



NE Section Council

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Nebraska Section Society for Range Management Newsletter



Message from the President

Lance Schutte

We are beginning to wrap up the fall season as the yellow, orange and red leaves are giving way to barren tree branches and what used to be green pastures now have amber and straw-colored hues. It is generally about this time each year that I realize we are a short 45 days from a new year, and I begin to reflect on what has occurred over the past year.

Thinking back to January 1, 2019, our year started off WET and COLD just like most, if not all, of you. This trend continued through until just recently, at least for us in south central Nebraska. These wet and cold conditions affected many of our livestock and grain producers. Calving was a nightmare to say the least, ADG were below normal in feedlots, animal health was an issue, getting crops into the fields was a challenge, grazing plans were blown up because pastures were under water, and do I even

dare mention all the flooding? Now I am wishing that I didn't reflect on 2019. However, amidst all these challenges I try to find the silver lining.

I know people who worked diligently to help Nebraska producers face and overcome many of the challenges that 2019 brought. My local volunteer fire departments gathered fence supplies and monetary donations, hay was donated and delivered with no costs to livestock producers, and some cattle were even donated to those who lost nearly everything. All of these made it through the major news outlets. I would like to highlight a few things that are equally important but didn't necessarily make national news.

UNL Extension wrote articles on species selection on Prevent Plant acres to help offset feed costs. NRCS, UNL Extension, local consultants and a host of others assisted livestock producers adjust

grazing plans for lost acres due to high water. Articles were written and disseminated on guidelines for grazing wet pastures and what could be done with debris and silt from the flooding. I realize this is a very small sampling of what occurred in response to what occurred in 2019. However, many of these instances were conducted or influenced by Nebraska SRM members!

We will be celebrating Thanksgiving in a few weeks, and I will be thankful for many things. One of those is that I am a very small part of a superb group of people who exhibit such passion and dedication to their profession, to their communities, and to their state. And I want to thank you all for everything you did to help our ag communities survive 2019. I want to close by wishing each one of you a happy Holiday season and I look forward to seeing many of you in Denver in February!

Historian's Report

Jeff Nichols

DO YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED IN THE NEBRASKA SECTION.....

Five Years Ago (2014)

The Nebraska Section officers were: Bob Broweleit, President; Jon Soper, Past President; Karla Jenkins. President Elect; Angie Petersen. Secretary-Treasurer; Shelia Luoma. Newsletter Editor;

Jeff Nichols and Anthony Perlin-ski were Council members.

The Nebraska Section annual meeting was held October 7th-9th at North Platte, NE. The meeting was organized by Bob Broweleit.

The Nebraska Section Range Management Service Award was presented to Shelly Kelly (Taylor). The Rangeman's Award was pre-

sented to the Sundstrom family of the Broken Box Ranch north of Moorefield, NE. The Section scholarship was presented to Lacey Clarke of Berwyn, NE.

There were 1,275 participants in the six Area Range Judging contests held across NE, with 403 participants at the State Contest held near Curtis, NE.
(continued page 4)

Franklin County Ranch Family Receives Rangeman's Award

Nadine Bishop

Choquette Family Ranch – James and JT Choquette recipients of Nebraska Section, SRM Award

Hastings, Ne., November 7, 2019 – Each year the Nebraska Section Society for Range Management (SRM) recognizes a rancher, or ranch family, who exemplifies a strong land ethic that is the heart of the Society's mission. The Choquette family of Upland, NE was recently recognized by the Society during the Section's 2019 annual meeting.



Jim and JT Choquette received the 2019 Nebraska Section-SRM Rangeman's award. From left to right: Brad Schick, NE Section Council member, Jim Choquette, JT Choquette, Lance Schutte, Section President.

The Choquette family has been farming and ranching in south-central Nebraska for nearly 130 years. From the late 1880's, through the Homestead Act Era, the Dust Bowl Era and beyond the family's farming and ranching practices have evolved and adapted, allowing their operation to survive and thrive.

About 30 years ago, the ranch began a new focus to foster soil health and move away from grazing the way it had always been done. Today, the 5th

generation builds on the work of previous generations. They have moved to a management strategy that allows them to graze cattle efficiently, cost-effectively and holistically. Cover crops and rotational grazing are two of the most critical parts of the success of the ranching operation's endeavor.



Jim Choquette sits atop his 4 year-old breeding stallion, 'A Saint En Gold,' on the family ranch. Although he had not ridden for 60 years, it all came back to this cowboy in an instant.

JT Choquette is continuing the family legacy with his dad, Jim. The operation tries to maximize what nature provides to boost profits, increase soil health, and improve overall sustainability. The Choquette's management focus is to mimic nature as much as possible. For example, large pastures all have been divided into smaller paddocks via portable fenceline, and cattle intensively graze their paddock before moving to the next paddock, similar to how bison herds once grazed the Great Plains. By allowing the grasses and plants time to recover and renew, the land is more productive and allows for more significant gains in the cattle herd. At the same

time, labor and equipment costs have been significantly reduced and profits come from cutting the costs of expensive farming equipment. "Our focus is to spend less and grow more," says James Choquette. "We are managing our operation to compliment and work with nature, to work with the natural prairie environment."

Some other sustainable grazing and soil health practices that the Choquettes have implemented include:

- Reseeding areas that are low in productivity with a diverse mix of plants, legumes, and pollinators to feed not only the soil and microbes, but also nature and wildlife.
- Adding plants that increase the amounts of soil carbon to armor the soil. The mixture of plants include some plants that cattle may not like to eat but which provide soil health benefits. Perennial grasses are included as they provide the best filters and the best long-term benefits.
- Managing grazing to minimize disturbance and optimize root systems.

The Choquette family believes in changing practices but not principles and their management of the land has a two-fold purpose: To build biological wealth and to promote biological health. Their philosophy has allowed the ranch to successfully integrate management principles that are not only ecologically, but also economically sustainable.

North Platte Man Recognized for Contributions to Rangeland Management Nadine Bishop

Dr. Jerry Volesky Honored for Contributions to Rangeland Management

Dr. Jerry Volesky, of North Platte, Nebraska was recently awarded the 2019 Nebraska Section, Society for Range Management (SRM), Range Management Service Award at the NE Section-SRM 2019 Annual Meeting. The Range Management Service Award recognizes range management professionals for outstanding service in promoting wise management and use of Nebraska rangeland resources.

Dr. Volesky is a Professor, and Extension Range and Forage Specialist with the UN-L and is located at the West Central Research and Extension Center in North Platte. His area of focus is livestock grazing and his primary area of research is grazing management and systems. While his primary research is conducted on Sandhills rangeland at the Gudmundson Sandhills Laboratory near



Dr. Anthony Perlinski, past Nebraska Section Society for Range Management presents the 2019 Range Service Award to Dr. Jerry Volesky

Whitman and Barta Brothers Ranch near Long Pine, he has additional projects involving seeded perennial and annual forages.

In his twenty-four years at the University of Nebraska, Volesky authored and co-authored

numerous publications including NebGuides that are used by livestock producers across the state. His many research projects have benefited livestock producers, graziers, land managers and the entire range management profession. Dr. Volesky is the go-to person for answers to rangeland management questions for many ranchers and resource management professionals. In addition to his research activities, he is involved in the development and implementation of range and forage management programming for youth and adults.

Volesky is a long-time member of SRM and has contributed greatly to the Nebraska Section SRM activities through his work with range judging, range youth camp, annual meetings and workshops. He has served on numerous Section Committees and the Section's Advisory Council, serving as Section President in 2007.

Arterburn Recognized as Outstanding Young Range Professional Nadine Bishop

Jack Arterburn, of Chadron, Nebraska was recently awarded the 2019 Nebraska Section, Society for Range Management (SRM), Outstanding Young Range Professional Award. This award recognizes contributions of younger range professionals to the advancement of the art and science of rangeland management.

Arterburn is currently the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Beef Systems Extension Educator for Northwest Nebraska. Previously, he was a graduate research and teaching assistant at UN-L. As a Beef Systems Educator, Jack provides research-based educational programs and resources to assist beef producers meet their goals.

Arterburn is a member of the Nebraska Section Society for Range Management and a council member for the section, a member of The Wildlife Society, and a member of the Nebraska Grazing Conference Advisory Committee. He is also an advisor to the Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition. In 2018, Jack was named one of the Cattle Business Weekly Top 10 Industry Leaders Under 40. He is also a member of the Tri-County Prescribed Burn Association and serves on its Prescribed Burn Approval Committee.

Arterburn attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and received his MS in Applied Ecology in 2016 and his BS in Fisheries and Wildlife, Habitat Management option with a minor in Grassland Ecology and Management in 2014.



Jack Arterburn received the 2019 Nebraska Section, Society for Range Management Outstanding Young Range Professional Award



WE WANT YOU!

On the Nebraska SRM Section Council board!

If you are interested in joining the Nebraska SRM Section Council board, contact Committee Chairman Bob Browleit (308)240-0420 bentbarc@gmail.com

Historian's Report...continued

Jeff Nichols

Ten Years Ago (2009)

The Nebraska Section officers were: Doug Whisenhunt, President; Mary Reece, Past President; Michael Croxen, President Elect; Leslie Stewart-Phelps, Secretary/Treasurer; Jamie Hornickel, Newsletter Editor; Curtis Talbot and Nick Simonson were Council Members.

The Nebraska Section annual meeting was held October 20th -22nd at Sidney, NE. The theme for the meeting was "The Value of Grassroots Conservation Partnerships - Pards". The meeting was organized by Doug Whisenhunt, Kristin Miller, Leslie Stewart-Phelps and Mary Reece.

The NE Section Range Management Service Award was presented to the Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition (NGLC). The Nebraska Rangeman's award was presented to the Jim and Becky Carr of the Carr Ranch. The Nebraska Section scholarships were presented to Michelle Miller of Minatare, NE and Daniel Frank of Bassett, NE. Two Special Awards of Merit were presented by the NE Section: Doug Whisenhunt, NRCS, for his efforts in promoting prescribed fire for maintaining and reclaiming Nebraska rangeland, and Kathy Clark, Twin Platte NRD Secretary located in the North Platte NRCS office for many years of service toward the registration and organization of the Nebraska Range Youth Camp.

Courtney Doremus of Polk, NE was the top High School Youth Forum presenter for the NE Section with her talk on the "Floods of Nebraska". David Kennedy followed up with his presentation titled "Invasive Species". Both went on to present at the International meetings held in Denver CO.

Twenty Years Ago (1999)

The Nebraska Section officers were: Bob Masters, President; Lora O'Rourke, President Elect; Terry Enfield, Past President, Bob Sprentall, Secretary/Treasurer; Sherry Connot, Newsletter Editor; Walt Schacht and Teri Edeal were Council members.

The annual Nebraska Section meeting was held in Kearney with "Global Change" as the meeting theme. More than 80 people were in attendance. Chris Helzer and Brent Lathrop of the Nature Conservancy provided an excellent tour on restoring native plant communities along the Platte River. Dave Cook of Oshkosh was presented the Range Management Service Award. The Rangeman's Award was presented to the Tippetts and Myers Ranch in recognition of their rangeland resource management. Dave Ference, Don Phillips, and Dennis Mottl were presented with the Nebraska Section's Special Service Award for their excellent Agriculture Education efforts. Scholarships were awarded to Anna Simmons Bodie from UNL and Dustin Ladenburger of CSC.

The State Range Judging contest was held at Battle Creek, Nebraska, where over 300 individuals participated from across the state.

Lorenz F. Bredemeier, age 88 passed away on August 16, 1999. He was the first president of the Nebraska Section in 1953, the year of its inception. Lorenz retired from the SCS after many years of dedicated service in the Range Management profession.

Thirty Years Ago (1989)

The Nebraska Section Officers were: Jack Maddux, President; Sid Salzman, Past President; Cort Dewing, President Elect; Daryl Cisney, Secretary-Treasurer; Mary Raymer (Reece), Newsletter Editor; and Catherine Mills and Sheila Valasek (Luoma) were council

persons.

The William P. (Bill) Wester Scholarship fund was established following his passing in the fall of 1989.

The Nebraska Section meeting was held in Grand Island on October 12th and 13th, which was attended by over 80 people. The theme of the meeting was "Surviving Prosperity?" and focused on watching the expense side of the ledger even during "good" years.

Justin Derner received the NE section scholarship award. Justin was the President of the UNL Range Management Club.

The "Rangeman's Award" was presented to Roy and June Stewart of Newport. The NE section Range Service Award was presented to Brent Lathrop of Geneva. In addition, a special award was presented to Reed and Rose Hamilton for their many years of contributions to the Nebraska Range Youth Camp. The Hamilton's have been involved in the youth camp since its inception in 1963.

The State Range Judging contest was held at Loup City with 242 contestants participating. The Ord high school represented Nebraska at the Old West Regional Range Judging contest held at Baker, Montana. The team placed tenth. Dave Ference, instructor at Ord High School, was their coach.

Fifty Years Ago (1959)

A survey indicated that there were over 100 wild turkeys living along a ten-mile area of the Niobrara River near Gordon. This population resulted from a release of four hens and two gobblers on the Mills Ranch by the Gordon Wildlife Club in the fall of 1953. The turkeys were imported to Nebraska from West Virginia.

Sara Wahl and Shelly Kelly

ranch sponsor please contact Shelly Kelly at shelly@sandhillstaskforce.com or Sara Wahl at sara.wahl@usda.gov.



Seeking Ranch Sponsors

Seeking Ranch Sponsor – Nebraska Youth Range Camp

The Nebraska Youth Range camp is seeking new ranch sponsors for the 57th annual camp and we need your help! Due to the generosity of our twenty ranch sponsors from last year we

are able to cut our registrations cost in half for 2019. This would not be possible without the continued support of our ranch sponsors. We need the Nebraska Section members help! Would you or someone you know be interested in sponsoring the 57th Nebraska Youth Range Camp? We have three different levels of sponsorship available. If you know someone who is interested in serving as a

In memoriam, Jack Maddux

Wilfred Jackson "Jack" Maddux was born on May 7, 1932 to Glen and Eva (Fanning) Maddux in Imperial, NE and departed this life at his home in Wauneta, NE on November 24, 2019. He was 87 years of age. Jack graduated from Wauneta Public School in 1949 and from Colorado State University in 1953. He served a tour of duty as an Air Force Instructor Pilot.



Jack Maddux

Jack returned home to the family operation and became the third generation on the Maddux Ranch, homesteaded in 1886. Due to the untimely death of his father he became general manager of Maddux Cattle Co. in 1958. That same year on December 30th he married Carol Smith and to this union three children were born: John Glen, Sandra Louise, and Mary Ann. Jack was totally devoted to his family and the ranch. He held a deep appreciation to all who worked with him through the years and he often said the most important thing we do in life is raise our family.

Jack was a member of the United Methodist Church, mayor of Wauneta and a 4-H and

Boy Scout leader. He took special pride in the number of boys in the troop who earned the rank of Eagle Scout.

Jack's continuous search for improving the cattle and the land eventually led him to serve as President of the Nebraska Stock Growers Assoc. and the Nebraska Section for Range Management. He became involved with the University of Nebraska Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources serving on numerous boards and support groups through the years. He also served as chairman of the University of Nebraska Foundation. Jack was named to several boards with the National Cattleman Beef Assoc. and held several leadership roles with Cattle-Fax from its inception. His concern about water and natural resource policy issues led to his involvement in the formulation of Nebraska's groundwater management legislation.

Jack's devotion to agricultural issues and the state in general led to his receiving many plaques and recognitions but he always maintained his reward was having the opportunity to know so many wonderful people. He had a genuine concern for each individual he met from school, up until the last days of his life.

Jack was preceded in death by his parents, brother Eugene Maddux, sister in law Loree Maddux, sister-in-law Sylvia Burke and brother-in-law Edward Burke. Left to mourn his passing are his wife, of over 60 years, Carol, son John (Julia) Maddux of Imperial, NE, and daughters Sandra Maddux of West Linn, OR

and Mary (Matt) Smith of Walnut Creek, CA. Grandchildren, Gabriel (Laura) Smith of East Haddam,, CT, Virgil Smith of Stanford, CA, Jacob Smith of San Diego, CA, Jackson Smith and Eva Smith of Walnut Creek, CA, Luke Conklin and Rebecca Conklin of West Linn, OR, Taylor Maddux and Thomas Maddux of Imperial, NE. Great Grandchildren, James, Madeleine and John Alexander Smith of East Haddam, CT.

Funeral services for Jack were held on November 30, 2019, in the Wauneta United Methodist Church with Pastor Elias Mukindia officiating. Burial was held in Riverside Cemetery with full Military Honors.

A reception will follow services at the Wauneta Community Building (Legion Hall). Friends and family are encouraged to attend and share a time of fellowship with the Maddux family.

Memorials are suggested to the Maddux Family for future designation or charity of your choice.

Online condolences may be left at liewerfuneralhome.com.

Liewer Funeral Home of Wauneta was entrusted with arrangements.

Society for Range Management: what is it?

Chuck Jarecki

If you are like most ranchers in Montana, you are a livestock manager plus a steward of the land. Each is of equal importance. During my career as a cattle rancher in the Polson area, it was my basic tenet that I was a steward of the land to provide a good home for my livestock so that they could produce to their genetic potential. MSGA President Fred Wacker shares a similar view, as stated below on his web site

"I believe that the rancher is the first and the best environmentalist and caretaker of the land. We will never do anything to harm our livestock or to harm our land because if we do, we're only harming ourselves."

I would like to introduce you to the Society for Range Management (SRM). Established in 1948, its mission is to provide leadership for the stewardship of rangelands based on sound ecological principles. I have been a member for over fifty years and have served on the SRM's Board of Directors. SRM's membership includes producers, researchers, Federal land managers, university faculty and range management students. So, there is ample opportunity to learn from fellow SRM members.

The SRM is divided into Sections. If you go to: www.rangelands.org and click on 'Sections' you can see the entire listing. In Montana you would normally belong to the International Mountain Section (generally the western half of Montana and Alberta) or the Northern Great Plains (eastern Montana, North Dakota and adjoining Canadian prov-

inces). But you can belong to any Section you desire. One thing I have enjoyed over the years is attending summer range tours in areas that I would never have gotten to see otherwise, plus all the friends I have made within the organization. Traveling to tours in many parts of Alberta was an added bonus.

Membership in SRM has many benefits. Here are just a few:

- 1) If you lease land (State or Federal), your SRM membership shows to the public that you, as a land manager, desire to do the best management possible using the latest science.
- 2) If SRM rancher members get together they can promote the kind in research that will help their bottom line. They could get SRM to support their needs in research and work to get the funding.
- 3) Rancher participation in SRM activities brings about new friends in the field of range management, like-minded folks in research, teaching, extension, youth activities, etc.
- 4) SRM provides ways to expand learning opportunities so you can continue to care for Montana's greatest renewable resource.
- 5) SRM range tours are educational and one learns of other rangeland ecosystems and the management challenges involved.
- 6) SRM has a presence in Washington, D.C. that works to ensure that legislation affecting rangelands is based on proven science, not on

some whim.

SRM has two publications available to members. The first is the "Rangeland Ecology and Management". It is basically used to publish range related research papers. The second is "Rangelands" and it is more for practical articles. I have had two manuscripts published in "Rangelands".

SRM holds a national meeting once a year, usually in February. At this meeting there are held numerous sessions that cover topics of interest to the rancher. In 2020 the meeting will be in Denver, CO, and in 2021 the gathering will be held in Boise, ID.

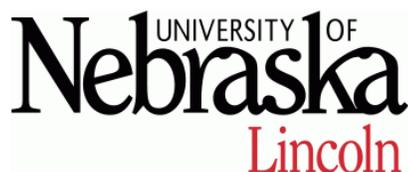
I would encourage you to join SRM and encourage other fellow ranchers to do the same. Simply go the SRM web site:

www.rangelands.org. From my standpoint, it has been a very rewarding experience, from the educational aspect and the great people you meet. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have. I can be contacted at: skywagon@centurytel.net.

Note:

The author has served as President of the Western Montana Stockmen's Assoc, MSGA BOD, Montana Beef Council (12 years), represented Montana on the former National Livestock and Meat Board (10 years) and served four years on a National Academy of Sciences Committee studying methods of classifying rangeland health.

Collegiate Range and Ag Clubs



2019-2020 UNL Range Club Officers

President: Asha Scheideler

Vice President: Nick Sanders

Primary Programmer: Ryley Johnson

Recruiter: Nicole Strand



2019-2020 CSU Ag Club Officers

President: Lindsey VanderMay

Vice President: Brooke Moore

Secretary/Treasurer: Myles Mendell

2019 SRM Collegiate Scholarship Recipients



Walt Schacht (let) with students Asha Scheideler (middle) and Lindsey VanderMay (right).

Walt Schacht awards two SRM scholarship recipients: Lindsey VanderMay, a student at Chadron State College and Asha Scheideler, a student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, during the state section meeting.

Both were recognized for their hard work in their perspective Ag and Range clubs among other involvements and their passion to continue their education and careers in the ag and range sector.



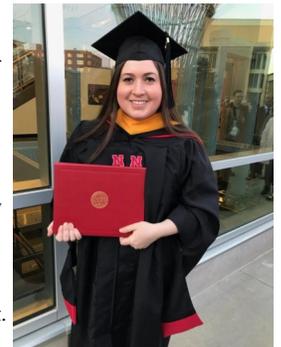
Monarch butterflies take a brief pause from heading south during fall migration in Aurora, Neb

Notes of Gratitude

The UNL Range Management Club would like to thank all of those who bought items and made donations to the club during the Crazy Auction at the NE section SRM meeting. The money will be used to send club members to the International SRM meeting in Denver of next year where they will compete in Plant I.D., Undergraduate Range Management Exam and extemporaneous speaking. Your support for the club and the youth within is greatly appreciated and does not go unnoticed.



Thank you everyone for your support and encouragement as I finished my MS in Agronomy with a specialization in Rangeland Mgmt.



We students need the support from our SRM mentors to help us along.

Thanks again!

Laura Rubeck

At a Glance

National SRM Meeting—Denver, CO

Sunday– Thursday, February 16–20, 2020

State Section Dinner—Denver, CO

Tuesday, February 18, 2020—6:00 PM

Reservation Details:

Hard Rock Café

500 16th Street Suite #120

Denver, CO 80202

(308) 623-3191

Reservation Name: NE Section SRM



Do you have information you want to share with other SRM Members?

Send an email to
Laura.Rubeck@ars.usda.gov

or

Amanda.Hefner@tnc.org

Get featured in the next newsletter!