APPENDIX D

**SAES-422**

**Format for Multistate Research Activity Accomplishments Report**

**Project/Activity Number:** WERA 1008

**Project/Activity Title:** The Rangelands Partnership as a Community of Practice

**Period Covered:** April 2021 – April 2022

**Date of This Report:** May 4, 2022

**Annual Meeting Date(s):** April 26 – 27, 2022

**Participants:** Boden, Dana (dboden1@unl.edu) – University of Nebraska; Bruegger, Retta (retta.bruegger@colostate.edu) – Colorado State University; Carr, Craig (craig.carr@montana.edu) - University of Montana; Dalke, Amber (adalke@arizona.edu) – University of Arizona; Ehlert, Krista (krista.ehlert@sdstate.edu) – South Dakota State University; Flick, Walt (whfick@ksu.edu) – Kansas State University; Gondor, Anne (gondora@arizona.edu) - University of Arizona; Hall, Ashley (ashleys3@arizona.edu) - University of Arizona; Hudson, Tip (hudsont@wsu.edu) – Washington State University; Hutchinson, Barbara (barbarah@arizona.edu) - University of Arizona; Johnson, Dustin (dustin.johnson@oregonstate.edu) Oregon State University; Juve, Nicole (nicole.km.juve@ndsu.edu) – North Dakota State University; Karl, Jason, (jkarl@uidaho.edu) - University of Idaho; Kenyon, Jeremy (jkenyon@uidaho.edu) - University of Idaho; Kruger, David (tseliot@uwyo.edu) - University of Wyoming; Kuden, Jodee (jlkuden@alaska.edu) - University of Alaska; Lawson, Ren (llawson@uidaho.edu) - University of Idaho; Lockard, Emily (emily.lockard@colostate.edu) – Colorado State University; Marshall, Nancy (nancy.marshall@sdstate.edu) – South Dakota State University; Meehan, Miranda (miranda.meehan@ndsu.edu) – North Dakota State University; Merrigan, Sheila (merrigan@arizona.edu) - University of Arizona; Noelle, Sarah (smnoelle@arizona.edu) - University of Arizona; Olsen, Livia (livia@ksu.edu) – Kansas State University; Petty, Barbara (bpetty@uidaho.edu) - University of Idaho; Pfander, Jeanne (jpfander@arizona.edu) - University of Arizona; Rutherford, Austin (arutherford@email.arizona.edu) - University of Arizona; Shannon, Amy (ashannon@unr.edu) - University of Nevada; Thorne, Mark (thornem@hawaii.edu) - University of Hawaii; Tolleson, Doug (douglas.tolleson@ag.tamu.edu) Texas A&M University; Winford, Eric (ewinford@uidaho.edu) - University of Idaho; Woodmansee, Grace (gwoodmansee@ucanr.edu) – University of California; Young, Kristina (kristina.young@usu.edu) – Utah State University; rangelands@list.cals.arizona.edu

**Annual Meeting Summary**: The Rangelands Partnership (RP) annual meeting focused on the theme of community. Keynote speaker, Sarah Wentzel-Fisher (Executive Director of the Quivira Coalition) presented on strategies to engage with various communities. Participants were updated on Extension and library activities for each member state, received a tutorial on RangeDocs, discussed the next steps for the RP following the UN approval of the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) 2026, and learned how to create a marketing plan. Based on feedback, the RP will host professional development opportunities including three online marketing webinars in addition to RP Roundup, quarterly sessions for education and networking. The three action groups each decided on goals to complete before the next annual meeting. The Marketing and Social Media action group intends to work on marketing RG. The Collections and Content action group will reach out to universities to collect dissertations and theses that would be relevant to RG. The Membership and Sustainability group aims to increase membership of librarians and Extension professionals from universities that are currently not active in the Partnership. Jeanne Pfander was elected to be the new secretary, Ashley Hall will move to the Vice Chair position, and Nancy Marshall will move into the Chair role. The meeting location for the next three years was decided on – 2023 Manhattan, Kansas, 2024 Maui, Hawaii, and 2025 Texas. Link to agenda and full meeting notes: <https://tinyurl.com/yztvxv8p>.

**Accomplishments:** Accomplishments, outcomes, and outputs based on WERA objectives:

*Objective 1: Strengthen the RP as a Community of Practice providing opportunities for professional development, networking, and collaborative projects and initiatives.*

* The RP hosted three RP Roundups. These quarterly virtual learning and networking sessions focused on rangeland issues in the west and great plains. Sessions consisted of three sections: 30-minute talk, two 30-minute breakout sessions, and a 30-minute networking session.
* The RP provided a 12-course online marketing training for 13 RP members and two producers over six months. This training program allowed the rangeland professional members to meet regularly, learn and share experiences, and ultimately build a stronger community of practice.
* Successful annual meeting of the RP (April 2022). Twenty in-person, 13 virtual participants. One scholarship provided for new member. Positive financial return.
* Recruited three rangeland professionals from Texas A&M University to join the Partnership

*Objective 2: Promote the launch of the Rangelands Gateway (RG) and publicize through all communications outlets.*

* [RG](https://rangelandsgateway.org/) launched in 2021. RP members publicize the website to their stakeholders across the west.
* A special issue ([March 2021](https://us12.campaign-archive.com/?u=1e07e5b3765520a0c1bbf6590&id=44bb7a4bdc)) of the RP newsletter was created to promote the website.

*Objective 3: Expand the number of resources and collections in the RG database.*

* Uploaded two newly available volumes of *Rangelands* and *Rangeland Ecology and Management*.
* Significant steps have been taken toward achieving the vision of RG to be the premier website for dissemination of scientific information on rangeland ecology and management. This includes removing references that are no longer available and improving search functionality.
* Total number of resources in the database is currently 25,395. (rangelandsgateway.org/library)

*Objective 4: Continue to build and expand the 19-member state rangelands websites with locally specific content in updated formats, providing additional access through the RG database.*

* Since the launch of RG, a RP Roundup was provided to members and recorded to show state members how to add locally specific content to the updated format. All partner states using the RG template have moved content and will continue to add appropriate resources.

*Objective 5: Develop marketing and new technology capacity to meet the needs and priorities of an increasingly diverse audience.*

* RP members who participated in the online marketing training project each created marketing plans to promote different aspects of RG.
* Members of the RP are developing RangeDocs, a new online search tool that allows users to pinpoint information within technical documents. The tool is designed to search a catalog of rangeland resources and Extension documents at the paragraph level. Users can create a profile to save search results and create personal collections of documents by topic. There are also curated collections of four topics created by experts which suggest relevant resources.

*Objective 6: Refine the “topic” sections to incorporate new knowledge.*

* Synthesized rangeland information is critical to being informed on a variety of rangeland issues. Topics provide an opportunity for rangeland professionals, ranchers, and students to learn about the ecology, uses, and societal benefits of rangelands. Topics are divided into broad categories with many additional resources including training videos, webinars, photos, decision support tools, and science-based articles.
* Two Topics (Public Lands Grazing and Maintaining & Improving Rangelands, launched in spring 2022) required significant updates.

*Objective 7: Co-coordinate the North American IYRP Support Group and its efforts to develop and facilitate outreach and educational activities.*

* The IYRP was officially approved by the UN to be held in 2026. Throughout the years of engagement to gain approval, RP members assisted with efforts to gain widespread support. This included serving on the IYRP Support Group, reaching out to organizations and entities for letters of support and commitment, and presenting about the IYRP effort at various conferences. Members of the Partnership developed and maintain the [IYRP website](https://iyrp.info/). Monthly articles on the status of the IYRP 2026 effort were published in the Partnership’s newsletter. RP members are serving on the recently formed IYRP North America Communications Team and are currently in the process of developing a strategic plan for IYRP outreach in North America from 2022-2026.
* Members of the RP discussed the importance of IYRP and rangelands worldwide on The Art of Range Podcast ([Episode 81](https://artofrange.com/episodes/aor-81-welcome-2026-intl-year-rangelands-pastoralists))

*Objective 8: Continue collaboration with The Society for Range Management (SRM) to increase visibility and awareness of both SRM and the RG, a mutually beneficial objective*.

* At the 2022 SRM annual conference the RP had a booth at the tradeshow to provide information about RP, RP newsletter, RangeDocs, and IYRP. The booth reached about 100 members from 18 different states and Canada. Members of the RP serve as Co-Chairs, participants, and SRM board liaison of SRM’s Outreach, Communication, and Website committee.

**Activities:**

Grants: The RP continues to participate in many collaborations on grants and targeted projects.

* NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant “A National Grazingland Information System: Expanding GlobalRangelands.org Through A Grazingland Thesaurus and Mobile Content Access”. Launched [RangeDocs](https://docs.rangelandsgateway.org/). The one-year no-cost extension ends September 2022.
* WSARE Professional Development Program project “Increasing the Online Communication Toolbox for Sustainable Rangeland Management: A Train-the-Trainer Program” (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023; WSARE Project #WPDP21-026). This project empowers rangeland professionals and producers to improve their online marketing strategies and skills to increase the visibility of science-based rangeland information.
* RREA National Focus Funds project “Expanding Extension Capacity Through RangeDocs: Searchable Rangeland Science” (September 1, 2021 – August 30, 2023; USDA NIFA NFF 2021-46401-34740). This project improves RangeDocs to include access to locally-and regionally produced Extension publications, create outreach materials, and widely market ready-to-use science-based information for Extension professionals and other stakeholders.
* Washington State University RREA National Focus Funds project “Big landscapes meet big data: informing grazing management in a variable and changing world”

Communication: The RP continues to have multiple communication channels to disseminate rangeland knowledge to local, national, and global stakeholders.

* Distributed information and updates via RP social media and the RP Newsletter.
* Increased the newsletter subscription and engagement. The electronic newsletter is sent monthly to 219 individuals. The newsletter focuses on RP related updates and articles written by RP members. Fifty-seven percent of recipients are highly or moderately engaged and open and click Partnership newsletter articles.
* The Global Rangelands website was slowly phased out in 2021 and was replaced by the Rangelands Gateway. Much of the new website needed to be transferred and updated manually. Although the RG was released late 2021, we have not yet had a major marketing release of the site. In 2021 Global Rangelands had 59,236 users from January to May and for Rangelands Gateway 28,978 users from May to December. There were 225,897 pageviews in GR and 129,203 pageviews in RG; 73,313 sessions GR and 36,220 sessions RG. Thirty percent of the GR users were from the United States and 43% of the RG users were from the United States.

**In Process / Next Step Activities:**

* Continue to work with technology experts to identify and correct issues related to the transition to RG including refining the database search tool, update topics, remove broken links in the database, and minor layout improvements.
* Continue to keep Partnership members engaged in RG through work sessions and RP Roundups as well as stay updated on Action Group responsibilities by participating in monthly Executive Committee meetings.
* Encourage members to identify the RP in publications, posters, and presentation.
* Continue to develop collaborative grant proposals that specifically identify connection to the RP.
* Continue to pursue harvesting rangelands content from institutional repositories.
* Develop a recruiting strategy for new members, focused on library participants.
* Encourage members to contribute to social media and marketing locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally to highlight the Partnership.

**Publications:**

Hall, A.L., Dalke, A., Merrigan, S., Pfander, J., Noelle, S., and Hutchinson, B. (2022). *Rangelands Gateway - Delivering Reliable Rangeland Online Resources*. Arizona Cooperative Extension Publication

Kenyon, J., Pfander, J.L., Dalke, A., Merrigan, S. and Karl, J. (2022, April 6). RangeDocs: A Grazing and Rangelands Management Digital Library [Contributed Paper]. USAIN 2022 Biennial Conference, Hosted virtually by University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville, AR.

Monthly newsletter: https://us12.campaign-archive.com/home/?u=1e07e5b3765520a0c1bbf6590&id=5c12e84cd8

**Authorization**: Submission by an AES or CES director or administrative advisor through NIMSS constitutes signature authority for this information.