

SRM Honor Awards

Presented at the Society's 61st Annual Meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, on January 30, 2008

Editor's Note: The complete citation for all awardees can be found on the SRM Web site at www.rangelands.org.

Fredric G. Renner Award

The Fredric G. Renner Award is the highest bestowed by the Society for Range Management. The award is named for one of the SRM's founding members, who served as its second president.



Lamar Smith accepts the Fredric G. Renner Award.

Lamar Smith has been a researcher, teacher, extension educator, Fulbright Scholar, international development specialist, rancher, consultant, real estate appraiser, and department head. He has served the SRM in every way conceivable from member to committee member, committee chair, board member, and officer. He has served outside of SRM in promoting the cause of range management through activity on advisory councils, as an invited speaker, and as an international consultant.

What one often forgets about Lamar is his activity as an educator. Lamar has taught every course considered mandatory for one to be formally trained in range management, as well as several other natural resources courses, and has been active in extension work. He started the Certified Professional in Rangeland Management process by asking the Professional Affairs Committee to develop a proposal and served as co-chair of the Certification Committee to get the process going. It is now a model certification program.

The paper, *A Critical Evaluation of the Range Condition Concept*, which Lamar presented at the First International Rangeland Congress in 1978, has been credited as being the first paper to critique the range condition concept after a long period of relatively little attention to the concept. Two papers, which Lamar published in 1988 and 1989, discuss the range condition concept as it relates to ecological theory and fully outlined the problems with the application of successional concepts to range condition assessment. SRM established the Range Inventory Standardization Committee group in 1978, with Lamar acting as Chair in 1981. They recommended a change from "range site" to "ecological site," and created the "resource value rating" concept. This group became the Task Group on Unity in Concepts and

Terminology in 1988, with Lamar as Chairman. Their final report to the Board of Directors was in 1991; it was published in the *Journal of Range Management* in 1995. The Task Group worked contemporaneously with the National Academy of Sciences. Unity emphasized the use of ecological sites and introduced the concept of “site conservation thresholds.” More than 30 yr since Lamar began his involvement with rangeland assessment and monitoring he is still active with the concept. He is coauthor of a “handbook” published by the University of Arizona that encourages utilization to be used in a way that is supported by the profession and good science. It is being evaluated for use throughout the United States.

After 51 yr as a member of SRM, he has lost none of his involvement and activity. He continues to play an active role by expressing his opinion openly and often. He steps in to assist in those activities and issues with which he is extremely well versed and keenly interested.

It is with great honor that we hereby present Dr E. Lamar Smith with the Society for Range Management’s most esteemed Frederic G. Renner Award.

W. R. Chapline Research Award

The W. R. Chapline Award was established in 1986 to provide recognition to members of SRM for exceptional research accomplishments in range science and related disciplines.

The recipient of the 2008 W. R. Chapline Research Award is **Dr David D. Briske**, Professor, Department of Ecosystem Sciences and Management, Texas A&M University. Dr Briske’s research has significantly contributed to important advances in both rangeland ecology and rangeland management for approximately 30 yr. Dr Briske has organized his research program to serve as a bridge between plant ecology and rangeland management. Attainment of this challenging goal required an in-depth understanding

of contemporary science and its relevance to rangeland issues. His work has contributed to several rangeland principles that support effective rangeland conservation and management, such as grass and grassland responses to herbivory, population ecology of bunchgrasses, and, most currently, contributions to state-and-transition models and thresholds. As an example, the book chapter coauthored with Jim Richards addressing plant responses to defoliation that was published in the SRM publication, “Wildland Plants: Physiological Ecology and Developmental Morphology,” remains one of the most definitive syntheses of perennial grass responses to grazing. Dr Briske has utilized this research insight to develop a well-funded research program with great relevance to the rangeland profession. The recognition and impact of his research is evident by the frequency with which his publications have been cited and the number of high-profile speaking invitations that he has received.

Dr Briske continues a high level of research activity by evaluating the ecological foundations for state-and-transition models and thresholds. He was senior author on two invited synthesis papers addressing state-and-transition models, ecological thresholds, and rangeland health in the January 2005 and May 2006 issues of *Rangeland Ecology and Management*. This work provides a means for rangeland professionals to begin to integrate existing ecological information with the new assessment procedures that are currently being developed and implemented. Dr Briske and two Texas A&M University colleagues have established a large-scale field facility on the Texas A&M campus to explore the effects of global climate change on oak savannas. This project investigates the effects of precipitation redistribution (summer to fall and spring) and simulated global warming on several widely distributed rangeland plant species including eastern red cedar and little bluestem.

Dr Briske has contributed to numerous outreach activities that demonstrate his commitment to translate ecological information into practices and policies that promote effective rangeland stewardship. He brings cutting-edge science into the classroom as well as the research arena. His students develop a clear understanding of how science relates to practical rangeland issues. This approach has placed him among the highest-rated educators in both undergraduate and graduate classes in the Department of Ecosystem Sciences and Management at Texas A&M University.

It is with great honor that the Society for Range Management hereby presents Dr David D. Briske with the 2007 W R Chapline Research Award.

W. R. Chapline Stewardship Award

The W. R. Chapline Stewardship Award was created in 1986 to provide recognition to members of SRM for exceptional accomplishments and contributions to the art and science of range management through specific rangeland entities.



David Briske accepts the W. R. Chapline Research Award.



Wayne Hanselka accepts the W. R. Chapline Stewardship Award.

During his 30-plus-yr tenure as an Extension Range Specialist, **Dr Wayne Hanselka** has been responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating range management educational programs in 37 south Texas counties. The product of his efforts has been to obtain the ultimate but illusive goal of all range professionals. Simply stated, he has made a difference, not only for extension within his assigned counties, but also for rangeland owners and managers across Texas, the Southwest, and Mexico, and, most importantly, for the valuable rangeland resources so important to everyone.

During his career Dr Hanselka has written over 163 publications, made hundreds of presentations, and secured over \$1 million in grants to support his programs. From 1996 to 2007 he served as the Associate Department Head and Extension Program Leader for Texas A&M University's Department of Ecosystem Science and Management. Dr Hanselka has not confined his efforts to Texas. Over the years he has worked closely with rangeland professionals in Mexico to reorganize the Mexico Chapter of the Society for Range Management and to create a future Agriculture Extension Service in the State of Tamaulipas.

Dr Hanselka's innovative leadership and programs; integrating county-based needs with regional, state, national, and international efforts, have resulted in the improved ecological health and productivity of Texas rangelands and rangeland throughout the Southwest and Mexico. The resulting products for all include an improved quantity and quality of water from rangeland watersheds, enhanced wildlife habitat and more efficient livestock production systems.

Because he has "made a difference" for rangelands and the people that manage them throughout Texas, the

southwest, and Mexico, the Society for Range Management is proud to present Dr Wayne Hanselka with the W. R. Chapline Land Stewardship Award.

Fellow Award

The title of Fellow is conferred upon members of the Society for Range Management in recognition of exceptional service to the Society and its programs in advancing the science and art of range-related resource management. This high honor is granted in the belief that special recognition should be given for exceptional and dedicated service to the Society.

No Fellow awards were given this year.

Sustained Lifetime Achievement Award

The Sustained Lifetime Achievement Award is presented by the Society for Range Management to members for long-term contributions to the art and science of range management and to the Society for Range Management.

Jack Miller, a past president and director of the Society for Range Management, spent his professional career managing and improving rangelands and providing leadership in the range profession. He continues to do so, including care for his own land in retirement.

He has remained active and involved in SRM since his time as president, currently as a member of the Endowment Fund Board of Governors.

Does a serving personality, a great work ethic, boundless energy, and a bountiful collection of skills and knowledge sound like candidate for Sustained Lifetime Achievement? It sure does and Jack Miller has these attributes in spades—all aces!

Jack Miller is indeed a worthy recipient of the Society's Sustained Lifetime Achievement Award.

Outstanding Achievement Awards

The Outstanding Achievement Awards are presented by the Society for Range Management to members and other qualified individuals and groups working in rangelands. The Outstanding Achievement Awards have been subdivided into two groups: Research/Academia and Stewardship (ranchers, agency professional, and consultants).

Research/Academia

Dr R. James Ansley has established a world-wide reputation as a rangeland ecologist based on his extensive research and experience in semiarid mesquite and juniper woodlands.

Jim has conducted and reported research on gas exchange, water use, seed production, seed predation, herbicide control, herbaceous responses, and fire ecology of woody communities. Being located at an Agricultural Research and Extension Center places a priority on research that addresses producer problems and ecological sustainability.

Jim cares deeply about proper management and sustainability of our rangelands. He is willing to present his results and his understanding of the issues to his peers in the

scientific arena, agricultural businesses, local clubs and groups, undergraduate students from other universities, and students ranging from kindergarten to high school. He is an advocate for sustainable management.

It is an honor for the Society for Range Management to award Dr R. James Ansley with the Outstanding Achievement Award in Research and Academia.

Dr Charles H. Butterfield is an educator in every sense of the word. He has dedicated himself to teaching in an arena in which rewards are handed out for research. Chuck came into a new and establishing program at Chadron State College and has built it into one of the leading producers of range management graduates in the United States.

He has added to the core curriculum in range management, teaches the basic soils course, and has added a wildlife management minor. He involves students in internships, student research, and controlled-burn projects. He has been extremely active in SRM Student Activities; has served on seven other committees, councils or task forces' has served as Range Science Education Council President and Nebraska Section President; and is active in Range Youth Camp and Environthon activities.

The Society for Range Management is honored to select Dr Charles H. Butterfield for and Outstanding Achievement Award in Research and Academia.

Dr J. Richard Conner, a Thomas M. O'Connor Professor, Department of Ecosystem Science and Management and the Department of Agricultural Economics, Texas A&M University, has done pioneering work as an Agriculture Economist specializing in the development of economically sustainable rangeland and ranch management strategies and tactics.

His has an exemplary national and international reputation for excellence in service related to his research in range and ranch management and development of decision-support programs for landowners and conservation management personnel.

This award brings great credit to Dr Connor personally, his family, his friends and colleagues, Texas A&M University, and the Society for Range Management.

Dr Richard (Bob) Lyons has been the preeminent leader in the understanding and research on animal behavior in the state of Texas.

His major area of emphasis as Professor and Extension Range Specialist at Texas A&M University includes range cattle nutritional analysis using the combined tools of near-infrared reflectance spectroscopy (NIRS) fecal analysis and body-condition scoring, and the application of global positioning systems and geographic information systems to investigate range cattle grazing behavior, explaining thresholds for pasture use and nonuse.

Dr Lyon's research on NIRS equations to estimate cattle forage quality from fecal analysis provided the basis for establishing the Grazing Animal Nutrition Lab at Texas A&M. This lab has been used extensively by agencies working with ranchers and has clients from 48 states.

Dr Lyons leaves his mark on the science, understanding and application of range management through numerous publications and presentations at international, national, and statewide meetings. His research and education efforts serve us well in our understanding, use, and stewardship of our rangeland resources.

Dr Jerry Volesky is widely recognized for his expertise in irrigated forages, irrigated pasture management, and grazing management. He has conducted definitive research and developed recommendations on frontal grazing in the southern Great Plains and rotational grazing on upland and subirrigated meadows, windrow grazing on subirrigated meadows, and year-round management plans for livestock production systems in the central and northern Great Plains.

His well-organized and -funded research projects are particularly relevant to the needs of regional range livestock producers and feed into his highly acclaimed extension programs in irrigated forages and pasture and grazing management. He was a leader in the planning and curriculum development of the Nebraska Ranch Practicum, a highly successful program in extension education that he and fellow specialists instruct annually.

Products of his outstanding integrated research and extension programs are over 50 research and 25 extension publications, which address challenging rangeland issues and provide significant insight into managing rangeland and forage resources.

It is a pleasure for the Society for Range Management to honor Dr Jerry D. Volesky with the Outstanding Achievement Award in Research and Academia.

Stewardship

Jenny Pluhar is a talented range scientist with high standards for professional performance and ethics. She has been a leader in SRM for 23 of the 27 yr she has been a member, helping to advance range science and the careers of range scientists. Her outstanding contributions to land stewardship include exemplary work as a wetland scientist, range consultant, and ranch manager.

As a professional, Jenny contributes to the sound management of rangelands in a broad geographic area, including wetland delineation, restoration, mitigation, rangeland monitoring, grazing management, and wildlife management. Jenny's 23 yr of leadership in Student Activities demonstrate her dedication to fostering the next generation of range scientists and managers.

Countless SRM members have been positively impacted by her work on undergraduate student competitions, scholarships, professional development workshops, training, and mentoring. Over 2,500 students and 1,000 professionals have been positively impacted by Tapping the Top and the Student Employment Workshop.

It is certainly a pleasure for the Society for Range Management to recognize Jennifer J. Pluhar's many contributions by awarding her the Outstanding Achievement Award for Stewardship.

Karyn Scalise has a wide diversity of experience involving native prairie and has been manager of the Saskatchewan Prairie Conservation Action Plan since April 2000.

Her exceptional networking skills and new perspectives have made the Prairie Conservation Action Plan a model for how diverse partnerships can identify common goals and enhance conservation. Some of her achievements include the development and delivery of the Eco-Ex and Owls and Cows programs to elementary schools throughout Saskatchewan, raising more than \$1.8 million for prairie conservation in Saskatchewan, and completing the legislative requirements to have *Stipa comata* declared Saskatchewan's provincial grass and to have an annual Native Prairie Appreciation Week declared in Saskatchewan.

Numerous stakeholders desire a say on how rangelands are managed. Often these views are very divergent. Karyn's superior organizational and communication skill and her diplomacy have been a major contributors to the increased efficacy of cooperative efforts to conserve prairie in Saskatchewan.

Effective native prairie conservation needs people like Karyn Scalise who embrace a unique vision and know how to tie everything together to make things happen!

The Society for Range Management is pleased to recognize Karyn Scalise's talent and work by honoring her with the Outstanding Achievement Award in Stewardship.

Outstanding Young Range Professional

The Outstanding Young Professional Award is presented by the Society to an individual member who has demonstrated extraordinary potential and promise as a range management professional. This award is presented as an encouragement for outstanding performance by young men and women entering the profession of range management.

Bill S. L. Houston has contributed to the profession of range management by being involved in range condition assessments, range management planning for federally operated community pastures, and conducting research at the Master's level.

Bill's Master's thesis, "Landscape Classification and Impact of Cattle Grazing on Vegetation and Range Condition in the Dundurn Sandhills, Saskatchewan" added to the body of knowledge concerning range condition assessment of sandhills range sites.

A significant contribution has been working to apply existing range management research in a way that is practical. He was involved in work with Dr Jeff Thorpe to develop a range health assessment and stocking rate protocol for the grasslands of Inner Mongolia, China.

Bill has demonstrated a great ability to get people to work together effectively so that new achievements can be realized by all.

The Society for Range Management is pleased to honor Bill accomplishments with the Outstanding Young Range Professional Award.

As a Range Management Specialist for the US Forest Service, **Cindy McArthur** has made significant contributions to public land grazing, rangeland restoration, and wild horse management in New Mexico and Oregon.

She has dramatically improved relationships between federal and public interest groups. Cindy finds ways to provide opportunities for cooperation and partnerships in situations that were rife with conflict and animosity.

She is currently devoting her energy to a new assignment as the Forest Service Liaison to the Society for Range Management. Cindy is a great role model for other young professionals and is among the best and brightest of the new generation of rangeland managers!

It is indeed a pleasure for the Society for Range Management to recognize Cindy's work and talent with the Outstanding Young Range Professional Award.

Dr Cody B. Scott, Professor of Animal Science at Angelo State University in San Angelo, Texas, is a devoted rangeland researcher and teacher.

Cody's research interests include using goats for biological control of juniper, understanding the role of livestock and wildlife in the spread of mesquite seeds, and addressing poisonous plant problems.

To date, Dr Scott's greatest contribution to range management lies in his ability to foster the development of effective rangeland managers. Students leave his classes and go into the work force with leadership abilities, a general understanding of the basics of range management, the ability to implement what they learn, and, most importantly, the ability to be independent thinkers.

We can be confident in looking forward to a long and outstanding career for Cody in the years to come.

The Society for Range management is pleased to recognize Dr Cody B. Scott with the Outstanding Young Range Professional Award.

Range Science Education Council Outstanding Undergraduate Teacher Award

The Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award is presented annually to the individual who makes the greatest contribution to undergraduate education in the broad discipline of range science. The award is presented jointly by the Range Science Education Council and the Society for Range Management.

The Range Science Education Council and the Society for Range Management proudly present the 2008 Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award to **Dr Robert Knight** of Texas A&M's Department of Ecosystem Science and Management. Dr Knight has taught undergraduate range management classes for over 20 yr. Dr Knight serves as an advisor to over 100 undergraduates and to the Range Club and is the coach of the Range Plant Identification Team at his university. In fact, his students consider him a role model for both students and other faculty.

Dr Knight is well known among his students as a faculty member dedicated to getting to know them and helping with their education and future professional life. One of his former students stated that “his dedication to his job and the people he works with is quite extraordinary. His student mentoring is inspiring. His professionalism and enthusiasm made a positive difference in my life, as well as many other students.” Not only has this year’s Outstanding Teacher developed a website to be used by students as a resource, he also serves as a “resource person to every undergraduate and graduate student in his department.” The guidance he provides students ranges from the normal scheduling of courses to individual mentoring, and incorporates his philosophy that all students have the ability to succeed and that his job is to help them set and reach their goals. He advises students to become involved with organizations at the campus and national levels—helping them develop professionally and teaching them to network for their future careers. His success in coaching the Range Plant Identification Team is illustrated by their winning three first-place Range Plant Team awards and winning all of the collegiate contests in the state.

Dr Knight is considered a highly effective educator both in and out of the classroom. It is no wonder that he has received awards at Texas A&M for teaching, advising, and mentoring and is now being recognized by the Range

Science Education Council and the Society for Range Management as the Outstanding Undergraduate Teacher for 2008.

Annual SRM International Travel Fellowship 2007

The SRM International Travel Fellowship, presented for the first time in 2006, is awarded to a rangeland scientist or manager from a developing country. The purpose of this fellowship, which includes a \$1,000 travel stipend, is to foster international exchange about advances in rangeland ecology and management and to promote participation in SRM by rangeland scientists and managers from developing countries. The fellowship is competitive and is awarded on the basis of scientific merit and applied significance of research, financial need, professional development objectives, and clarity of expression in English.

Dr Alicia Melgoza is a professor at the Universidad de Chihuahua in Mexico. Her main research areas there are plant taxonomy, evaluation and monitoring of rangelands, and native plant propagation. As a result of her work as botanist, she has published four manuals on native plants for ranchers and extensionists and a book on rangeland plants of Chihuahua. In association with staff from the USDA she has contributed in the development of new approaches for evaluation and monitoring rangelands.

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