

WCC-40 Minutes

Meeting held on Oct. 18-19, 2001 at Socorro, New Mexico. Those in attendance include:

Mike Smith – Wyoming, pearl@uwyo.edu

Paul Tueller – Nevada, ptt@unr.edu

Neil West – Utah, new369@cc.usu.edu

David Pyke – USGS, pyked@fsl.orst.edu

Kirk McDaniel – New Mexico, kmcdanie@nmsu.edu

Bill Krueger – Oregon, William.C.Krueger@orst.edu

Rod Heitschmidt – ARS, rod@larri.ars.usda.gov

Jim Jacobs – Administrative Advisor, Wyoming

Members not in attendance: Bill Barker, William_Barker@ndsu.nodak.edu North Dakota, Barbara Allen-Diaz ballen@nature.berkeley.edu, California, Larry Bryant lbryant/wo@fs.fed.us, U.S. Forest Service, Steve Bunting sbunting@uidaho.edu, Idaho, Dennis Child dennisc@cnr.colostate.edu, Colorado, Linda Hardesty lhardest@mail.wsu.edu, Washington, Pat Johnson Patj@ces.sdstate.edu, South Dakota, Clayton Marlow cmarlow@montana.edu, Montana, and Wayne Hamilton, Texas.

Utah – in the process of developing new departments within the College of Natural Resources. West characterized them as wet, dry and social. All in a state of change with nothing yet decided. Dry names down to a list of five. Must give a range degree for at least four years. Some big changes are in the offing.

Nevada – things are looking up for range research and range management in Nevada. This is primarily the result of some new administrators who have chosen to be supportive of range programs in the Great Basin. These administrators are Dr. David Thawley, the new dean of the College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources and a new department chairman of the Department of Environmental and Resource Sciences, Mike Collopy. Rangeland research is being conducted by faculty in this department, Paul Tueller, Sherman Swanson, and Bob Nowak. Also Berry Perryman, a new hire, and Ben Bruce and Hudson Glimp are involved with various range programs in research and extension. Research directions are heavy to fire ecology and some to the riparian zone and remote sensing.

David Pyke – broad program of research with USGS in cooperation with rangeland resources at Oregon State University. USGS Forest and Rangeland Ecosystem Science Center. Jayne Belnap, Steve Kinick, Ed Starkey are a part of this group. Described several research projects – rangeland monitoring, rehab evaluations after fire, USGS global change (biosphere analysis of grazing, measurements of thresholds outward from the watering points, nutrient cycling, soil biotic crusts).

Oregon – discussed ICBMP and the need to use this data. The science in this work was quite good. <http://oregoninvests.css.orst.edu> will provide information on rangeland research in Oregon. Continuing significant program in riparian research. Tamzen Stringham is a new riparian ecologist at OSU. Numerous research programs. John Buckhouse involved in the Oregon Plan. Juniper competition research is being completed by Lee Edelman who is about to retire. Weed

research. Doug Johnson is doing considerable work in remote sensing and is involved in a new program called Weed Mapper.

ARS (Heitschmidt) –written report provided on work at Ft. Keogh. Indicated Ft. Keogh will be focusing research on the development of an ecologically superior animal.

Kirk McDaniel – things are going well at NMSU. Have two new hires one in hydrology and one in general range. They have a new department head.

Mike Smith – a number of changes with new faculty in different disciplines. The undergraduate program is still functioning reasonably well. Big issue around the state is the development of mining activity especially drilling for natural gas. Research will be headed in this direction. Looking at old exclosures from the late 50s or early 60s put in by Herb Fisser.

On the morning of October 19, Joel Brown from NRCS and Alan Torell from NMSU joined WCC-40 and gave reports.

Allan Torell – from WCC-55. Mentioned meeting held last summer on recreation questions at Moab, Utah. Publication prepared entitled “Current Issues in Rangeland Economics.” Ag Econ search at University of Minnesota will list papers under WCC-55.

WCC-55 involved with public lands economics. Working on sage grouse issues. Policy Analysis Center for Public Lands is the group that is working on these issues. WCC-55 will be meeting in San Antonio, TX next year. Working on the question of the value of a public land AUM.

Joel Brown – thanked the group for attending the ESD Workshop, an effort of the Grazing Land Institute at Fort Worth. Asked about efforts across the U.S. on ESD work and state and transition models. Indicated that some work is going on in every state. Discussed the NRCS range handbook. Encouraged group to use the handbook in classes, etc. and provide feedback.

Discussed the question of representation to WCC-40 from NRCS, BLM and Forest Service. Joel Brown was encouraged to help determine an appropriate representative from NRCS and he will contact Larry Butler. Determined to contact Tim Reuwsaat for a representative from BLM. Larry Bryant is the representative from the Forest Service. David Pyke will be the representative from USGS.

Old Business – reviewed objectives. One action item from last year’s meeting was the review and development of standardized assessment and monitoring. Discussion led by Heitschmidt. Assessment Project, another producer led effort. Discussion of five different efforts to consider the question of rangeland monitoring.

1. SRR – Sustainable Rangeland Roundtable.
2. NRI – natural resource inventory, NRCS
3. Heinz Center
4. ARS led efforts, Lynn James effort and the Jornada effort.
5. REAP – Rangeland Environmental Assessment Report

Discussion concerning Food and Agriculture Policy report from USDA. You can find this on the USDA web site as a PDF file. CAST report on livestock and the environment was mentioned by Krueger. The Heinz report is being reviewed by Neil West to provide oversight. This is the Heinz's Center report on grazing land conditions. West will be sending copies of the draft report to WCC-40 members and they are to send comments to Neil.

Discussed the SRR meeting to be held in San Antonio. EPA will present information.

A symposium is proposed for the SRM meeting in Casper, Wyoming in 2003. The proposed topic is "Putting Monitoring Information to Work." The committee will consist of Neil West, Chairman, Clayton Marlow, Kirk McDaniel, and Wayne Hamilton. Alan Torell will talk to WCC-55 committee relative to cost/benefit analysis of range monitoring. What will be the cost of the various monitoring approaches? There will be a dry run and review of the papers for the symposium at the next year's meeting in San Antonio.

Decision was made to have the symposium published. The means of defraying the cost of publishing was discussed. It was proposed that consideration be given to a hard publication and placing the document as a PDF file making it available on line. Possibly place it on the University of Arizona AgNIC Web-Site Project: "Managing Rangelands" at <http://ag.arizona.edu/agnic/range.html>

West moved that we commend all those participants that have collaborated in improving ESDs to apply to every land ownership in the state. Second by Mike Smith. Motion passed. Will be sent to the State BLM director, U.S. Forest Service Regional Forester, NRCS State Conservationist, and other participants as determined by Kirk McDaniel.

2002 meeting – San Antonio, Texas. A date will be selected from the second week in October to the end of October.

It was suggested that the WCC-40 should review the Yellowstone report.

Election of officers.

Chairman – David Pyke, elected

Local Arrangements Chair – Wayne Hamilton

Vice Chair and Secretary - Steve Bunting, elected.