

## **WERA1008: Rangelands West Partnership**

**Date of Annual Report: 07/28/2011**

### **Report Information:**

Annual Meeting Dates: 05/22/2011 to 05/24/2011

Period the Report Covers: 10/2009 to 09/2010

### **Participants: Annual Meeting Attendees:**

On site attendees: Norman Harris-AK; Barbara Hutchinson-AZ; Sheila Merrigan-AZ; Jeanne Pfander-AZ; Matt Rahr-AZ; Mel George-CA; Mark Thorne-HI; Karen Launchbaugh-ID; Lovina Roselle-ID; Walter Fick-KS; Livia Olsen-KS; Glenn Duff-MT; Rachel Frost-MT; Jeff Mosley-MT; Amy Ganguli-ND; Amy Shannon-NV; Pat Johnson-SD; Felix Ayala-TX; Beth Burritt-UT; David Kruger-WY; Rachel Mealor-WY; Merrita Fraker-Marble-WY; John Tanaka- WY; John Taylor, University of Queensland – Australia; Colin Kaltenbach, Administrative Advisor

Virtual / Online attendees: John Kawula-AK; Allison Level-CO; Dana W. R. Boden-NE; Tip Hudson, WA

### **Brief Summary of Minutes of Annual Business Meeting, May 24, 2011:**

[Note: The Rangelands West Partnership is also often referred to as the Western Rangelands Partnership (WRP) but for the purposes of the WERA documentation, we are using the name Rangelands West Partnership (RWP).]

Chair Report - Amy Shannon opened the business meeting; thanked Rachel Frost for successful meeting arrangements; acknowledged generous donations for meeting meals and refreshments from Montana Experiment Station (Dr. Jeff Jacobsen, Dean & Director), Montana State University Extension (Dr. Doug Steele, VP for External Relations and Director of Extension) and Montana State University Libraries (Dr. Tamara Miller, Dean of Libraries).

Secretary Report – Jeanne Pfander reported that she had compiled and submitted annual meeting minutes and report for WERA; throughout year helped organize and keep notes of conference calls for tech committee and for the annual meeting planning; experimented with email newsletter in January; mostly irregular communications to membership go out through listserv messages.

Financial Report – John Tanaka

Approximately \$3,000 in account held for RWP at Wyoming; whatever is left after Bozeman mtg will go to next meeting organizers (AZ).

WERA update - Colin Kaltenbach

WERA 1008 terminates September 30, 2011. Renewal was approved in March for 5 years (Oct.1, 2011-Sept.30, 2016). John Tanaka will be administrative advisor, effective Oct.1. If someone is not on Colin's list, they need to sign up with their Experiment Station Director. Report will be sent out via listserv for folks to take to their directors.

#### Upcoming annual meetings:

Arizona will host for 2012 (March 11-13). Alaska is offering to host in 2013, May or early June. Perhaps California in 2014? Dave Kruger, WY has a planning document for hosting RWP meetings that he will pass on to Arizona team.

#### Governance / Executive Committee:

Amy Shannon was thanked for her service as Chair and rotated to Past-Chair. Mark Thorne moved into Chair position and Jeanne Pfander rotated to Vice-Chair. Rachel Mealor was welcomed as newly elected Secretary for the Rangelands West Partnership (RWP).

### **General Meeting Notes (RWP Annual Meeting, May 22-24, 2011)**

#### Summary of meeting:

The first day of the meeting included a review of RWP activities including presentations and meetings at the SRM Annual Meeting, grant-funded projects that members are involved in (eXtension Rangelands, RSIS, HEC/Rangelands Education; ISE Global Rangelands, etc.) and state site updates/progress reports. Additionally, a presentation was given by John Taylor, President of the Australian Rangelands Society. Felix Ayala, representing the University of Sonora (Mexico) and Texas A&M-Kingsville, was welcomed. Discussions were held about RW state site maintenance & support options, including Az IT support and/or the LibGuides approach.

The second day of the meeting included the Business Meeting (see above), a discussion on the benefits of the range scientist/librarian collaboration; new grant proposal/project and funding opportunities; a brainstorming session and action planning.

Key actions / next steps include: revise RWP bylaws; develop RWP member website with member directory, etc.; establish regular online newsletter for membership; hold a mid-year virtual/online meeting; work on marketing and assessment/impact tasks.

#### **10/2009 – 09/2010 Accomplishments:**

- Successful annual meeting of the Rangelands West Partnership (March 2010, Laramie, WY). 31 attendees (18 on-site; 13 virtual attendees) representing 15 states
- Several grants received by different RWP partners for rangelands information projects
  - USDA Higher Education Challenge Grant - Repositioning Rangeland Education for a Changing World (University of Idaho, Humboldt State University, New Mexico State University, Oklahoma State University, South Dakota State University, University of California-Davis and Utah State University)
  - USDA-NIFA International Science and Education Global Rangelands Project (AZ, CA, ID, South Africa, Australia, FAO)
  - Range Science Information System Project (ID, MT)
- Western Extension and Research Administrative (WERA) status renewal documentation submitted
- RWP members contributing to eXtension Rangelands Community of Practice
- Significant progress on technical requirements and design for new Global Rangelands site.

### **Challenges of the past year:**

- Creating the new Global Rangelands site with limited resources and time
- Existing Rangelands West site has numerous technical problems with database causing user frustration
- State partners all facing budget constraints, impacts time/resources to devote to RWP activities

### **In process / Next Step activities:**

- Finish redesign of the Rangelands West portal including a new technical architecture to accommodate user-requested functionality and incorporate social media tools to encourage increased user-engagement;
- Continue to build and expand unique state rangelands websites with locally-specific content - with access provided also through the Global Rangelands repository search function and from the home page of Rangelands-West/Global Rangelands.
- Build a global repository of full-text rangeland science and management resources (called "Global Rangelands") in cooperation with rangeland-related organizations and associations from around the world
- Strengthen connections between Rangelands West/Global Rangelands, eXtension Rangelands, and the Range Science Education Council's resources and services, and continue their complementary development.
- Reestablish connections with AgNIC database as soon as we have a working Global Rangelands/R.W. database that can be harvested.

### **Impact Statement:**

The Rangelands West Partnership (RWP) seeks to provide quality web-based information, resources and tools to improve land management and ensure sustainability of rangelands. Our expected and ongoing outcomes and impacts include:

- Increased quality of rangeland information and resources to meet the needs of a broad range of users and audiences from around the world.
- Improved navigation and accessibility of desired information through the redesigned Rangelands West/Global Rangelands website.
- Creation of user-oriented services based on direct input from diverse audiences through formal needs assessments.
- Strengthened relationships among rangeland professionals, librarians, and information specialists in each Western state through improved communications resulting in greater sharing of information and content development.
- Development of standardized methods for metadata, incorporating input from the Western Rangelands Partners, FAO, and other interested stakeholders. The metadata for significant rangelands resources will then be input into the new portal.
- Identification of Western Rangeland Partnership university institutional repositories with relevant rangeland resources that could also be made available through Global Rangelands for additional access.

- Increased use and exposure of the Rangelands West website, and state rangelands websites to the global community.
- Significant steps taken toward the achievement of the primary vision of Rangelands West/Global Rangelands as the premier website for dissemination of scientifically-based printed information on rangeland ecology and management.