



Nebraska Section Society for Range Management Newsletter



NE Section Council

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Inside this issue:

President's Corner	1
2026 Joint Conference	2
Monterey Annual Meeting	3
HSYF Update	4
IYRP Update	5
Lifetime Achievement Award	5
More from Monterey	6

President's Corner by Cheryl Dunn, President

As I begin my term as President, I am truly honored to serve this section and the broader Society for Range Management community. My first SRM conference was in 2001, and at that time I had no idea how deeply this organization would shape my career and professional network. Seventeen years ago, I came to Nebraska from Kansas, having grown up in western Kansas with family that did wheat farming and ranching. Some of my earliest lessons in stewardship came not from a classroom, but from watching family members care for the land. I still think about my great uncle, well into his 90s, out in the pasture cutting suckers to maintain healthy grass stands. That work ethic and long view of stewardship left a lasting impression on me.

When I arrived in Nebraska, I quickly became involved as a Plant ID team coach, advisor for the UNL Range Club, and Range Cup advisor. Those roles provided not only professional opportunities but also a strong sense of connection, mentorship, and shared purpose. The relationships built through this Society have influenced my work as an educator, researcher, and grassland advocate, and it is a privilege to now step into this leadership role.

This past year demonstrated what we can accomplish together. Our joint conference with the Nebraska Natural Legacy group was an outstanding success. By bringing together producers, agency professionals, researchers, educators, students, and conservation partners, we strengthened existing collaborations and created new ones. The strong attendance and thoughtful discussions reflected the depth of expertise and commitment within our rangeland community. The energy from that event gives us real momentum to build on in the coming year.

Looking ahead, 2026 will continue that collaborative spirit. Our annual meeting will once again be a joint gathering, this time bringing together Nebraska SRM, Nebraska Natural Legacy, and Nebraska Wildlife Society partners for an even broader conversation around grasslands, habitat, and working landscapes. These joint meetings expand perspectives, strengthen interdisciplinary partnerships, and help us address complex challenges more effectively, while also creating a stronger pipeline for young people to learn about and join our Society. Please keep an eye out for a Save the Date announcement in the coming months. You will not want to miss it.

The International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) also provides an exciting platform to highlight Nebraska's rangelands and the people who steward them. Our state's grasslands are globally significant working landscapes, and this year offers us a meaningful opportunity to elevate their importance across local, national, and international audiences. Through outreach, education, student engagement, and partnerships, we can ensure that Nebraska plays a visible and influential role in this global celebration.

[Continued on Page 2](#)

2026 Joint Conference: Nebraska Natural Legacy, The Wildlife Society & Society for Range Management

October 27 - 29

Younes Conference Center, Kearney, NE

outdoornebraska.gov/about/press-events/events/natural-legacy-conference/



President's Corner, Continued *By: Cheryl Dunn, President*

Lastly, I want to thank Jacob Harvey for stepping into the role of Incoming President. We appreciate Jacob's willingness to serve and support the continuity of our section. In this role, he will be coordinating and planning the joint October meeting in Kearney with the Nebraska Chapter of TWS and Nebraska Natural Legacy. We look forward to a productive and collaborative joint meeting this fall.

Cheryl D. Dunn
NESRM President

News from the SRM Annual Meeting in Monterey, CA *By: Cheryl Dunn*

This year, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln had eight students travel to the Society for Range Management Annual Meeting in Monterey. They competed in the Undergraduate Range Management Exam (URME), the Plant Identification Contest, and the Range Cup competition, and their preparation began long before they boarded the plane.

For months, these students dedicated themselves to studying plant characteristics, ecological principles, grazing management strategies, and policy issues. They practiced plant identification relentlessly, worked through grazing practices in another country, did a lot of mathing (stocking rates!) and refined their ability to think critically under pressure. The time and effort they invested showed not only in competition, but in the confidence and professionalism they carried throughout the week.

While the contests were important, the experience extended far beyond the score sheets and Latin names. They attended technical sessions together, networked with professionals, asked thoughtful questions, and actively supported our graduate students by showing up to research presentations and offering encouragement. That visible support speaks volumes about the culture of mentorship and teamwork we are building.

They also took time for team-building activities, strengthening friendships, building trust, and representing UNL with pride. By the end of the week, they returned home not only with sharpened knowledge and skills (and a new set of silverware minus the knives...if you know, you know), but with a stronger sense of belonging within the range profession.

Experiences like this are transformative. They reinforce classroom learning, expand professional networks, and help students see themselves as future leaders in rangeland management. I could not be prouder of their hard work, dedication, and the way they represented our program and we can't wait for Wichita 2027.



Nebraska High School Youth Forum in Monterey, CA By: Lisa Clarke McMillan

Mary Reece and Lisa McMillan accompanied three Nebraska delegates to Monterey, CA on Saturday February 7, 2026, to participate in the International SRM Meeting and High School Youth Forum (HSYF). The delegates included Justin Guggenmos- Erickson, Elizabeth Olson-Atkinson, Eli Rogers, Dunning. On Sunday morning they scoped out the home & presentation room, the conference center, and did a walking tour of Fisherman's Wharf and Cannery Row on the coast of the Pacific Ocean. Sunday evening was the opening night, and the HSYF orientation for the students to get acquainted with a short slide show about themselves and ice breaker games lead by Eli Rogers (2026 HSYF President), this was followed by practicing their 6-to-8-minute range related presentations.

Monday was the ecological tour with sights and stops on the Santa Lucia Preserve. The weather was cool, but viewing the stream running past Giant redwood trees, then down to the ocean was an ecosystem that was very foreign to our Nebraska delegates, but it was very educational and great learning experience for everyone. We returned to the Portola Hotel and observed the college students in the Plant I.D. study room and the Rangeland Cup posters. At the convention center they had a chance to attend the Trade Show, where Universities and Colleges were recruiting students for their programs, and businesses and agencies were showcasing their products. That evening all attended the "Professional Interaction" night where pizza and wings were served. During supper the students were introduced to five professionals that rotated around tables and visited with them regarding the paths they took through their education and into their current career. Our own Sheridan Wilson, Aurther, NE were in attendance and provided us with the education path, summer jobs and experiences that took her to her current position with AgSpire.

Tuesday was a full day of presentations, with Justin Guggenmos presentation titled "Rangeland Degradation", and Elizabeth Olson's talk titled "Virtual Fencing: A Game Changer for Range Conservation". The new SRM Lunch and Learn program was attended then back to delegate presentations after lunch.

The Nebraska delegates joined Nebraska SRM members on Tuesday night at the Section gathering in Monterey, it was an opportunity to interact with Nebraska members. The delegates after the Nebraska gathering were able to relax and unwind at the SRM Dance with the rest of the Forum delegates.

Wednesday, we assembled for a late breakfast followed by the HSYF business meeting. All delegates and sub-committee meeting members attended the SRM Business Lunch where Ben Beckman took the stage and welcomed all to the 2027 SRM Meeting in Wichita, KS (Nebraska is co-hosting with Kansas and Oklahoma). The afternoon workshop on "Interpreting Ecological Site Descriptions and State and Transition Models", and the election of the 2026 HSYF President Sage Imig from Hawaii.

Eli Rogers emceed the awards ceremony for the HSYF portion and we Nebraskans were proud when Bob Browleit took the stage and excepted a \$5,000 award for what we have done to promote the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP). The students changed clothes and the HSYF business meeting resumed, with graduation certificates for 24 delegates representing 10 different sections, with the seven HSYF Sub-Committee members in attendance, (which included Mary and Lisa too). The "Trinket Exchange" is always a highlight of the forum, and this years did not disappoint. This is the final time these high schoolers will be all together and exchanging a small gift/token showcasing their town, state, livelihood, etc., will act as a reminder of their friendship and the amazing time they all had at the International SRM meeting and HSYF in Monterey, CA.

The return trip on Thursday morning started very early with everyone leaving the hotel around 3:15 AM for our 5:00 AM flight. Everything was smooth and all returned tired but proud of our delegates. Thank you to the Nebraska Section members and Council for their support of the youth in this state.



Left to Right: Lisa, Justin, Elizabeth, Eli and Mary

An Update on IYRP **By: Bob Browleit**

The Nebraska section received the first SRM President's prize of \$5,000 our IYRP activities and proposal to the SRM board. With the prize, we hired an intern for the summer, Emma Bullerman, an ag communication major in conjunction with the Center for Grassland studies. Emma will be assisting us with IYRP activities including attending to the IYRP kiosk that is on display at the Capitol building and Morrill Hall and other locations in Nebraska throughout the summer. Here is a link to a Pure Nebraska TV program that highlights the display at the Capitol building. <https://youtu.be/F8VG2gUWvLw?si=yjvuoaVh-ojE554c> [youtu.be]

Links to the coach John Cook grassland videos can be found at <https://nebraskagrasslands.org/iyrp/> [nebraskagrasslands.org]

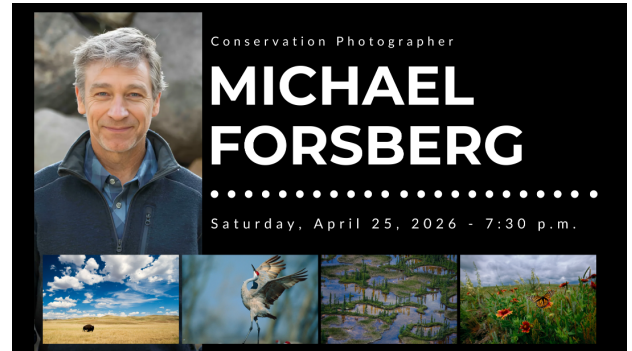
We hope our section members will share this link on their social media pages and help celebrate 2026 the International Year of Rangelands.

Also, if members want to become a partner in the Nebraska Grassland Alliance, go to the following link and our and join the growing coalition to support Nebraska's grasslands. There is no cost to become a partner.

<https://nebraskagrasslands.org/become-a-partner/> [nebraskagrasslands.org]

Additionally, Michael Forsberg will be the featured guest at Arts for the Soul in Lincoln on April 25th. This IYRP activity can be found at the website:

<https://fpclincoln.org/michaelforsberg/> [fpclincoln.org]



Michael Forsberg
Conservation Photographer
Saturday, April 25, 2026 - 7:30 p.m.

**Cranes, Plains, and a Watershed--
A photographer's journey in flyover country.**

**Michael will be sharing his photos & stories from
a
lifetime of photographing Nebraska & the Great
Plains**

Daryl Cisney's Lifetime Achievement Award

The Joint Natural Legacy and Nebraska Section of the Society for Range Management Conference was held in Lincoln, Nebraska at the University of Nebraska East Campus Student Union on October 6-8, 2025.

During the Awards Presentation, Daryl A. Cisney of Ogallala was presented a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Nebraska Section of the Society for Range Management. Daryl was cited during the presentation for his long term activity for and support of the Nebraska Youth Range Camp and Youth Range Judging programs in Nebraska, as well as his ongoing and continuing financial support of the High School Youth Forum travel and involvement at the International SRM Annual Meetings. Daryl was cited for his support of Various Educational Programs including the nearly 25 years of acting as a Guest Instructor for the Field Portion of a UNL class for Seniors and Graduate Students, as well as ongoing and continued financial support of the Annual Nebraska Section Scholarship Awards.

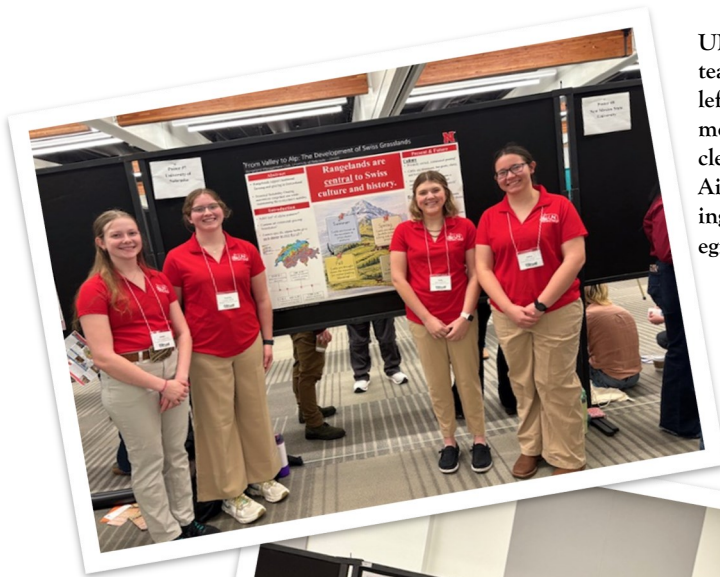
As a past NE Section President and a multiple year Section Secretary, Daryl has continued to provide leadership to the Nebraska Section and is a very deserving participant of the Lifetime Achievement Award.



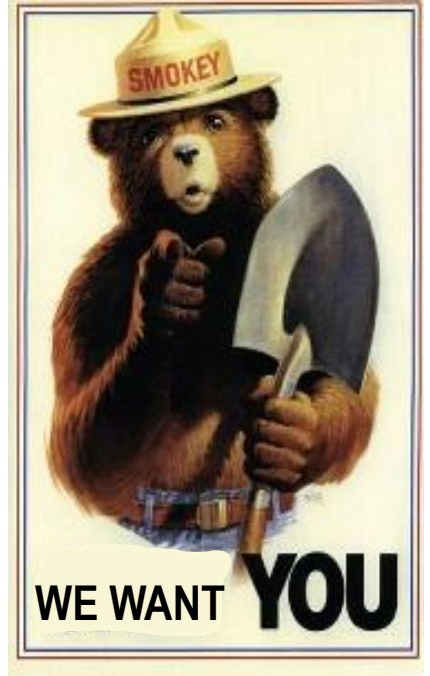
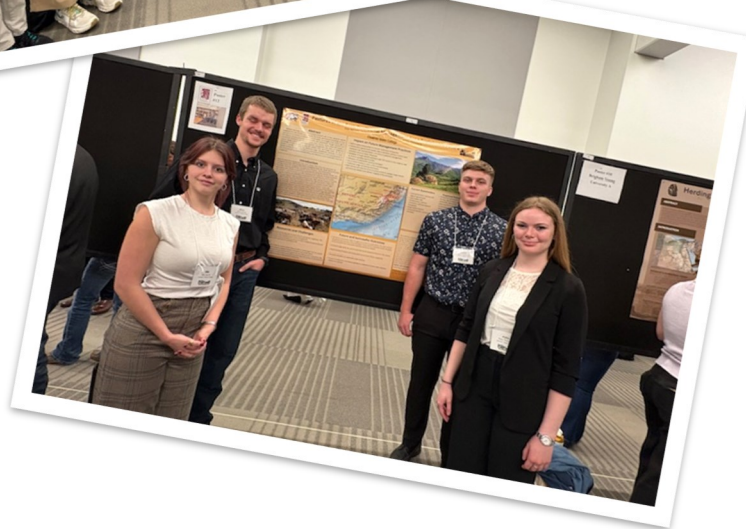
More from Monterey...



Left to Right: 2027 Co-Chairs Ben Beckman (Nebraska) and Justin Roemer (Kansas) present on the 2027 meeting and Wichita at the SRM Business Meeting



UNL Rangeland Cup team (from right to left; Bobbi Guggemos, Cassidy Maricle, Abby Hirschman, Aidan Choat) presenting on the grazing strategies in Switzerland



On the Nebraska Section SRM Council Board!

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