



BLUESTEM BULLETIN

Kansas Section, SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT, Newsletter
To Foster Advancement in The Art Of Grazing Land Management

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December, 2010

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

John Henry
President, Kansas Section, SRM

The Kansas Section had a great turnout for the fall meeting that was held at the Plant Materials Center near Manhattan. A lot of good ideas and opportunities were discussed during the business meeting. We had an excellent tour of the Plant Materials Center and the Konza Prairie Biological Station. These are two impressive rangeland resources we have right here in Kansas. Many thanks to Rich Wynia and Alan Casey for hosting our meeting.

It's time again to elect new officers for the Kansas Chapter of SRM. I would like to thank all those that have served and those that are currently serving. Another big THANK YOU goes out to those that agreed to run for office next year. Like many of you I was apprehensive to run for office not knowing how much time it would take or how I would be accepted into the organization. After working through the ranks of Director, Second Vice President, First Vice President and now President I can assure you that the time requirement is minimal. SRM is a great group of people that are not there to judge you but to help you with the task at hand. To serve SRM as a director or executive officer does not require one to be the most prominent range scientist around, or the wisest financial manager or even the most organized individual. The directors and officers are a team, each with different talents, with the sum being greater than the individual parts.

As president of this organization you are privileged to receive much more information concerning the national organization of SRM. I have been amazed at how active SRM is nationally from working with the legislature, training opportunities, high level meetings concerning rangeland issues, and job opportunities nationwide. The national organization wants your input and the more you get involved the deeper your appreciation for rangelands.

The Kansas Section bylaws require that we have at least 2 candidates for each office. As a result there will be winners and losers. Don't feel bad if you are not the successful candidate, we've all been there. It is not likely that voting members feel you incapable of handling the job, it is more likely that the successful candidate was just better known or attended more meetings. We all appreciate your willingness to run for office and hope you will run again when asked.

Consider giving some of your time and talent to SRM as an elected officer. I promise you, it is well worth the effort and the experience will be one you treasure!

WHAT'S INSIDE

- Fall Meeting Minutes
- Smoke Modeling News Release
- Election Bios/Ballot

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

<http://ks.rangelands.org>

John Henry	President
Cade Rensink	First Vice-President
Jordge LaFantasie	2nd Vice-President
KC Olson	Director
Dustin Tacha	Director
Kevin Price	Director
Patrick Casey	Director
Alex Miller	Secretary-Treasurer
Doug Spencer	Past President
Livia Olsen	Webmaster
Pat Broyles	Historian
Walter Fick	Newsletter Editor

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

As I read through the minutes of the last meeting I realized I was late in getting this edition of the Bluestem Bulletin in your hands. Please vote. Hope to see you all next month in Wichita.

If you would like to receive the Bluestem Bulletin via e-mail please contact me at the above address or at (785) 532-7223 or whfick@ksu.edu.

Members or other readers are encouraged 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.

Submission deadline for the next issue of the Bluestem Bulletin: March 1, 2011

Kansas Section-Society for Range Management

Minutes for the Oct 1, 2010 meeting @ NRCS Plant Material Center

President John Henry called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the Plant Material Center. John started the meeting with a Service award for 2007-2008 to Chris Tecklenburg.

The minutes were read and a correction was brought up by Walt Fick. The minutes were approved and seconded. Alex Miller read the treasurer's report. Since the last meeting we have outgoing expenses of \$168.11 and income of \$290, which leaves our current balance at \$6546.87. The group accepted the report as read.

Old Business

President Henry brought up that we need applicants for the Range Management awards. There was some discussion on the process of applying for the award. Please contact incoming president Cade Rensink this fall if you have any nominations.

Doug Spencer reported a successful Range Youth Camp this year with 18 campers in attendance. Alex Miller reported that the 2011 RYC will be held again at Camp Mennoscah. Chris Tecklenburg had looked into another camp; however the facilities did not meet the needs of the RYC. Alex M also mentioned to contact him if you had any ideas or suggestions for 2011 RYC.

RYC treasurer, Doug Spencer reported that after paying for SRM Annual meeting scholarships, we came out \$500 ahead. Discussion followed on where to spend the money in the RYC fund. One suggestion was to possibly sponsor a college scholarship for those who have attended Range Youth Camp in the past. Some members expressed concern of the sustainability of such a fund. Please contact Doug Spencer with any input you may have on the possibility of sponsoring a scholarship.

Walt Fick gave a report on this year's Adult Range Schools. The western school had 15 participants and the eastern school had 30 participants. Discussion followed on supporting the scholarships again this year to Adult Range School. The Kansas Grazing Lands Coalition (KGLC) requested \$600 for this year's scholarships. Doug S. moved to contribute \$600 to the KGLC scholarship fund, the motion was seconded, and passed by the group.

Discussion then moved to funding registrations for students attending the SRM annual meetings. Keith Harmony said we should continue to make it available to students. Cade Rensink brought up the

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Minutes cont'd

Released: Dec. 1, 2010

possibility of reaching out to some of the community colleges around Kansas. Several Junior Colleges have range programs that would benefit from attending the meetings. John Henry called for volunteers to contact the colleges. Cade Rensink and Jorge LaFantasie volunteered to contact the ag departments around the state. Keith Harmony moved to help out with student registrations with a \$1000 cap. The motion was approved, seconded, and passed.

KGLC is looking for someone to replace Carol Blocksome on the council. Please contact Mike Christian if you have an interest in the position. For now, Jorge and Kevin Price agreed to alternate attendance at the meetings. It was also brought up that we need a representative to attend the Prescribed Fire Council meetings. Carol B also gave an update on the Smoke Management Plan they are working out with the EPA.

Doug Spencer said we need nominees for the Vice President position. Dusty Tacha and Jamie Holopirek were two names that came up in discussion. Ballots will be sent out Nov. 15th and are due back by Dec 15th. Expect to see them in the newsletter.

President Henry discussed the future locations of the Annual meetings. We may be asked to help out with preparations for the Oklahoma City meetings.

Jorge L said she tried to work on students attending Range Youth Camp to participate in the Range Youth Forum. We have no volunteers so far. Cade R suggested going thru the FFA since some of their speeches deal with range management. Dusty and Cade R will explore getting the word out to Ag Teachers.

The membership committee said they are trying to increase membership in the Kansas Section. E-mail Cade R or John Henry with ideas.

Cade Rensink said the 2011 National Ag Agent tour will be held in Kansas. They are currently looking for grazing/range related stops. The meeting will be hosted in Overland Park. Cade was asking for support of the Kansas Section. We discussed sponsoring the tour.

Livia Olsen was approved as our new webmaster.

The next meeting of the Kansas Section will be Jan. 20th, 2011. It was moved and seconded to adjourn, and participants left to tour the Konza Prairie.

Alex Miller

Smoke Modeling Tool Could Benefit Grassland Managers Goal is to Curb Smoke during Prescribed Burns

MANHATTAN, Kan. – Prescribed burning in the Flint Hills has significant economic benefits to grassland managers, but can also potentially cause air quality problems at times. This is especially troublesome for large metropolitan areas such as Kansas City and Wichita because so many people are impacted.

New modeling tools and decision support systems being developed at Kansas State University could help reduce the potential for air quality problems while still allowing for timely prescribed burning of the Flint Hills, said Carol Blocksome, K-State Research and Extension range management researcher.

This voluntary system will be field tested during the spring of 2011 in selected areas of the Flint Hills, as part of the State of Kansas Flint Hills Smoke Management Plan, Blocksome said. The test will be the start of a validation and refinement period of the new system that should last two to four years. The system could then be finalized and operational in about five years, if all goes well.

The decision support system (DSS) being developed by Doug Goodin and colleagues in K-State's Department of Geography, is based on a smoke plume transportation model called V-Smoke, used by the U.S. Forest Service. That model attempts to predict where a large plume of smoke will go on a given day, based on environmental conditions and other factors.

The DSS from K-State uses V-Smoke, along with data on forage biomass conditions on the ground and historical burn patterns in specific counties, to predict how much burning may take place on a given day, how much smoke could occur, and the direction in which the smoke plume is likely to move, Blocksome explained.

K-State's DSS model will be run daily during April, with the results issued as a series of advisories for specific counties, or sections of counties, in Kansas.

"If the DSS model results suggest that burning in a particular location is likely to cause smoke plumes to move over a large metropolitan area, it will flag that location as an area of concern. This will provide burn managers with additional information for deciding whether burning at that location should be recommended," Blocksome said.

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Smoke Modeling cont'd

Starting in April of 2011, K-State extension staff and others will ask grassland managers to check the DSS website starting at 6:00 a.m. the morning before a prescribed burn is planned, she said.

"If the website flags a location as an area of concern, we hope grassland managers in that area will consider calling off the burn that day and waiting for the next opportunity," Blocksome said.

The DSS model is part of the State of Kansas Flint Hills Smoke Management Plan. It is important to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the Environmental Protection Agency that the state has such a plan and that it is effective, she added. If grassland managers are making a good faith effort to follow the smoke management plan, it is hoped that this will eliminate the occasional "exceedance," a day on which smoke from Flint Hills burning causes ozone levels to be higher than the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

Adjusting burning plans to take into account the information provided by the DSS model will be voluntary for now. Whether compliance remains voluntary depends in part on how well the DSS model advisories are accepted by grassland managers in the Flint Hills, Blocksome said.

Depending on when the new website becomes operational, grassland managers can expect to receive more information over the winter and early spring about the new web-based advisory smoke management system from K-State.

"They will be made aware of how the system will work and the importance of following the voluntary advisories. If all goes well over the next few years, the system will be followed by grassland managers and will keep smoke from causing ozone exceedances in metropolitan areas in Kansas," Blocksome said.

"If this voluntary system is successful, we may be able to avoid having any type of mandatory regulations on prescribed burning in the Flint Hills," she added.

Story by:

Steve Watson

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Additional Information:

Carol Blocksome is at 785-532-5776 or blocksom@ksu.edu

SRM Nominations (Fall 2010)**2nd Vice President****Dustin Tacha**

I was born and raised in Oakley, KS. I attended Fort Hays State University, earning Bachelor (2006) and Master (2009) degrees in biology with emphasis in grassland ecology and range science. My graduate research was an in depth study of the effects of black-tailed prairie dog on shortgrass vegetation in western Kansas. While attending college, I worked three summers as a Natural Resources Conservation Service student trainee in Ness City, Eureka, and Hutchinson. I worked an additional three summers for a private company conducting the National Resources Inventory (NRI) on rangeland in Kansas, Nebraska, and Colorado, which was contracted out by NRCS in those states. Also in the private sector, I conducted rangeland inventories and grazing plan reviews for a carbon credit program, which allowed me exposure to a wide diversity of rangeland landscapes from Kansas and Colorado to Montana. Upon graduation with my Master Degree in 2009, I went to work for NRCS in Hugoton, KS, where I worked on rangeland and cropland resource concerns from April 2009 – April 2010. I am currently a NRCS Rangeland Management Specialist in Winfield, KS. I enjoy hunting, fishing, and the outdoors in general. I love my job, helping Kansas producers with our state's rangeland resource issues as well as the unique concerns of land and people.

Chris Tecklenburg

Born and raised in Scott City, Kansas. Lived in Western Kansas until college. Grew up in an Agriculture community and worked on a cattle ranch throughout high school. In 2001, I earned a Bachelor degree from Ft. Hays in Biology with an emphasis in Rangeland Management. I applied and accepted a position with the NRCS in 2001 as a Rangeland Mgt Specialist. I have 11 ½ years of government service. For the past 9 years I have served as a rangeland consultant and advisor based out of South Hutchinson, KS to numerous ranchers and farmers in a 12 county area. I provide inventories and evaluations of their resources, identify problems and propose land improvement alternatives. I have been an SRM member since 2001.

Director**Jamie T. Holopirek**

Jamie T. Holopirek is the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) District Conservationist at the Greensburg Service Center in Kansas. Holopirek has been in this position since October 2004. He has worked with several ranchers in Kiowa and Comanche Counties in the South Central region of Kansas to reduce and control the invasion of Eastern Red cedars while also encouraging prescribed grazing. Holopirek has worked with the Comanche Pool Prairie Resource Foundation and the Red Hills Prescribed Burning Association while being in Kiowa County.

Holopirek worked as a Soil Conservationist with NRCS in the Seneca Field Office prior to accepting the District Conservationist position in Greensburg. While working in this Northeastern County in Kansas, he worked mainly on cool season pastures dealing with numerous brush infestations such as Sumac and Buck brush. Holopirek worked in this portion of the state from October 2002 to October 2004.

From July 2001 to October 2002, Holopirek worked as a Soil Conservationist in the Concordia Service Center which is in the North Central part of Kansas. He worked on native grasslands in Cloud County to encourage landowners to distribute grazing more uniformly by developing various types of watering systems.

Prior to beginning his career with NRCS in July 2001, Holopirek graduated in May from Fort Hays State University where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture with an emphasis in Crop Science. While attending college and throughout his career with NRCS, Holopirek has managed a cow/calf and a stocker operation on native rangelands in Central Kansas. He practices rotational grazing with his cow/calf operation and his stocker program as well. Holopirek also uses prescribed burning to stimulate native grasses as much as possible.

His hobbies include hunting, fishing, watching sports, and spending time with his wife and two children whenever he is not working at his NRCS job or ranching.

Glenn Brunkow

Glenn is a fifth generation farmer/ rancher in the Flint Hills of Northeast Kansas. He and his wife Jennifer and their kids Isaac and Tatum raise cattle, sheep and crops with his father. Glenn is a graduate of Kansas State University with a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Economics and a master's degree in Agronomy. He is also the County Extension Director and Agriculture Agent for Pottawatomie County. . He is a graduate of the American Farm Bureau Partners in Ag Leadership program and the NCBA Masters in Beef Advocacy course. Most of all he is the proud producer of the food America eats.

Kevin Parsons

Kevin was born in 1983 and grew up near the town of Winfield in South Central Kansas where he spent most of his time hunting, fishing, farming, and helping take care of his family's cattle herd. After high school, Kevin attended Oklahoma State University in Stillwater Oklahoma. He was a member of the Oklahoma chapter of the Society for Range Management and competed in the under graduate range management exams in 2007 and 2008. His team placed 4th in 2007. While in college Kevin lived and worked at the OSU Rangeland Research Station in Stillwater Oklahoma. At the Research station, Kevin was in charge of maintaining prescribed fire equipment, building cattle pens, and caring for 150 head of first calf heifers. He was also involved in the vegetation data collection for patch burn patch grazing research done at OSU. Kevin graduated From OSU in May of 2008 with a BS degree in Natural Resources Ecology and Management; he specialized in Range Management. After college, Kevin went back to work on his family's farm until hiring on with the NRCS in September of 2009. Kevin currently works for the NRCS in Eureka, Kansas, as a Rangeland Management Specialist. Kevin currently lives outside of Eureka spending most of his free time hunting, fishing, and touring the prairie.

VOTE BY DECEMBER 15

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Jan 13 Tallgrass Legacy Alliance Meeting, Strong City, KS
- Jan 20 Kansas Section, Society for Range Management Meeting, Wichita, KS
- Jan 20-21 Kansas Natural Resources Conference, Wichita, KS
- Jan 25 Prescribed Burning Workshop, Emporia, KS
- Feb 6-10 Society for Range Management Annual Meeting, Billings, MT
- Mar 2 Prescribed Burning Workshop, Cassoday, KS
- Apr 2-8 International Rangeland Congress, Rosario, Argentina