



Rangelands—Behind The Scenes— How We Started—What Is Coming

by Gary Frasier

With this issue, *Rangelands* enters its 25th year of publication. This is an exciting time for us. Everyone associated with *Rangelands* is proud of what has evolved over time. This issue is the first of a full year (6 issues) of an Anniversary celebration. In addition to the normal range of articles you see in each issue, we will have sections devoted to showing changes that have occurred in the past 25 years, not only in *Rangelands* but also in the field of natural resource management.

How did we get started? The early organizers of the Society for Range Management recognized that there was a need for a medium for exchange of new developments, ideas, and for the discussion of policies. In 1947 a committee was formed and given the task of developing a journal. The result of this effort was the *Journal of Range Management*. The Journal originally included scientific articles, technical notes, management notes, viewpoints, book reviews, letters to the editor, news and notes, section information, current literature, and Society business. Each volume of the *Journal* consisted of 6 issues and was published on alternate months, January, March, May, July, September, and November.

In June 1969 *Rangeman's News*, was begun, primarily for publishing range news, Society business, and related topics. This publication was a companion to the *Journal of Range Management* and was designed to appear in alternate months from the *Journal*, thereby providing monthly contact with the members. Francis T. Colbert was the Editor of the *Rangeman's News* until his death in 1974. In October 1974, *Rangeman's Journal* replaced *Rangeman's News* with little change in objectives. It was intended to be wide ranging in coverage and sought to publish in a non-technical format, any article or news item that would benefit rangemen, rangelands, and range management. This included

information not only related to biology (soils, plants and animals) but also topics related to economics, sociology, law, history, philosophy, and anything else that would help achieve natural resource management objectives. Society news and business, personnel items, etc., were also continued.

The *Rangeman's Journal* was produced by an Editor and Editorial Board of 12 members serving 3 years. They reviewed manuscripts and provided information to the authors to simplify manuscripts where it seemed appropriate. A key element was to maintain a non-technical format. Jeff Powell edited *Rangeman's Journal* through the April 1975 issue, when John (Danny) Freeman succeeded him.

In February 1979, the name was changed from *Rangeman's Journal* to *Rangelands*. *Rangelands* was essentially a renamed, renumbered and revamped *Rangeman's Journal* but with a greater emphasis on longer and more comprehensive articles. Although some technical articles are included, an attempt is made to maintain a non-technical flavor. It continued to cover all aspects of Society affairs under the same editorial arrangement as *Rangeman's Journal*. John Freeman was Editor until February 1984 when Gary Frasier took over the editor's responsibilities.

From that auspicious start in 1979, *Rangelands* has been an outstanding success. Yet with success there is always the desire to make it better. During the past few years we have spent considerable time listening to the readers both individually and via various polls. What do they want *Rangelands* to be? What would you like to see more of? From this information we have made changes in not only the content of *Rangelands*, but also to the appearance of *Rangelands*.

Some of the changes have included: color photos on the cover (first seen in the December 1985

issue), full color covers and backs (February 1989), and interior color photos to go with articles (February 1990). There have been issues dedicated to specific topics including: "History of Range Management" June 1981, "Women on the Range" Feb. 1984, and "The Taylor Grazing Act," August 1984.

The majority of the articles published in *Rangelands* are volunteer submissions by members of the Society for Range Management. These authors deserve much of the credit for willingness to work with the *Rangelands* Editorial Board and Editors to make the information presentable in a non-technical format.

Special thanks go to Pat Smith who was Production Editor from the inception of *Rangelands* until her retirement in 1994 at which time Patty Rich took over the duties. In March 2002, Kindra Gordon took over the duties of Managing Editor. Her background and experience is being merged into the publication.

We will continue to make any changes necessary to meet the desires of the readership. Everyone associated with *Rangelands* looks forward to another 25 years of a great publication.

Keep tuned for the next 5 issues of our Anniversary Celebration.



Gary Frasier
Technical Editor



Kindra Gordon
Managing Editor



Patty Rich
Production Editor

Footnote: Some of the above information was obtained from; "A history of the society for range management, 1948-1985", by Clinton H. Wasser, Elbert H. Reed, and Arthur D. Smith, Society for Range Management, Denver, Colorado, 1987.

A Look Back To 1978

Twenty-five years ago when the *Rangeman's Journal* was launched the average price for a gallon of gas in the U.S. was \$0.63 and a loaf of bread was \$0.42. That was 1978 and Jimmy Carter was U.S. President.

Other interesting points in the U.S. economy in 1978:

- minimum wage = \$2.65
- average household income = \$16,975
- average cost of a new car = \$5,405

In national news headlines during 1978, the NASA space program was popular; coal miners went on strike for 110 days – and endangered species were in the news.

The endangered snail darter stopped the \$100 million Tellico Dam project in Tennessee. Internationally, the Soviets set an endurance record for keeping a man in space for 139 days; a Czech pilot became the first non-Russian or American in space; and in England test-tube fertilization was successful tried.

At the movies, the academy award winner for best picture was "The Deer Hunter." Popular songs included: "Just the Way you Are," "Copacabana," and "Stayin' Alive." (The Dallas Cowboys were also king that year when they won the Superbowl.)