



New Mexico Section Newsletter

Society for Range Management

SPRING 2012

President's Desk



Les Owen, New Mexico
Section SRM President

Well, the Winter Meeting went off without a hitch (Thanks in large part to Tom Dean and the Socorro County 4-H crew) and the New Year is off to a roaring start. We had a very productive Board of Directors meeting in conjunction with the Members' Forum during the winter meeting. Thank you Laurie Abbott for organizing the forum that provided direct input to section leadership regarding what SRM members feel is important. There was a great deal of discussion that centered on how to involve more livestock producers in SRM. The board also adopted a section handbook that has been in the revision process for the past year. I invite you all to look at the handbook on our section website and see how you can become more involved in section activities through the various committees. Meeting dates for 2012 board meetings are: March 29, May 29, Summer Tour meeting TBA, September 27, and November 22.

The most meaningful outcome

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New Mexico Section SRM Winter Meeting Socorro, NM

By Les Owen

NMSRM's annual Winter Meeting was held in Socorro January 4-6, 2012. The event kicked off with a tour of the Oscura grazing allotment that consists of BLM, Dept of Defense, and State Trust lands totaling over 74,000 acres (Thank you Nathan Combs for arranging this tour). The ranch is being managed by the Wrye Family, who are in the process of rehabilitating range improvements that deteriorated since the base property was obtained by the Dept. of Defense. The tour was informative with a look at chemical, mechanical, and Rx fire treatments of sand sage and piñon/juniper. Participants also learned about the New Mexico Range Judging Contest that FFA and 4-H members compete in each year. It also seems there were some non-drought related difficulties in getting out of Taylor Canyon (Who was driving that green pickup?). We concluded the day with a very impressive presentation by High School Youth Forum winner Serina Pack about her research in the use of native grass for mine site reclamation projects. The formal part of the meeting was graciously hosted by the Socorro County Cooperative Extension Service. The Mavericks 4-H Club took great care of us during the breaks with fruits, homemade snacks, and other goodies to keep us going. Presentations focused on effects to the range and management options related to the extreme drought conditions and wildfires experienced in 2011. Please go to our website to view the presentation slides. Socorro County 4-H did an excellent job hosting the awards dinner where the section recognized deserving recipients in the various awards categories. Thank you to our meeting sponsors (Dow AgroSciences, DuPont, National Agricultural Statistics Service, New Mexico Cattle Growers Association, Jornada Experimental Range, Quivira Coalition) and all of the presenters for helping to make the meeting a success.

New Mexico Youth Ranch Management Camp

Date: June 3-8, 2012

Location: Valles Caldera National Preserve

Youth ages 15-19 can apply online at:

<http://nmyrm.nmsu.edu/>



By Katrina Benson
Proud Donor New Mexico Society for Range Management

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 from the winter board meeting was creation of the David Graham Memorial Scholarship fund. The fund was created with the donation of \$500 per year for 5 years from an anonymous donor with the challenge to all section members to match the contribution. There have been many subsequent contributions to the fund; though, I'm not sure of the current total. The section will be considering how this scholarship is to be awarded over the next few board meetings. If you have any suggestions or would like to contribute, please let us know. I recently had the honor of presenting ERM award plaques to the team of folks involved with the West Potrillo Mountains Grassland Restoration Project at an employee meeting of the BLM Las Cruces District Office. This was a great opportunity to visit with the diverse team of individuals, organizations, and agencies that collaborated to see this large scale restoration effort through fruition. Spring will be here before we know it and even though much of the state was blessed with moisture in December, we are once again drying out. Climatologists report weak to moderate La Niña conditions in the equatorial Pacific indicating a greater probability for below normal precipitation through the spring. This coming on the heels of a dry 2011, will likely present range managers with more difficult decisions to make. New Mexico's range livestock industry was hit hard by the drought

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In early June, New Mexico State University hosted a ranch management camp for youth at the Valles Caldera. Though I initially was reluctant to attend, my father, Anthony Benson, finally convinced me that I should go. I realized that if nothing else, I would learn something about ranch management, which I will need to know someday when my siblings and I inherit my family's ranch. However, after one short week cram-packed with information (that I hope I retain!), I found that I actually had a fantastic time. While there were certainly some unexpected activities such as fabricating our own beef carcass or getting to feel the inside of a live cow's stomach, there were also very informative presentations and demonstrations. I now know how to give shots to cattle, how to monitor rangeland, how to manage both the wildlife and their habitats, and lastly, how to market beef. Additionally, we had hands-on experience shooting air rifles, using a bow and arrow, and trapping animals. However, it was not just the subjects and activities that made the camp so great, it was also the people I met there. I made really good friends, both with my small group, and with all the other girls because there were so few of us! I was particularly influenced by my group leader, Manny Encinias, who helped us with everything from motivation, encouraging us to work on our project hours before everyone else woke up, to self-discovery, helping each of us find and tell "our ranching story" to discover who we are as ranchers. Though it was very short, I learned more in my week of ranch camp than in any other summer program I've attended!



NMSU to host Rancher's Roundtable

Apr 11 Wildlife Habitat, Nutrition and Harvest

Sponsored by: Purina Mills

Scheduled Experts:

- Jim Lane* – Director, NM Game and Fish
- Sam Smallidge* – Extension Wildlife Specialist
- Larry Varner* – Deer Nutritionist, Purina Mills
- TBA* – Manager, Ranch Wildlife Operation
- Moderator:* Eric Scholljegerdes – Ruminant Nutritionist

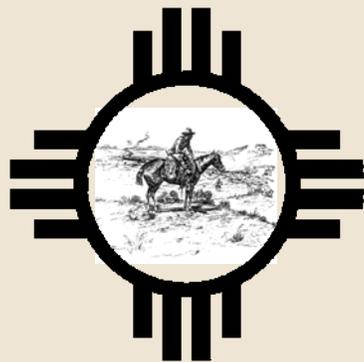
May 16 Computer Applications, Recordkeeping, and the WWW

Sponsored by: Allflex, USA and CattleMax Herd Management Software

Scheduled Experts:

- Jerry Hawkes* – Extension Agricultural Economics
- Allen Torrel* – Agricultural Economics and Business
- Moderator:* Eric Scholljegerdes – Ruminant Nutritionist

<http://coronasc.nmsu.edu/ranchers-roundtable.html>



Why NM SRM?

By Mike Hobbs, NM SRM Director

When asked the reasons for my desiring membership in the SRM, a myriad of reasons came immediately to mind, most having to do with professional association, networking, sharing ideas and becoming more creative and competitive within our industry. Upon further reflection, I realized in SRM was highly pertinent to the current times and endless string of environmental, legislative, social, wildlife competition and economic issues confronting producers attempting to embrace the emerging “global economy” that is apparently to be our collective future.

During my tenure with the Society, the producers of the west have encountered many grave challenges, be them drought, insect invasion, noxious weed encroachment, horrific wildfires, animal health and welfare issues and “environmentalists” who readily accept the moniker, although few actually comprehend the essence of the trials associated with balancing affordable protein production with sustainability of the land and resources required. As a producer, particularly in these times of prolonged, intense drought, endless wildfires, coupled with the unprecedented downsizing of western brood cow herds, has it ever been more requisite to utilize the tools and resources available to the open-minded and resourceful. Perhaps that is the key; “open-minded”. Therein is the underlying objective for appreciating the Society of Range Manager. A collective group of academics, governmental stewards, county extension agents and producers working side by side to address collective challenges and expend the energy to insure our industry remains viable and progressive as the rules of engagement and obstacles are constantly in flux. As a young man, it was my desire to be a good cowboy, with the ultimate goal of becoming a respected cowman as I matured and learned what was needed to facilitate a respectable and substantial cattle operation. After many years in pursuit of that goal, it became increasingly apparent that, while good quality livestock, the ability to effectively handle the cattle and the personnel was important, my primary task must be producing identifiable forage and know how to measure and be able to estimate that production, based upon climatic conditions and stocking rates. After spending considerable time with my good friend and SRM member, Tim Leftwich, my desire to become affiliated with the SRM became manifest. Tim’s knowledge of the forage, what was palatable and when and why, opened a new vista for my curiosity. This was the organization that was already embarked on that journey and was on the cutting edge of the science required and although I was told more than once, by some crusty old-timers, that these “egg-heads” were good in the classroom but useless afield, I have certainly learned to the contrary. In my perfect world, we would all have a David Graham available to discuss the challenges of

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of 2011, with January 2012 beef cattle inventory estimates from NASS being the lowest in the past quarter century. This provides testament to the range management skills of New Mexico ranchers and their ability to make the tough decision to reduce herd size for protection of the rangeland resource. Thank you folks for all you do to promote range management in New Mexico. Once again, I encourage all to take a look at our website to learn more about NMSRM and how you can become more involved.

locoweed, larkspur or range caterpillars with, and while a clear solution to the problem may not be discovered or revealed immediately, management strategies are fleshed out and options weighed.

I am proud of and have benefitted significantly due to my affiliation with the SRM and am encouraging the next generation of ranchers, farmers, feed salesmen, cattle brokers, cowboys and all those whose livelihoods depend on the land and what it produces to take an unbiased look at the society for range management and get involved in the endless processes required to be sustainable in the agricultural world. The collective knowledge, even when regionally specific, is of great value to those desiring to elevate the quality of their operations while focusing on being engaged for the long-haul. Never has there been a greater need for sharing knowledge and experience and what better venue than the SRM.

Respectfully,
Mike Hobbs
SRM New Mexico Section

**WE NEED YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS
TO THE NEWSLETTER**



Lost Resources John David Graham

John David Graham died Monday, December 26, 2011 in Plano, Texas. David was born to Claude and Ruth Graham on November 23, 1944 in Socorro, New Mexico. He attended rural schools in Datil and Magdalena, New Mexico and graduated from the Ag College at New Mexico State University in 1968. He married Midge (York) in 1965 and soon after they began their careers together in education. Along the way they had 3 children, Kevin, Wendy, and Stacy. David taught vocational agriculture at Des Moines High School for four and a half years before spending a year at the New Mexico Department of Education as a vocational agriculture specialist/state supervisor. In August of 1973, he started his career with the Cooperative Extension Service as the Agricultural Agent in Union County. He was assigned a white Blazer that he drove the wheels off and never washed once; it can still be found at the Union County Extension office. From his first day on the job David was absolutely committed to his county and its people, agriculture education, 4-H and FFA, cattle ranching and range management. Through the years he committed considerable time and resources to research noxious weeds, range pests, and pesticide management. He co-authored many scientific papers working collaboratively with research specialists at New Mexico State University and the United States Department of Agriculture Poisonous Plants Lab in Logan, Utah. David was a lifelong SRM member. He was particularly active at the state level serving on the Board of Directors and as President. David's commitment to youth education was exhibited by his commitment to the High School Youth Forum. Every year he served as Youth Committee Chair half of the Forum participants could be expected to reside in Union County. This highlights a unique skill David had, the power of persuasion. It was difficult to tell David "no" because he was not afraid to call a spade a spade. That is probably why he ended up as the Nominations Committee Chair. The NM section can thank David for years of candidates "willing" to run for office for the good of the order. David's humor, no-nonsense approach, passion for agriculture, commitment to youth education, and formerly white truck will be missed by all, especially those whose lives he impacted in New Mexico.

MEMORIAL: The family requests memorial donations be made to the Union County Fair Board. Memorial donations can be sent to Union County Extension Office, c/o Tommy Jantz, PO Box 428, Clayton, NM 88415.

2012 Board of Directors Meeting Schedule

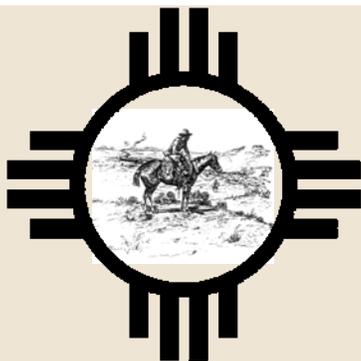
March 29th

May 29th

Summer Tour Meeting TBD

September 27th

November 29th



Youth and Our Future

By Mike and Carrie Hobbs

Today's youth do not put a lot of emphases on their heritage, but they do focus on high tech modern devices and the corporate ladder. I recently heard a statement made at the NM SRM Meeting and it really stuck with me. **"There is NO Culture without Agriculture"**

Ranch and Farm families raise their children to have morals, family values and to follow their family tradition. They are expected to continue their Agriculture Heritage. Feed up, do your chores, close the gate, watch the weather, be honest, mind your manners and work hard. All of these important things are passed from generation to generation.

But times are changing. Today's youth are losing interest in long hours, no days off and constantly fighting mother nature or at least trying to stay one step ahead of her. They are looking for bigger incomes, a steady paycheck, benefits, retirement plans, weekends and holidays off, as well as year end bonuses. And don't forget those promotions. Wow, don't we all want that?

Today's youth have lost sight of one very, very important thing. Their Agriculture Heritage is the single most important and necessary job in the world.

Ask them to imagine life without beef, pork or poultry. Imagine no fruit or vegetables. A BBQ without ribs, a summer without ice cream, a ball game without hot-dogs and hamburgers or Thanksgiving without a turkey. Imagine no food.

Agriculture is LIFE.....no matter what culture that you live in.

So when your children or grandchildren think that farming, and ranching is just the old way of life, the work is way to hard, the challenges way to big and that there are more important jobs to be had with bigger and better everything..... Remind them while you are filling their plate, that

Agriculture is LIFE.....no matter what culture that you live in. "There is NO Culture without Agriculture"

There is a great pride in providing for the USA as well as the rest of the world. Pride in family and pride in Heritage.

AGRICULTURE, The MOST Important job in the world.

CONGRATULATIONS IT'S A BOY!

NM SRM President-Elect Doug and wife Rebecca Cram
Welcomed Adam Douglas Cram
8 lbs. 6 oz 20.5"long
February 18th



For more information visit us online: <http://nmsrm.nmsu.edu/>



Upcoming Events

<http://www.rangelands.org/>

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