

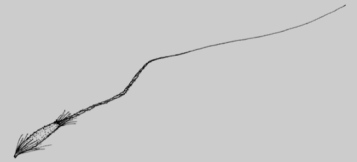


Needlegrass Notes

Volume 66:2

Fall 2020

Society for Range Management
California-Pacific Section



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President's Message

Matthew Shapero

As range professionals, we are trained to be accustomed to and even expect variability, uncertainty, and disturbance. Uneven precipitation, unusual spells of cold and heat, pests, disease—these are almost regular features of rangelands in the West and Pacific. And yet despite this training, I don't think any of us were quite prepared for the challenges we've faced these last six months: a life-altering pandemic, a historically destructive wildfire season in California, drought in most places, volatile markets, civil unrest. Some within our membership have been significantly impacted, with work reduced and/or terminated, projects canceled, businesses interrupted and/or threatened, and health and well-being compromised. I don't think any one of us have been left untouched.

Despite normally being sites of uncertainty, I've found a kind of refuge on rangelands as of late. When asked about my social distancing plan for work, for example, I argued I didn't need one since clipping grass on hands and knees alone on a six-thousand-acre ranch is almost the definition of socially distanced. But more seriously, in a year like this, there's been a comfort to some things out on the range just sort of being normal: the rains in California more or less stopped when they usually do, the grasses senesced, the calves were weaned and sold, fences got mended. I know others over the last weeks have been significantly impacted by wildfire, such that being out has been much less soothing. Down in the part of California where I am, however, we've been (knock on wood) largely spared from the worst of the impacts of fire and smoke.



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President's Message — Continued

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In the face of this turmoil, I've taken note of our Cal-Pac members who have risen to meet some of our ongoing challenges: Section Treasurer, Devii Rao, and Felix Ratcliffe, led a statewide project that calculated cattle's annual contribution to removing fine fuels through grazing, a report that has received wide attention; Marc Horney and Lance Criley—both members of the California Board of Forestry Rangeland Management Advisory Committee—are preparing to host a second series of workshops intended to more explicitly connect statewide grazing with fire resilience; Tracy Schohr and others, in leading efforts to transport livestock out of the paths of wildfires, have shown how range professionals can meaningfully support the communities we serve; and just this week, I attended a web panel featuring Bre Owens, who is now one of the leading voices for what regenerative agriculture on rangelands can look like.

Like the lands we study, steward, and care for, we are a resilient bunch, and I have no doubt our profession will emerge from these times more robust, more useful. As I mentioned in the addendum to my Spring President's Message, however, one of the hardest parts of this year for me has been being disconnected from friends and colleagues I typically connect with on rangelands. This disconnection in part explains why I didn't make as much progress on my year's Cal-Pac goals. We are still ever-so-close to concluding the CRM Program Guidelines update, that's nearly eight years in the making; our website has been re-organized but not yet re-designed (maybe by the end of this calendar year?); we are no closer to cleaning up the outdated and inaccurate aspects of our Handbook; and we've made no progress brainstorming how to connect Cal-Pac with producers.

With that said, I am very pleased to be passing the reigns into the very able and enthusiastic hands of Jill Ficke-Beaton. It will be refreshing and expanding to have a Hawaiian-based leader, and I'm excited to support her in her efforts, whether it's tying up the loose ends I've left or embarking on other priorities. In signing off as President, I'd like to thank those that have supported me over the past year: in particular, Jill and Mindy Nicoletti, as President-elect and Past-President, respectively; Devii Rao for her financial diligence; Larry Ford for his regular counsel; Susan Edinger-



Section-President, Matthew Shapero, on hands and knees clipping grass; Santa Barbara County, Fall 2020. The mowing is part of an experiment examining fire behavior across different levels of biomass.

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President's Message — Continued

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Marshall and Denise Defreese, as former and current CRM Panel Chairs; our Board of Directors for their ongoing engagement; Katie Brown, for corralling us all when it comes to Needlegrass Notes; and last, but certainly not least, Theresa Becchetti, for her steady, behind-the-scenes leadership that is a big part of how and why CalPac persists.

I trust next year will be different and unexpected; studying and working on range-lands has taught me that much.

Sincerely,
Matthew Shapero
CalPac SRM Section President

Range Camp Update

An online version of Range Camp was launched over the summer utilizing pre-recorded videos covering topics typically discussed in-person at Elkus Ranch. A live Zoom discussion with presenters in late August allowed students to ask questions and interact with presenters. The plan for 2021 is still unknown due to COVID restrictions. Updates will be sent out to the listserv as we know more. If you have questions or would like additional information please reach out to Theresa Becchetti at tabecchetti@ucanr.edu.

A moment to reminisce...2019 Range Camp Photo Flashback!



We look forward to many more great years at Elkus Ranch in the future!



Your 2020 Committee Chairs & Members

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Speakers Include

Larry Forero, County Director, UCCE: Shasta County

Dan Macon, Livestock and Natural Resources Advisor, UCCE:

Placer/Nevada/Sutter/Yuba County Director

Chico State, Humboldt State, and Cal Poly Presentations

Auction of the Bone for Cal-Pac Range Clubs

Hal Gordon, Agriculture Economist, NRCS: West National Technology Support Center

Kasey Deatley, Associate Professor of Animal and Range Science CSU Chico



CEU's Available!

2021 Cal –Pac Officer Elections

How to make your vote count

Members who currently receive Section communications via email will be sent an electronic ballot. If you have not received an electronic ballot by October 19, 2020 please contact Theresa Becchetti at tabecchetti@ucanr.edu.

If you are a member that receives a paper copy of the newsletter, an addressed ballot is enclosed that you can mail to Theresa Becchetti.

Candidates for Section President-Elect

This office spends 1 year as President-Elect, followed by 1 year as Section President, and 1 year as Past President, each with unique responsibilities. To learn more, you may refer to the Cal-Pac section [handbook](#), available on our website.

Allison Rofe (Alameda/Contra Costa Counties, California)

I am the Rangeland Specialist for the East Bay Regional Park District. I currently oversee the range management on 86,000 acres of parklands and work with over 40 grazing tenants. My work focuses on maintaining livestock use as a conservation management tool on public lands and building relationships with a diverse group of stakeholders. I received a BS in Rangeland Resource Science from Humboldt State University and a master's degree in Range Management from the University of California, Berkeley. I've worked as the Rangeland Management Specialist for the NRCS in Mendocino County and as a Range Conservationist for the Contra Costa Resource Conservation District (CCRCD).

I have been an SRM member since 2011, a Certified Rangeland Manager, and a Section Board of Director (2018-2020). Throughout my career in Range, I have developed valuable partnerships and will be able to use my resource management experience to take on the mantle of leadership as President-Elect and continue to promote working landscapes and be an advocate for our rangeland communities.

Candidates for Section Board of Directors *(listed alphabetically by last name)*

Alan Bower (Red Bluff, California)

It is an honor to run for the Cal-Pac Board of Directors. I previously served on the board from 2010 – 2012 then was president in 2013.

My professional experience has consisted of working for the Bureau of Land Management and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (from 2001 to May of 2007) as a rangeland management specialist, in Bakerville and Quincy, CA, respectively. That was followed by a position with University of California Cooperative Extension as a livestock/natural resources advisor in Humboldt and Del Norte Counties. I returned to NRCS in 2009 and am currently the Area 1 (northern California) Rangeland Management Specialist. Also, I have taught rangeland principles and applied ecology on the university level, as well as provided training and hosted work-

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shops within the discipline. Additionally, I have performed rangeland and pasture research, and provided livestock health and management technical assistance, to meet the needs of the ranching and natural resource community.

I have been a member of the Society for Rangeland Management since 1999 and I feel my professional background and previous experience on the Board of Directors will help me in the position.

Ariel De Lara (Santa Maria, California)

I have been with the NRCS since 2014 where I started as an intern and am currently a Rangeland Management Specialist in Santa Maria, CA where I serve Santa Barbara county. I graduated from Humboldt State University with a B.S. in Rangeland Resource Science in 2015. I joined Society for Range Management while attending Humboldt State University and participated in the Plant ID competition at SRM Annual Meetings. I have since continued to attend SRM events nationally as well as Cal Pac Spring and Fall Meetings. I have always enjoyed the technical discussions as well as the opportunity to network with others. I am excited for the opportunity to be more involved in Cal Pac and SRM as a Board of Director should I be elected.

Madeline Milner (Palmdale, California)

My name is Madeline Milner, and I'm currently the Area Range Specialist for the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, California, Area 4. I am originally from El Paso TX. I attended New Mexico State University in Las Cruces NM where I earned my bachelor's degree in Range Science with a minor in soil science. At NMSU I was an active member and officer of the NMSU Range Club. As a student I attended three international SRM conventions in Oklahoma City, Orlando, and Sacramento and competed in various undergraduate competitions. While attending NMSU for my undergraduate degree, I worked for the Bureau of Land Management in the Carlsbad Field Office and the Las Cruces District Office as a GIS intern. I worked on a variety of projects in that role, from oil and gas drilling leases, to allotment sales, potash mine inspections, and biological surveys. It was there I was first introduced to federal rangeland stewardship. I applied for and was chosen for a Pathways internship with the CA-NRCS in 2014. I worked as an intern for two summers and was converted to a full time Soil Conservationist in the Lancaster Field office in April of 2016. The Lancaster office covers over 2 million acres in Los Angeles and Kern County and contains a variety of landscapes and natural resource challenges. Land conversion, drought, air pollution, invasive species and soil degradation are just a few of the issues that agricultural producers contend with in Southern California. To better prepare myself to help producers face these challenges, I began working on my Master's in Natural Resource Management degree with a focus on Rangeland Ecology at Colorado State University. I'm on track to complete my degree in December of 2020. I entered my current position over a year ago and have further expanded my work to multiple counties outside of my original service area, and a larger breadth of environments, types of producers, and natural resource concerns.

If selected I look forward to taking a more active role in SRM and representing the unique challenges that

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range stewards in Southern California face. I strongly believe in the benefits of membership and participation in SRM and would like to work towards achieving more involvement from my professional peers as well as producers.

Christian Siemer (Lassen County, California)

I am excited to pursue the Board of Directors for the Cal-Pac section of the Society for Range Management. While earning my degree in Rangeland Management at the University of Reno in 2013, I became a student member of SRM and have been an active member since. Currently I am employed by the Bureau of Land Management as a Rangeland Management Specialist for the Eagle Lake Field Office in Susanville, California. In my current position, I manage numerous public land grazing permits on approximately 500,000 acres. I plan and oversee various conservation projects including water development, fire restoration, wild horse and burro gathers, and wildlife habitat improvement. Previously, as a Soil Conservationist for NRCS in Lassen County, I worked with producers on private and public land to develop conservation plans for a variety of land uses. Along with working in the field of rangeland management I have been involved in the Buffalo-Skedaddle Landscape Restoration and the Conservation Initiative Partners Group since 2016 and currently serve as an officer and director for the California Cattleman's Association for the Lassen County chapter. Becoming a member of the Board of Directors for the Cal-Pac section of SRM would provide me the opportunity to share my experience, knowledge, and passion and to grow and learn from other experts in rangeland management.

Mark S. Thorne, Ph.D., (Kamuela, Hawaii)

I have served as an extension specialist in range and livestock management in the Dept. of Human Nutrition, Food, and Animal Sciences at the University of Hawaii-Manoa since 2003. After graduating High School in Sheridan Wyoming, I worked for several large ranches in Nevada, Oregon, and Montana before serving in the United States Marine Corps from 1988-1996. I hold B.S and M.S. degrees in Rangeland Ecology and Watershed Management from the University of Wyoming and a Ph.D. from Colorado State University in Rangeland Ecophysiology. I have been a member of the Society for Range Management since 1995, first in the Wyoming and Colorado Sections. I have been with the California-Pacific Section since 2003, and in that time I have served on the Board of Directors in 2009-2011, was awarded section Range Manager of the Year in 2010, and helped organize three Cal-Pac Section meetings (2004, 2009, 2016) in Hawaii.

If elected I will welcome the opportunity to represent the Cal-Pac Section membership on the Board of Directors. I will work hard to ensure our section continues to grow and meet the needs of our membership. Certainly, the events over this past year have been challenging and changed the way we interact. It has also revealed new possibilities engagement across electronic meeting platforms from webinars to virtual workshops, field days, and full-on conferences. These are new and challenging, but also exiting in the way that they have the potential to reach audiences that we have not been able to reach before. I also believe that it is a way for this section, the largest and most geographically diverse section of the Society for Range Management, can increase engagement and participation of our membership in meetings and other section events. I would like to see our website redesigned and updated, see increased circulation of the needlegrass notes, and the opportunity for the membership to participate in Cal-Pac meetings virtually.

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Email Katie Brown at katie@alt-me.com for more information.

Newsletter Articles

All contributions to Needlegrass Notes are welcome. Please submit your articles and news items to: Katie Brown at katie@alt-me.com

Keep in Touch

Moved? Changed jobs? Or have a new email address? Don't forget to update your membership information on the National SRM website at <http://www.rangelands.org> and the California-Pacific Chapter by sending an email to Ling He at clarkia@hotmail.com. We will correct your email address on our email list serve so that you stay up to date on the latest news and happenings in the chapter.



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Society for Range Management

We're on the web:

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