

Editorial

What Are We Going To Do About It?

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About what? The image of range resources and of range management in the viewpoint of the average citizen! I have just finished reading the chapters on "Grasslands" and on "Wild Animals" in Allen's and Leonard's third edition, *CONSERVING NATURAL RESOURCES, PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE IN A DEMOCRACY*. This experience renewed my awareness of and concern about a chronic "disease" that I believe has infected all together too many of us in the Range Management "Profession". Could we call it defeatism or "don't-careitis"? We are not doing a sufficiently vigorous and dedicated job of selling the importance of this tremendous natural resource for which we are responsible, of building a greater appreciation for what modern range management is, of making "John Doe

citizen" more aware of how society benefits from healthy, productive ranges and what the livestock industry has been doing to help improve this important natural resource, of stimulating a more widespread appreciation that healthy range resources are basic to the productivity of big game populations as well as the western range livestock industry. By these omissions, we make it harder for authors like Allen and Leonard to do a good job when they talk about *our field* and the resources with which we are concerned.

My first reaction upon reading the above chapters was one of great disappointment—almost of anger and disgust—that two knowledgeable people would cut range resources so short in writing a book widely used in conservation courses across the country. I was particularly concerned that the philosophy and attitudes they expounded do not represent the 1966 brand of range management which has seen conflict between the professional and the stockman evaporate like the morning fog on a sunny day—the kind of range management which is seeing great programs of resource improvement carried to successful conclusion, the kind of dedication by both professional and user that is seeing increase in Federal permits to livestock ranchers as a result of good management, research that is developing new technology for the improvement of important game ranges—the kind of range management that is cognizant of the multiple-use-management concept and is working hard to resolve old or fancied conflicts with forestry and with wildlife and to prevent conflicts with the rapidly developing recreational use of important range lands. No, I couldn't blame all these

oversights on the authors of this widely used book.

If we had been doing our job thoroughly and talking range management instead of excusing it or hiding it under such misleading, politically expedient blankets as "wildlife habitat", its importance and nature would have been so clear to these authors that we might have seen two instead of one chapter on range. The presentation would have been up to date. It would have clearly established this resource as the food and cover base for *both* wildlife and domestic livestock populations and as the core of watershed protection and quality on millions of acres. The chapter might even have been titled "Range Resources". One can't ignore the obvious—you know when the sun is shining, if you're awake. More than just lovers are aware of a full moon but it is mighty easy for any of us not to notice the thin sliver of a new moon just peeking up or (I sometimes wonder) sinking over the horizon.

There is unrealized opportunity for qualified range people to write for the layman—to write voluminously about the wise use and management of range resources and what they mean to our national life and to the world. All you have to do is just introduce an elementary or secondary school teacher of Conservation or Biology to the true importance of range resources and you will hear exclamations like, "Oh! Why, I didn't realize...; where can I get more information? Tell me more!" But, we are not telling the story of range resources and range management to one of our best allies and "evangelists"—the conservation teacher and textbook writer. We are denying them the tools with which to work. **WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?**