

## A Message from Bruce I. Knight, Chief, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

We are proud to be part of this special supplement on rangeland management.

Sound, science-based rangeland management continues to be a major priority for NRCS and our partners. We have worked with the owners and managers of private rangeland for nearly seven decades. We have helped them meet immediate needs and manage the quality of their land for future generations. The articles in this supplement reflect that continuing commitment.

Several NRCS range management specialists and biologists wrote about the technical assistance they're delivering to private landowners across the country. They tell you about some of the new technology we're developing to assist the stewards of America's rangelands in the years ahead.

In *Ecological Sites: Understanding the Landscape* (p.18), you'll learn about ecological site descriptions, an improved tool that will help the next generation of rangeland managers and planners make better land management decisions.

Much of the world's rangelands are either too rugged or arid for raising crops, but provide opportunities to raise livestock. *Grazing Management: An Art & Science* (p.22) offers some ideas that can help you maintain an economically sustainable ranch in places where the going is rough.

NRCS has several programs to help you manage for wildlife and their habitat. *Working with Wildlife* (p.27) takes a look at how the agency and its partners in Louisiana are using those programs to help producers and the public make life better for wildlife.

In *An Eye in the Sky* (p.30) we take a look toward the future and the technology that is becoming available to aid NRCS in providing land managers with resource management tools. The authors examine a unique Environmental Quality Incentives Program project in Alaska that uses satellite telemetry to blaze new trails in reindeer herd management.

I hope you will enjoy reading about some of the work underway and what is on the drawing board. To learn more, contact your local NRCS office or USDA Service Center, or our Web site at [www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov). The Farmers and Ranchers section on our home page links to rangeland publications, the National Rangeland and Pasture Handbook, and other sources of useful information.



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