service Award:**

**Robert Ehrhart.** A frequently heard comment by others in the rangeland profession is "Do you know Bob Ehrhart? He was the best teacher I had in my college career". This statement exemplifies just one of this wonderful man's contributions to our society. Distance Education specialist, rangeland and riparian specialist, author of the "Stream and Riparian Area Management" publication, and countless other achievements speak to his boundless energy. Now formally retired for the third time, he continues to be an active PNW member participating in rangeland field trips where his reputation as a skilled manager and dedicated teacher is regularly on display. Congratulations to Robert Ehrhart, recipient of the 2016 Exemplary Service Award.

**2016 James A Brunner "In for the Long Haul" Award: Dr. Fred Hall.** Dr. Hall's pioneering work on forest ecosystems, grazing/browsing monitoring, photography & photo-metrics, and forest health have withstood the test of time and are still being used today. It is noteworthy that Dr. Hall continued his research long after his retirement from the Forest Service. Unpaid and unassisted, Fred monitored his photo sites in a variety of ecosystems for decades until his health demanded that he find a younger person to carry that torch forward. The PNW section of SRM is indebted to the life-long work of Dr. Fred Hall. With pleasure, Fred is recognized with the James A. Brunner In for the Long Haul Award.

**The dinner speaker for our evening gathering was Ed Alverson, Natural Areas Coordinator for the Lane County Parks Division.** Ed Alverson has worked as a field botanist and stewardship ecologist in the Pacific Northwest for over 35 years. His presentation reviewed the vegetation changes in the Willamette Valley since the 1850's and the work involved in preservation of critical native vegetation in the oak woodlands and oak savannah ecosystem remnants in the valley. His perspective on the need to forge ahead with the work of maintaining some of the unique vegetation features, despite the inability to duplicate a full replication of the past, was encouraging.



Realistic goals and objectives in restoration work can provide the flexibility needed to achieve worthwhile progress! Thanks to Ed Alverson for his work and his presentation at our evening event.

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## Using Drones in Field Research

*by Nick Vora, Soil Conservationist with the NRCS in La Grande, OR. In my life outside of work I try to get out in the mountains hiking, hunting, or camping whenever I get the chance.*



**Carlos Ochoa** and **Nicole Durfee** presented information on some of the potential and current uses for drones in research and land management. Nicole gave an overview of civilian drone (UAV) capabilities relevant to natural resources at this point in the rapidly evolving technology. While UAVs are largely payload and range limited, they can be useful for precision agriculture management, rangeland inventory and monitoring, fire mapping, and elevation data collection (LIDAR), among many other uses. Advantages of UAVs include quick response times, portability, and low prices relative to aircraft, while disadvantages to operation include dependence on good weather, low endurance, and small payloads.

Carlos briefed us on the OSU range/animal science program's current UAV program, its capabilities, and direction. The OSU program has access to multiple aircraft platforms, and is currently working on the acquisition and use of multiple different sensors such as thermal/multi-spectral cameras and temperature and moisture probes. Carlos and Nicole have used drones for riparian monitoring projects, photo points, and easy visualization of juniper treatment effects. Future uses may include (among many possibilities) livestock data collection, facilities inspections, and "living labs" to better inform and connect students to the environment. Carlos finished the presentation with a demonstration and probably the first SRM "drone selfie"!!

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## On-line education in NR & Range Management

*by John Klock, Lakeview, OR., an interdisciplinary rangeland specialist and botanist with the Bureau of Land Management. For fun, he runs ultra-marathon trail races!*

\*There are not enough students for the range jobs out there.

\*College students are unaware of the opportunities in rangeland management.

\*When applying for federal jobs, students may not meet the OPM standards under the 0454 Rangeland Management Series.

\*Range education programs are challenged to strike a balance between the traditional basics and modernizing the curricula.

These are a just a few of the challenges facing the rangeland management discipline these days but **Yvette Gibson** is on track to modify these trends. Yvette is an online instructor for Oregon State University in the Department of Animal and Rangeland Sciences. At our PNW Workshop, she spoke about the progress and future of online natural resources and range education.

As Professor Gibson explained, online education is here to stay. Currently across America, 65% of institutions say online programs are a critical part of their long-term education strategy. Oregon State University is certainly a key player in the industry and, in fact, is the number one ranked online natural resources program in the country. Further, OSU's online bachelor's degree programs are consistently ranked in the top ten in the country. So what about the range program?

My review of the Oregon State University distance education platform, called E-Campus, shows that there are seventeen range courses taught online through Oregon State University. But still there is one big question for the rangeland management profession. How can an online program provide the experiential learning which is so integral to the rangeland management field? One answer is to develop practical learning experiences near the

student, whether that student is in South Africa or Lakeview, Oregon. Yvette and the rest of the range faculty help to guide students to those meaningful work experiences. There are also two week intensive hybrid courses offered in the summer where students spend part of their time doing their time in the classroom and part of their time out in the field.

Yvette and her colleagues are on the frontlines of online education to get it right for range students facing a world of rapid political and social change across our vast western rangelands. **Thanks Yvette.**

## Congratulations to some great folks who we need to bring into SRM!!

**Defrees Ranch LLC**, Baker County, OR is the **National Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year**. The **Defrees Ranch hosted our 2012 PNW SRM workshop "Rock Piles to Grass"**. We rode a hay wagon to see the work being done to restore the 1913 gold dredge tailings bordering their ranch. Lyle and Dean Defrees started the project, with Baker County, in 1998. Weeds were crossing over the tailings to their ranch, allowing little other vegetation to grow. As granddaughter Dallas wrote in her senior thesis for OSU Honors College, cattle were fed on the tailings during the winter, with controlled grazing during the summer. What began as a 10-year experiment on 10.6 acres was so positive that it was extended and expanded. When SRM was on the ranch in 2012, if you had not been told that you were looking at dredge tailings, you would not have seen it. The Defrees forest lands are continuously being improved through thinning and a mix of restoration projects.

**Drewsey Field Ranch**, Harney Co., OR received one of only four national awards from the Public Lands Council, recognizing BLM permittees who work to protect the environment in which they live and work. Burns District BLM nominated the winner. The ranch is recognized as the **Sage-Grouse Habitat Stewardship Permittee**. In 2011, four years after wildfire, the allotment was a tinder box of dead fine fuels, Medusahead rye and cheatgrass. Concerned about burning conditions, the ranch reached out to SRM'er **Dr. Barry Perryman** at the University of Nevada, Reno. A winter grazing demonstration was arranged with the ranch and BLM. Pasture grazing is usually spring through fall. In winter, when most perennials are dormant, invasive annual grasses could be a target for foraging livestock, and prevent seed production. After four years, the results are excellent: desirable perennial bunch grasses are replacing Medusahead and cheatgrass; another wildfire burned into the project area and went out; stable livestock production and range health are acceptable. The Drewsey Field Ranch is dedicated to managing livestock to reduce fuel load and invasive annuals and to improve Sage-grouse habitat.

### Calendar of Events

Jan. 29 - Feb. 2, 2017	70th SRM Technical Training, Annual Meeting & Tradeshow, St. George, UT
May 10-11, 2017	Roots of Resilience, Pendleton, OR, with Dr. Fred Provenza "teaching cows to eat weeds & Kit Pharo "livestock grazing benefits soil health". Contact Andrea Mann, 509-670-7743, for more information
June 6 - 8, 2017	PNW SRM Summer Workshop, Ephrata, Washington
Fall 2017	PNW SRM Fall Workshop, British Columbia

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**PNW's strength is in its Chapters  
Contact yours today!**

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