

**Editor's Note:**

*At the 1993 Annual Meeting of the Society for Range Management in Albuquerque, N.M., there was considerable discussion concerning the future goals and objectives of the Society. The theme for the meeting was "Expanding Partnerships and Continuing Successes." Dr. Don Dwyer in his keynote address raised some questions as to how much progress has been made in the past years. With these various thoughts in mind, it might be useful to see what what the*

*visions and goals of the Society of Range Management were at the time the Society was formed. The following item is reprinted from page 1 of the first issue of the Journal of Range Management (Volume 1, Number 1, October 1948). The author, Joe Pechanec, is a charter member and was the first president of the Society for Range Management. I leave it to you to decide how much progress has been made.*

## Our Range Society

Joseph F. Pechanec

When the new range society was first considered, doubtless most of you thought "Why form another organization?" I'd be surprised if you didn't! Most range men already belong to so many professional societies that to participate actively in another would severely tax their personal energies and prove a financial burden.

Those active in efforts to form the society were well aware of the pitfalls and thus gave its creation serious thought. There were several objectives that most range men had in mind for a desirable society. These we gleaned from your letters and from discussions with countless numbers of range men.

1. Recognition of range management and its application as a profession.
2. Liberal membership requirements to permit professional workers with highly varied basic training to become full members with an equal voice in society affairs.
3. The publication of a journal devoted to the subject of range and pasture which would provide a medium for exchange of new developments, ideas, and for the discussion of policies.
4. Provision for meetings where range men can assemble yearly for exchange of ideas and development of unity in procedures for managing range lands.

Countless individuals in many different agencies or groups and with highly varied basic training are engaged in range and grassland work. On these workers falls the major responsibility of pointing the way toward the greatest productivity and fullest utilization of the forage resource consistent with maintenance of soil and forage. Moreover, these workers are responsible for the scientific validity of their work.

It seemed natural, therefore that range men should organize to seek unity and agreement on objectives, procedures, and professional standards.

Nowhere within the framework of existent societies did there seem to be a place for range men. Objectives desired in a range organization could not be satisfied. All existing societies had been organized for other purposes and interests. To accommodate range men any one of them would have had to broaden its scope.

Plainly, something had to be done. Our profession had no status or unity. We needed a medium for exchange of ideas and unified expression of standards. We needed also a common ground for the highly varied group in the field. But it was clear that we needed to push ourselves

because no one was going to do it for us.

Out of these conditions the range society evolved. It first began in 1946 with a survey to find out what the majority of range men wanted. When it became evident that the majority desired a separate organization, a membership drive was launched in July 1947. By the time of our first Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City in January, 1948, 500 had joined the Society. At present there are more than 650 members.

Preparations are being made for our second Annual Meeting in Denver. The Society's program is taking form rapidly as a result of the activities of the Council and seven committees. Interest in the Society is widespread throughout this country, Canada, and extending into South America.

Formation of our Society came at a particularly appropriate time. There is an acute awareness of the need to conserve renewable resources. Forage is one of these. In the battle for better management of resources we must align ourselves closely with other allied societies. There will be no conflict between our Society and others in the field of conservation. Efforts of these organizations will complement each other.

Upon our stewardship, either as owners, research workers, teachers, or administrators, depend the improvement and maintenance of the range resource. Our Society through its own members and through cooperation with closely allied organizations shall strive to make these range and grassland resources serve mankind to the fullest degree now and in the future. In achieving this end, we can perform many valuable functions:

We can present the ideas of professional range men to the public, to government circles, and to other societies.

We can promote more complete and widespread education to insure the best management of our range resources.

We can sponsor application of the best knowledge available to the management of publicly and privately owned range lands.

We can encourage additional research into the fundamental principles of range management.

We can provide an avenue for exchange of ideas and experiences among range and grassland workers.

To carry out these functions, as well as to increase unity and improve professional standards, will be the objectives of the American Society of Range Management. ●