



President's Address: Expanding Partnerships and Continuing Successes

JOHN L. (JACK) ARTZ, PRESIDENT
Society for Range Management, 1992

Each year our Annual Meeting brings together about one-quarter of our membership, a percentage higher than that achieved by any similar organization I know. This year was no exception. We missed you that could not be with us and you missed another great meeting.

As last year in Spokane, we opened our meeting with a breakfast—a new tradition that I like. It allowed me to make my report and recognize many key members early on—and gave everyone the opportunity to “put a face with the name” of people they might want to meet and visit with during the week. Our meeting theme, *Expanding Partnerships and Continuing Successes*, set the tone all week as we conducted the business of the Society, took advantage of educational opportunities, and socialized. We are in a fast changing world and a fast changing profession. Each of us needs to change too, and this meeting provided a special opportunity for us to be change agents as well.

In January, thanks to TV, most of us witnessed some of the ceremonies in Washington during the installation of our new president. Inaugurals are designed to inspire and to build enthusiasm and faith in our new leaders. A major message this year was the hope for a renewal of faith in America under the vital leadership of a new generation. Bill Clinton is our first President born after World War II and will be bringing many of his fellow “Boomers” with him to the new administration. We may have seen the last of our Presidents to have served in World War II and will be seeing fewer and fewer of that generation in positions of power.

I believe the same is true for our Society for Range Management. I may well be the last SRM President with World War II service and to have been involved in range management at the time our Society was established. As a card carrying member of the older generation, I look forward to the vital leadership of a new generation of range managers.

Another message I received was the much quoted statement in the President's inaugural address: “There is nothing wrong with America that cannot be cured by what is right with America.” The same is true for SRM. I'm here to tell you that the strengths of SRM far outweigh our weaknesses.

Our greatest strength, I am convinced, is DEDICATED MEMBERS. We have a greater proportion of dedicated and actively participating members than any other professional organization I know of. I am pleased to report that membership increased by nearly 3% this year, the greatest annual gain in many years.

We have some other major strengths. One is our DENVER OFFICE—a charming building full of charming, efficient, and loyal people. If you haven't dropped in, I urge you to do so. The transition of EVP's this year from Peter Jackson, through interim EVP Ray Housley, to Bud Rumburg went painlessly and I am grateful to each of them, as well as the whole support staff, for a professional job well done. A number of improvements and innovations in the way we do business are underway and I believe we are

a stronger, more effectively administered professional organization than ever before.

Another major strength is our SECTIONS—21 strong. Through our Sections we are able to reach out to people where they live and where they work. In many important areas, Sections can be more proactively relevant to members and the public than our parent Society. Sections are often in a better position than the parent Society to identify local and regional issues and to sponsor (or co-sponsor) timely educational and facilitative activities. The parent Society this year has agreed to provide “up front” money and assistance to encourage such Section activity.

A fourth strength is our YOUTH PROGRAMS. I know of no other professional organization that has done as much as SRM to involve youth in its activities and I know of no professional organization that has benefitted more from such participation. Over ten percent of our members are students and I am delighted to see so many of them at our meetings. Students are our real change agents. We need to stay in communication with them.

Nearly every Section now sponsors high school student range camps and provides college scholarships. More than half bring students to our SRM High School Youth Forum. Fifty-two college range clubs belong to our SRM Student Conclave—ten from Mexico and Canada. Most are represented each year at our Undergraduate Range Exam, Plant ID Contest, Undergraduate Paper Session, Student Displays, and at our business, educational, and social events—those for us all and those especially for them.

A fifth SRM strength is our PUBLICATIONS. Our *Journal of Range Management*, *Rangelands* and *Trailboss News* are quality professional publications. We all owe much to Gary Frasier, Jerry Schwen, Pat Smith, Patty Perez, the editorial boards, and all those that contribute papers. I would add a special thanks to John Vallentine, who has prepared the “Current Literature” columns in *Rangelands* for more years than I can remember.

In addition to service to our members, these publications are important to our outreach. We now have 650 subscribers to *JRM* and 245 to *Rangelands*. I am pleased that our nonmember subscriptions have increased since initiation this year of the *Rangelands* Subscription Program. Our Denver Office also has a growing selection of other educational materials ranging from textbooks to leaflets to a video library. A descriptive list is in preparation for the 80-plus tapes currently available, and borrowers presently pay only mailing costs.

A sixth strength is in our COMMITTEES AND TASK GROUPS. These are the program development and delivery machines of our Society. We have nearly 40 of them involving more than 400 members. Many operate at the Section level as well. At least 5 merit special credit for work well done this year:

1. The *Future in Range Management Education Task Group* led by Mort Kothmann has completed a 3-year study of the status of range management education in terms of (a) undergraduate education, (b) graduate education and research, (c) extension and continuing education, and (d) agency and

This address was presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Range Management in Albuquerque, N.M., February, 1993.

industry needs—in Canada and Mexico as well as in the United States. Copies of their report will be available on request.

2. The *Endangered Species Task Group*, chaired by Don Henderson, presented a report to the Board at Albuquerque with recommendations on how SRM should be involved during the Endangered Species Act critical reauthorization processes. Look to your April or May issue of *Trailboss News* for an update.
3. The *Conservation Reserve Task Group*, led by Rhett Johnson, has been working with Sections and partner organizations encouraging conservation and agricultural groups to prepare for the wind-up of the current CRP program in 1996. Our goal is to keep as much CRP land as possible in permanent cover.
4. The *Unity in Concepts and Terms Task Group*, chaired by Patricia Johnson, continues to provide leadership in national and worldwide efforts to provide a more understandable and scientifically supportable ecological framework for describing and analyzing rangelands. Representatives from the National Park Service, Defense Department, and Environmental Protection Agency as well as from Canada and Mexico joined the Task Group this year, and field testing and Section review have been initiated. We are still waiting for the report of the National Academy of Sciences task group that concurrently conducted similar studies.
5. The *Public Affairs Committee*, chaired by Bob Hamner, made special efforts this year to streamline and clarify processes involved in policy and position statements and other SRM public information mechanisms. You'll be hearing more on this soon.

There have been many more accomplishments this year. All of you have contributed. I am especially pleased to report accomplishments in 2 areas we have given high priority this year.

First, EXPANDING PARTNERSHIPS has been a major goal this year. Our Affiliations Committee, under Chairman Dan Merkel, has been restructured for more proactive outreach and renamed the Partnerships and Affiliations Committee. Memoranda of Understanding were signed this year with the Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service, Agricultural Research Service, and National Park Service. We expect to sign with the Bureau of Land Management and Environmental Protection Agency in the next few months. These agreements identify common goals, recognize benefits from close and continuing working relationships, and provide a framework for cooperation. Similar agreements with professional and conservation organizations, such as the American Forage and Grassland Association, the Wildlife Society, and the National Association of Conservation Districts, are being explored.

We are aggressively extending partnerships internationally. This week, a contingent of Society members led by Dr. Phil Sims are "outreaching" in Australia and New Zealand at the 17th International Grassland Congress. In November, our Executive Vice-President represented us at the First Western Canada Interprovincial Range Conference in Saskatoon. In July, I was honored to be a speaker at the Eighth National Congress of Sociedad Mexicana de Manejo de Pastizales (SOMAP) in Guadalajara. This year, in August, we will be represented at the International Grassland Resources Symposium in Inner Mongolia, China. And, in July 1995 we will be hosting the Fifth International Rangeland Congress in Salt Lake City.

We are also currently involved in several major partnering projects. We are partners in one coalition developing a national grazing lands initiative for private lands and another working on a major national symposium on the Conservation Reserve Program. We are a part of a Natural Resources Foundation coalition identifying critical natural resource management issues for the twenty-

first century. We hosted a multi-organization group advising the Environmental Protection Agency on approaches to management of nonpoint pollution on grazing lands and are working with the National Park Service on a proposed multi-professional society review of issues related to management of Yellowstone National Park's Northern Range. This year we will be developing partnerships to work with the upcoming reauthorizations of the Endangered Species and Rural Clean Water Acts.

STRATEGIC PLANNING has been our second priority area this year. Like any organization, we need to take a hard look at ourselves from time to time to gain consensus on who we are and where we should be headed—especially in times, like these, of rapid change. At a 3-day special session at Denver in October, the Board developed preliminary statements on SRM visions, values, mission, guiding principles, and key issues. At Albuquerque, these were shared and revised in a meeting with Section presidents and then presented to committees and to the full membership. Everyone was invited to comment during an "open mike" session following the annual business meeting.

During this year, we will be encouraging Sections, committees, and the Student Conclave to work with the draft document developed at Albuquerque, to build on it and their particular areas of interest, and to propose revisions where appropriate. Incoming President Gary Donart will be appointing a special task group to coordinate and facilitate these efforts.

As President of SRM, I am privileged to see "SRM in action" more than most of you do and I am grateful for this opportunity to share with you my pride in our organization and my appreciation to all of you that make it what we are today. As President, I also see things that give me some concerns about our organization. I think it is equally important that I share those with you. We all need to be thinking realistically about them.

My first concern relates to OUTREACH. We are a small, little-known, and often misunderstood society and profession. We will probably always remain small but we cannot afford to remain misunderstood. This is why the work of our Unity Task Group and expanding partnership efforts are so important.

A second concern relates closely to the first. It is the LOW IDENTIFICATION OF RANGE PROGRAMS IN AGENCIES AND UNIVERSITIES. It is ironic that when interest in rangeland issues is at an all time high, many agencies and educational institutions are reducing and deemphasizing range programs and failing to recognize range science and management as an important part of emerging and changing programs. Each of us can cite many examples of this, I am sure, and I won't belabor it further here.

My third concern is FINANCES. SRM is operating about as lean and mean as we possibly can. Demands and cost continue to increase but dues have not increased since 1985. Sure, there are other income sources that we should continue to pursue but we need to recognize their limitations. The bottom line is that if we as members want more from our Society, we've got to be willing to pay for it. We need to bite this bullet and we need to do it soon.

One final impression from the inauguration illustrates a fourth concern: As a Society we are TOO SLOW OUT OF THE STARTING GATE. The presidential inauguration focuses public attention on the future. It highlights the new president and his visions and serves as an inspirational and practical springboard for aggressive implementation of new directions and new programs. Our annual meetings, among other purposes, should serve that function in SRM but I don't think they do.

At our Annual Meetings, our new officers are not installed until near the end of the meeting and there is uncertainty whether the outgoing or incoming chair is responsible for conducting committee meetings during the week. The result is too much focus on the past and too little time for organizing for the future.

(continued on page 126)

President's Address (continued from page 99)

This year I tried to improve the situation a little. Introductions of new officers and committee chairs were made at the kick-off breakfast. Incoming President Gary Donart shared the responsibilities of the Board Chairman with me throughout the week, and our Annual Business Meeting was held separate from the Awards Program to provide more opportunity for member involvement in the business of our Society. However, more should be done to make our annual meetings more future-focused and to "jump-start" programs for the new year. If we are to move out ahead of the pack, we need to look for other "stationary bicycles" in the way we do business.

I have identified four weaknesses in our Society. If you match these with the many major strengths discussed first, mathematics indicates that the outlook for the future of SRM is positive. I certainly concur with this. To paraphrase President Clinton, "There is nothing wrong with our Society that cannot be cured by what is right with our Society." Our greatest strength is you, our DEDICATED MEMBERS. Our future is in good hands—yours—and I am grateful for the support you have given me as your 1992 President.