

## **WERA 1008: Rangelands West Partnership**

**Date of Annual Report: 04/17/2012**

### **Report Information:**

Annual Meeting Dates: 03/11/2012 to 03/14/2012

Period the Report Covers: 10/2010 to 09/2011

### **Participants (Annual Meeting Attendees)**

#### On-site:

United States (33): Norman Harris-AK; Barbara Hutchinson-AZ; Fadzayi Mashiri – AZ; Sheila Merrigan-AZ; Jeanne Pfander-AZ; Matt Rahr-AZ; George Ruyle – AZ; Jeff Schalau – AZ; Toby Torrey – AZ; Doug Tolleson – AZ; Mel George-CA; John Harper - CA; Cody Sheehy – CA; Allison Level-CO; Mark Thorne-HI; Lovina Roselle-ID; Walter Fick-KS; Livia Olsen-KS; Rachel Frost-MT; Jeff Mosley-MT; Brad Schultz – NV; Amy Shannon - NV; Cindy Watkins-NM; Amy Ganguli-ND; Nicole Mason - ND; Nancy Marshall –SD; Deva E. Reddy-TX; Alyson McDonald - TX; Beth Burritt-UT; Patsy Palacios – UT; David Kruger-WY; Rachel Mealor–WY; John Tanaka – WY (WERA 1008 Administrative Advisor)

International (3): Valeria Pesce – FAO (Rome, Italy); Felix Ayala- Universidad de Sonora, Mexico; Lucky Xaba – Rhodes University, South Africa

Virtual / Online attendees(6): John Kawula-AK; Dana W. R. Boden-NE; Mike Borman – OR; Tip Hudson - WA; Merrita Fraker-Marble–WY; John Taylor, University of Queensland – Australia

### **Annual Business Meeting (Summary), March 12, 2012:**

Chair Report–Mark Thorne opened the business meeting; thanked the Arizona team for successful meeting arrangements; acknowledged generous donations from the University of Arizona Libraries (Carla Stoffle, Dean of Libraries) for several of the meeting meals and refreshment breaks.

Secretary/Treasurer Report – Rachel Mealor 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 Executive Committee / Steering Team and sent out email communications to membership through listserv. Current balance is \$3,968.86 in the account to be used for next year’s annual meeting.

WERA update -John Tanaka reported that Roger Beachy is no longer the head of NIFA, new person is not in the position yet. Budgets are not good. Have to get the WERA 1008 report for 2011 submitted within the next 45 days.

### 2013 annual meeting:

Alaska will host the annual meeting in May or early June, 2013 (exact date to be determined). Dave Kruger, WY will send the planning document for hosting RWP meetings to Norm Harris.

### Governance / Executive Committee:

Mark Thorne was thanked for his service as Chair and rotated to Past-Chair. Jeanne Pfander moved into Chair position and Rachel Meador rotated to Vice-Chair. After being elected by unanimous acclaim, David Kruger was welcomed as 2012/2013 Secretary/Treasurer for the Rangelands West Partnership (RWP).

Bylaws Revision: A discussion was held regarding the proposed revised Bylaws for the partnership (sent out by email to the membership on February 14, 2012). The membership could not come to agreement regarding membership eligibility and voting status. Discussion was tabled to be continued the next morning (03/13/2012).

### **General Meeting Notes (RWP Annual Meeting, March 11-14, 2012)**

An informal reception was held the evening of Sunday, March 11, with music provided by Jeff Schalaus, Doug Tolleson and Nancy Riccio.

On Monday, March 12, Mark Thorne, Chair, Rangelands West Partnership, opened the meeting, followed by a welcome from Dr. Shane Burgess, Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs) at the University of Arizona. The morning agenda included a review of RWP activities during the past year (presentations and meetings at the 2012 SRM Annual Meeting, updates on grant-funded projects -eXtension Rangelands, RSIS, HEC/Rangelands Education; CEAP; ISE Global Rangelands, etc). Following lunch, Dr. Jeff Silvertooth, Associate Dean for Economic Development and Director, Arizona Cooperative Extension at the University of Arizona CALs, gave a brief welcome to attendees. Richard Collins (Arizona rancher, Canelo Hills Coalition) gave a well-received presentation *The Land Ethic and Limits for Grazing in Red Rock Canyon*. Felix Ayala (University of Sonora, Mexico) and Valeria Pesce (FAO/GFAR) gave updates on their institutions for an international perspective. A virtual online presentation was given by John Taylor, President of the Australian Rangelands Society. State updates from members followed. The Business Meeting (see above) closed out the afternoon agenda of the first day of the meeting.

At the dinner that evening (03/12/12), Rangelands West Trailblazer awards were presented to Mel George, UC-Davis and Carla Stoffle, Dean of the UA Libraries for their many contributions to the work of the Partnership. Bruce Andre, cowboy poet and artist/sculptor, provided the evening's entertainment.

The second day of the meeting (Tuesday, March 13) started out with a continuation (carried over from the previous day's Business Meeting) of the discussion on the Bylaws revision. When the group could not come to consensus in the allotted time, the Bylaws revision was tabled and assigned as something for the Executive Committee to pursue during the coming year, bringing

to the membership for an online vote before the 2013 meeting. The morning continued with a hands-on workshop presented by Matt Rahr and Toby Torrey (AZ) on data input for the Rangelands West portal. This was followed with break-out sessions on RW state site maintenance & support options, including Az IT support and the LibGuides approach. Cody Sheehy gave a lunchtime presentation on his documentary film work in Australia and Mongolia. The afternoon of the second day included a presentation and discussion on new approaches to fundraising (George Ruyle – AZ) and the use of social media tools in Extension (Sheila Merrigan – AZ). The meeting closed with a brainstorming and action planning session.

Assignments from the action planning session:

- Task Force for Hot Topics Development & Maintenance
  - Amy Ganguli - ND, Lovina Roselle - ID, Rachel Frost - MT, Fadzayi Mashiri - AZ, Nicole Mason - ND
- Task Force for finding quick and easy method to incorporate records for agricultural experiment station repositories
  - Allison Level - CO and Matt Rahr - AZ
- Task Force for Recruiting Canadian institutions into RW/GR
  - Barb Hutchinson - AZ and Amy Ganguli - ND
- Task Force for Revised Bylaws for RWP (Finalize revision and Bring for Vote)
  - Jeanne Pfander - AZ, Rachel Meador - WY, Dave Kruger - WY, Amy Shannon - NV, Walt Fick - KS, Mark Thorne - HI, Jeff Mosley - MT

The third day of the meeting (Wednesday, March 14) consisted of an optional field trip to the Santa Rita Experimental Range (SRER) south of Tucson. Dr. Mitch McClaran led the walking tour on-site. Mark Heitlinger, SRER Manager, gave a presentation preceding the lunch. Attendees returned to Tucson by 2 p.m.

### **10/2010 – 09/2011 Accomplishments:**

- Successful annual meeting of the Rangelands West Partnership (May 2011, Bozeman, MT). attendees (25 on-site; 4 virtual attendees) representing 16 U.S. states and Australia
- Progress on 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 approved.
- 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 ("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.
- See also Task Force assignments above.

## **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.