

Range Management Education

I. The Problem

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Since the birth of range management as a profession, the accumulated knowledge about the range resource and range management practices has become a monument to our progress. But, are we getting the whole job done? Some people have said that our research is so far ahead of management the full attention of the profession could be utilized for decades in "getting what we already know on the land." This probably represents an extreme view because we have laid many important milestones in management and each advancement in new knowledge makes the old more effective. Regardless of your own reaction to these statements, they do imply a question of great importance: What is the place of education in getting range management on the land? Perhaps we need to adjust our emphasis considering the three main functions of our profession—research, management, and education.

Is this the order of priority we have placed on them: research first because of the magnitude of the unknown, management a close second because of the obvious need, and education coming along somewhere in the dust of the main drive to be noticed only when it lags, drifts too far out of line, or makes a sudden stir of activity?

Fortunately for the Society, two things have contributed to keeping education before the membership: First, the publication of an annual student issue of *THE JOURNAL OF RANGE MANAGEMENT*; and second, publication of 15 articles on various phases of range education at a frequency of one to four per year since 1950. This may be a record, and the contributors are to be complimented. *But*, is the publication of articles enough? The value of these 15 articles is proportional to the stimulation of the membership

to think and to *do something* about the educational cornerstone of our profession—a cornerstone which is laid in the home, aligned in elementary and secondary school, cemented in college, and built upon in the school of hard knocks and experience. Where does education stand in priority among the rank and file of our membership and what is important in the education of range managers?

Recognizing the importance of these questions and realizing that it is the rancher who ultimately puts

These articles on Range Management Education by Prof. Charles E. Poulton and Prof. E. W. Tisdale were developed from a panel discussion on this topic at the Denver meetings of the American Society of Range Management in Denver, Colorado, January, 1956. Other papers in the series will be presented in subsequent issues.

range management on the land, the Northwest Section of the American Society of Range Management conducted a panel at their 1954 meeting on the question, "Can we contribute to better range management on the land by integrating range management and animal husbandry training?" The panel was moderated by the author with the following participants: E. W. TISDALE, University of Idaho, Department of Range Management, on "College Training in Range Management"; T. B. KEITH, University of Idaho, Department of Animal Husbandry, on "Animal Science Training for Range Livestock Students"; DAVID F. COSTELLO, Chief of Range Research, Pacific Northwest Forest and Range Experiment Station, on "College Training for Range Management, an Employer's View"; and J. W. SOUTHWORTH, Rancher, Seneca, Oregon, on "Technical

Training Needs of the Range Livestock Producer."

The panel stimulated such an interesting discussion that it was repeated by request at the national meeting of the Society in January 1956. At the Denver meeting the participants were the same except for L. E. WASHBURN, Colorado A and M College, Department of Animal Husbandry, who replaced T. B. KEITH and presented "The Educational Problem Common to Range Management and Animal Husbandry"; and KENNETH CONRAD, Rancher, Wray, Colorado, who read J. W. SOUTHWORTH'S paper and contributed some of his own ideas on the same subject. These articles will appear under this same general title in this and succeeding issues of the *JOURNAL*.

If you have children or grandchildren or only an interest in the youngster over the hill or down the block, or if you merely have visions of the right girl in the back of your mind, education is of vital concern to you and you will be interested in reading what these men have to say about this important subject. Read and think about the ideas and concepts presented, discuss them in your local sections, and let the membership and your local schools and colleges know what you think. Only in this way can we mature our educational philosophy, keep it up to date, and maintain proper balance and priority in our three professional functions—research, EDUCATION, and management. The opportunity exists, whether you are a professional range manager or a practical ranch manager to work for an educational program which will build a maximum of progress and accomplishment for you and contribute to the molding of a new generation capable of maintaining range management as a competent profession in the face of great scientific discoveries yet to be made in this atomic age.

What will you do about education, the important connecting link between range research and range management?