

## **PRESIDENT'S CORNER**

**Carol Blocksome**

**President, Kansas Section, SRM**

The need for additional prescribed burning of Kansas rangelands is obvious throughout the state. Cedar trees cover thousands of acres of what was once open grassland. Brush is moving out of riparian areas onto the uplands. Locust trees dot CRP stands.

During the past year, prescribed burning assistance has recurred as a topic of interest at Kansas SRM meetings. Unfamiliarity with prescribed burning techniques and the inability to physically perform burns have been suggested as reasons prescribed burning is not occurring.

There is a need for both the education of landowners/operators who will burn their own land and for private contractors who can conduct burns for those unable or unwilling to take on the task. Below is a review of prescribed burning assistance available in Kansas.

### **Education**

Upon request, Kansas State University (KSU) Extension personnel will conduct burn schools around the state where prescribed burning techniques are discussed. Topics included are why and when to burn, fire behavior, weather and fire, safety, regulations, equipment, firebreaks, ignition techniques, and planning a burn. For information, contact Walt Fick (785.532.7223, [whfick@ksu.edu](mailto:whfick@ksu.edu)).

College credit in prescribed burning is available from Fort Hays State University (FHSU) during the spring semester. This is a one credit hour class that meets one evening per week for a couple of months during the spring semester, starting mid-January. It can also be attended without credit, but the cost is the same (\$101.75).

Topics covered in the class are Combustion, Uses of Fire; Fire Behavior; Fuels; Effects of Fire on Vegetation, Soils, Wildlife, and Livestock; Planning

and Techniques of Conducting a Prescribed Burn. The course culminates with students actually participating in a prescribed burn. For information, contact Robert Nicholson (785.628.4214, [rnicholson@fhsu.edu](mailto:rnicholson@fhsu.edu)).

### **Technical Assistance**

Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) will assist in writing burn plans for CRP. In some areas, cash incentives and equipment that can be borrowed are also available. These cash incentives are in addition to NRCS Mid-contract Management Cost-Share. For more information, contact your district wildlife biologist. To determine who that is, use the map at: ([http://www.kdwp.state.ks.us/news/kdwp\\_info/location\\_s/county\\_information](http://www.kdwp.state.ks.us/news/kdwp_info/location_s/county_information)).

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) range specialists can write burn plans for their region. Contact your local NRCS office for more information. To find your local NRCS office, use the directory located at: <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=KS>

KSU Extension personnel can also write burn plans. Local Extension personnel who have appropriate training and experience may write burn plans for their counties or state specialists can be contacted. To locate your local Extension office, use the directory at: <http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/main/directory.asp>. For state specialists, contact Walt Fick (785.532.7223, [whfick@ksu.edu](mailto:whfick@ksu.edu)) or Charlie Lee (785.532.5734, [clee@ksu.edu](mailto:clee@ksu.edu)).

KS SRM also has certified professionals (Certified Professional in Rangeland Management--CPRM and Certified Range Management Consultant--CRMC) who can write burn plans. In most cases, there would be fees associated with these services. For more information, contact Bob Nicholson (785.628.4214, [rnicholson@fhsu.edu](mailto:rnicholson@fhsu.edu)), who is currently the only CRMC in the state.

**KANSAS SECTION  
SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT  
BOX 303 - MANHATTAN, KS  
66505**

Carol Blocksome	President
Dennis Doring	First Vice-President
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Walter Fick	Newsletter Editor

### EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Subscriptions to the Bluestem Bulletin are available to non-SRM members at \$5 per year. Send remittance payable to the Kansas Section, SRM to Walter Fick, Dept. of Agronomy - TH, Kansas State Univ., Manhattan, KS 66506.

We now have the capability to electronically send the Bluestem Bulletin. If you would like to receive the newsletter via e-mail please contact me at the above address or at (785) 532-7223 or [whfick@ksu.edu](mailto:whfick@ksu.edu).

I encourage members or other readers to submit information to include in the Bluestem Bulletin. Announcements regarding meetings, field days, etc. are welcome. If you would like to write an article related to rangeland management please do so and send it to me.

### MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

**Submission deadline for the next issue of the Bluestem Bulletin: March 15, 2006**

### PRESCRIBED BURNING INFO CONT'D

#### Field Experience

Field experience and burn certification is available through NRCS. Workshops are available twice a year, once in the spring and once in the fall. These workshops are useful for maintaining skills and updating knowledge. For information, contact David Kraft (620.343.7276, [david.kraft@ks.usda.gov](mailto:david.kraft@ks.usda.gov)).

Local NRCS offices may provide prescribed burning information and practice burns. These burns also provide local fire departments with a chance to practice containing and extinguishing grass fires. The landowner/operator is required to set the fire for practice burns on his/her land. Contact your local NRCS office for more information.

#### Burn Assistance

Pheasants Forever (PF) can provide professional range burning services. Kansas is scheduled to have a habitat specialist by next spring who will work in Lincoln, Russell, Osborne and Mitchell counties. The Post Rock Pheasants Forever Chapter of Lincoln, KS has a group of trained volunteers conducting burns on private lands in their area. Participating landowners designate their cost share money for CRP Mid-contract Management to the chapter as payment. Crews are under the leadership of a Burn Boss.

Other PF chapters may assist landowners with burns. The landowner must light the fire, with PF members acting as crew. PF members must first attend Forest Service training to meet insurance requirements. If your local PF chapter is not currently involved in assisting landowners with burning, please view it as an opportunity for you to join PF (if you're not already a member) and sign up for the local Habitat Committee, where burning assistance is arranged. For more information, contact Barth Crouch (785.452.0780, [vcrouch@juno.com](mailto:vcrouch@juno.com)).

KDWP biologists assist with CRP burns in some instances. Burning must be done prior to April 1 to encourage forb growth and meet wildlife management objectives. On non-CRP rangeland, KDWP will assist with patch burning. For more information, contact Brad Simpson (620.672.5911, [brads@wp.state.ks.us](mailto:brads@wp.state.ks.us)).

NRCS is in the process of reviewing the extent of burn assistance they will provide. New policies and procedures are scheduled to be completed before next spring's burn season. Contact your local NRCS office at that time.

## MINUTES - KANSAS SECTION, SRM

President Carol Blocksome called the annual meeting of the Kansas Section to order at 6:50 p.m. on September 28, 2005 in Wichita, KS. The minutes of the May 12 meeting in Independence were approved. Walt Fick presented the treasurer's report showing a current balance of \$8, 414.72. Fick also reported that 410 copies of the newsletter were distributed in August. He was reminded to include an SRM membership application in the newsletter at least once a year. Webmaster Mike Haddock will update the officer list and posts the Bluestem Bulletin as it comes out. Dennis Doring reported that the Kansas Section currently has 93 members.

Carol Blocksome gave the election results. Keith Harmony was elected 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President with John Henry and Dale Ladd elected to the Board of Directors. Thanks is extended to all those who ran for an office.

The Kansas Section, SRM brochure was discussed. Keith Harmony will be asked to look into the status of this project.

An electronic version of the EGM award nomination form is needed to help facilitate nominations. It was suggested that this form should be sent to NRCS, County Agents, KAWS, and K-State Watershed Specialists to obtain nominations. It was suggested that new signs be ordered with a change calling the award Excellence in Rangeland Management.

Burning Cooperatives were discussed. There seems to be a need for people with CRP land and no experience to burn. Liability is an issue. Pheasants Forever and the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks have programs available to assist with prescribed burning. There is a cost associated with this assistance.

Chris Tecklenburg has agreed to write some guidelines for the Kansas Range Youth Camp.

Recent annual meetings have been held jointly with other organizations but attendance by section members has been less than satisfactory. A spring/summer meeting and tour will be planned by Charlie Lee. The annual meeting next fall is the responsibility of Dennis Doring.

Carol shared her planned comments about SRM she will present at the KAWS meeting. It was suggested that she might enhance the importance of grazing livestock in Kansas and discuss the increasing demand for alternative uses of rangeland.

Carol continues to work on a duty roster for committees, etc. so they understand their responsibilities better.

The section by-laws need to be updated in lieu of recent changes. Fick volunteered to do such. Blocksome wondered whether further changes need to be done to match actual practice in the section. For instance:

nomination/ballot dates, committee appointment approval by board of directors, filling vacancies on committees, reasonable response time from members, and need for a budget.

Communication and exchange of information was discussed. It was suggested that much could be done electronically off of the website.

Charlie Lee suggested that the spring/summer meeting be held in western Kansas, possibly in the sand sage country.

John Bond and Rick Davis attended the meeting. They are part of Top Drawer Communications. They have a contract with NRCS to assist the Kansas Grazing Land Coalition coordinate some rangeland management activities in Kansas in the coming year.

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Walt Fick

### Election Results

Second VP:	Keith Harmony
Director:	John Henry
Director:	Dale Ladd

### SRM Honor Awards

The deadline to nominate individuals for SRM Awards is April 30. These awards include:

Frederic G. Renner  
W.R. Chapline Land Stewardship  
W.R. Chapline Research  
Fellow  
Outstanding Achievement  
Outstanding Young Range Professional  
Sustained Lifetime Achievement

Descriptions of each award and the nomination procedure can be viewed at the following website:

[http://www.rangelands.org/about\\_honorawards.shtml](http://www.rangelands.org/about_honorawards.shtml)

### Previous Award Winners from the Kansas Section

W.R. Chapline Research - Clenton E. Owensby, 2004  
Fellow - Arthur J. Armbrust, 1996  
Fellow - Gerald W. Sharp, 1978 (Posthumous)  
Fellow - Gerald W. Tomanek, 1977

Cont'd on next page

## Outstanding Achievement

- Paul D. Ohlenbusch, 2004
- Sharp Bros. Seed Company, 1981
- Kling L. Anderson, 1972

## Special Award for Distinguished Service

- Gerald W. Tomanek, 2002

## Filling the void... the Young Professional Conclave

The word is out about the Society for Range Management's newest conclave: the Young Professional Conclave. The start-up of this group has spurred the interest of many, which indicates how sorely it was needed. An organizing committee has put great effort into developing a symposium geared towards the interests and needs of young professionals, an event one would not want to miss.

Election of officers will take place during the luncheon section of the event. These individuals will be charged with the task of taking the conclave to the next level and integrating it into the society as a whole, as well as, at the section level. Matt Phillippi is currently accepting nominations at [nroinc@mcn.net](mailto:nroinc@mcn.net) or 406-587-7792. Nominees do not need to be present at the meeting in Vancouver. An email containing a list of nominees and further details regarding the election procedure will be sent to the current Young Professional Conclave distribution list. If you are interested in being added to this list, please contact us.

A sponsorship committee is working to find donors to reduce the costs of the break and lunch, hopefully, enabling more people to attend this special event. Any assistance would be much appreciated. To find out more information about the conclave, elections, or sponsorship contact Steph Sever at [ssever@montana.edu](mailto:ssever@montana.edu) or 406-994-3272.

## Young Professional Conclave-Symposium

Tuesday, February 14, 2006

8:00-11:00 a.m.

- 8:00 Welcome and Introductions
- 8:10 (Panel Discussion) Balancing Act: Career vs. Family-Jennifer Pluhar, Lance Vermeire, Chad and Amy Boyd
- 8:50 (Panel Discussion) Balancing Act: Field Work vs. Paper Work-Faith Ryan, Karen Hickman, Scott Fluer, and Jack Alexander
- 9:30 Break
- 9:45 What is SRM? An overview of the Society, its organizational structure, and the benefits of getting involved (national and local section levels)-Bob Budd
- 10:00 (Panel Discussion) What do we do and how to get involved?  
 -Board or Directors – Dennis Phillippi  
 -Advisory Council – Charles Hart  
 -Committee Chairs
- Award Committee
  - Rangeland Assessment & Monitoring Committee
  - Rangeland Invasive Species Committee
  - Remote Sensing & GIS Committee
  - Watershed/Riparian Committee
  - Wildlife Habitat Committee
  - Leadership Development Committee
  - Rangeland Steering Committee
  - Partnerships & Affiliations Committee
  - Government Policies & Programs Committee
- Denver Office Staff – Ann Harris

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- January 5 Tallgrass Legacy Alliance, Flint Hills National Wildlife Refuge, Hartford, KS
- January 21 Kansas Grazer's Association Winter Conference, Assaria, KS
- February 7 Kansas Grazing Land Coalition, Salina, KS
- February 12-17 59<sup>th</sup> Annual SRM Meeting, Vancouver, British Columbia
- March 3 Cattlemen's Day, Manhattan, KS
- July 11-14 Kansas Range Youth Camp, Rock Springs 4-H Camp