

Are You Really Concerned About Your Society?

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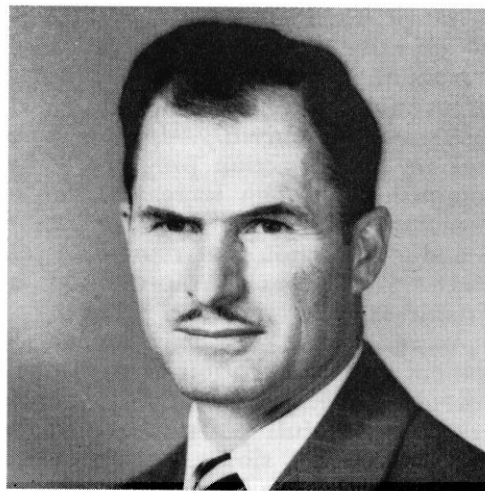
The American Society of Range Management is entering a critical period in which it will face many important problems. This situation is not unique to this society. Many other scientific societies feel that they are not keeping pace with scientific endeavor in the United States and other parts of the world. Areas of competence and recognition are being tested by all disciplines. Planning and financing to move forward are paramount if our profession is to survive. Otherwise our area of concern will be usurped by other disciplines and contemporary scientific societies.

Grassland societies in Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa are representing all areas of forage and rangeland scientific endeavor. Both agronomic and animal science disciplines are involved but range management per se as a science concerned with the balance of both plant and animal life is not truly considered. The initiation of grassland societies in both North and South America is being encouraged by various scientific interests. What sort of a competitive or cooperative effort should the ASRM undertake with these groups in the United States and abroad?

Sections

Advisory Council.—The sections are the corner stones of our Society. The Advisory Council composed of section presidents is an extremely important organ of our organization. The Board of Directors of the Society relies upon the Council for (1) recommendations on all important issues, and (2) suggestions for improvement and development of the Society. It is the responsibility of the parent Society Officers to keep the Advisory Council informed of all our major activities and concerns. In turn it is the responsibility of each section president to keep the section membership informed. It is through the Council that individual members can have a voice and be brought closer to the Society.

Section Activity.—A satisfied and interested membership depends largely upon section activity. Sections should consider two or three field day



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meetings per year in various geographical locations in their area. All sections should consider the organization of chapters through which each individual member may become more aware of the benefits of the Society. The annual meeting of the section should be an important affair and not an hour or so of registration and an afternoon of mediocre presentations of papers, followed by installation of officers. Make the meetings worth while to justify travel and attendance of the membership. Likewise, employers should be liberal with travel expenses and paid leave for their employees who desire to attend. Certainly a well-informed employee is better than one who remains in his community and grows stagnant.

High quality newsletters including pictures, some scientific information, and section business issued quarterly are doing more than most of us anticipated to create enthusiasm among section members.

The Public Relations program must be active at the section level. I hope that each section will initiate a public relations committee to work jointly with the parent public relations committee. This is, indeed, an important activity that requires participation by the sections. They can look forward to guidance from the Executive Secretary's Office.

Each section must assume the responsibility of soliciting new members and retaining stable membership roles. This is an important function of the section and they must make this activity a perennial and continuous day-to-day program without even a temporary lull which often happens with the change in officers and committees each year.

Parent Society

It is the general feeling of your Officers that Range Management is suffering from the doldrums

because range managers show *too little concern*. It is the objective of the ASRM to move our profession from this present state of lethargy. Necessary steps include the following.

Finances and Membership.—It was necessary to raise income for an action program. This is to be accomplished through increased dues and increased membership. Your dues are promoting a science and a profession that represents your area of concern. What does your profession mean to you without identification and stature?

The progress of *Range Management* in scientific development and recognition as a discipline capable of managing the all important renewable range resources at full potential has moved forward, but much too slowly. Your membership and active participation in a dedicated manner is critically needed at this time if we hope to improve our professional image with other allied sciences and the lay people who have the erroneous concept that we are a selfish special interest group without scientific identification.

It has been calculated that slightly more than 50% of our college graduates in range science who are currently working as professional range managers are not members of our Society. This is truly a pathetic situation and must be evaluated with thoroughness. The Society apparently is not offering what our scientifically-trained range managers desire or these men do not realize what the Society stands for or can do for them. We must learn why we do not have these college graduates on our membership roles. There are at least 1,000 potential members and supporters in this group and the Society cannot hope to progress without them. Their support should be looked upon as promoting a science and a profession associated with their area of competence. Certainly, they need a Society that can represent and speak for them among allied scientific societies and multiple-use groups where their interests and training require identification and recognition.

Executive Secretary.—The overall plan agreed upon at the annual meeting in New Orleans in 1966 called for a full-time executive secretary—a person who is well trained and who can converse with all segments of our Society and other scientific areas as well. A person who can serve as the prime mover for our membership and public relations programs. We have selected such a man in Mr. Francis Colbert who has been a full partner and corporate officer of an agricultural management and consulting firm in Phoenix, Arizona for 16 years. He has a Master's degree in range management with a most enviable scholastic record. He can communicate both orally and by written word exceedingly well. The Board recommends him without reservation. We hope you will give him

complete support in our new program to move Range Management forward.

National Headquarters.—At the New Orleans meetings it was voted to move our National headquarters to the vicinity of Denver, Colorado. Since this time, there has been a plea to consider Washington, D.C. The planning committee and the Advisory Council will make recommendations to the Board when all factors are evaluated.

Public Relations.—It is common knowledge that our Society needs an energetic public relations program. The public needs to know the importance of the range resource. They need to know the importance of developing and managing range lands at their full potential for food, employment, and economic stability of rural communities. All range technicians should be sufficiently knowledgeable to defend as well as to justify the grazing of the renewable range resource for the welfare of mankind.

At present the Society belongs to a public relations council having representation from the National Cattle Growers Association, the National Sheep and Wool Producers, the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the American Society of Range Management. This group will sponsor programs aimed at elementary school children, the general public, and allied societies through brochures, articles in popular magazines, motion pictures, and lectures. This will by necessity have a modest beginning this year but great things are expected from this cooperative effort.

Professional Stature.—A very important activity initiated this past year concerns the improvement of our professional stature. The American Society of Range Management must be recognized in all biological resource management programs both in the United States and abroad.

The ASRM should be involved with the National Advisory Commission on Rural Poverty since they are concerned with the uses of the natural resources as they may create employment and economic stability for local communities. Certainly thousands of small communities throughout the West are, to a large degree, dependent upon range livestock production.

The world programs involved in the care and development of the native forage resources do not give *Range Management* the consideration it deserves. The International Biological Program has a major section on development and use of biological resources yet native range forage or native grasslands are not mentioned. This is an area where the ASRM can make a distinct and significant contribution. We must insist that range management be included.

Currently we are preparing proposals for affiliation with the American Association for the Ad-

vancement of Science, the National Research Council, the Agricultural Research Institute, and the American Institute of Biological Sciences.

Range Management Education.—It is hoped that the ASRM will shortly be recognized as a participant with the Commission on Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources. This commission expresses an interest in sciences dealing with development and use of renewable natural resources. The Professional Standards Committee and the Range Management Education Council should work closely with this commission, particularly with the panel presently studying future educational curricula changes for scientists who will be involved in the management of renewable natural resources. Education of range scientists must keep pace with other areas of scientific advancement.

Education in range management today involves more than the ecological and physiological responses of plants to defoliation, more than the technical knowledge of improving and developing range lands, more than the taxonomy of the plants on grazing lands and their forage values, more than the nutritional status of plants with respect to meeting the physiological requirements of grazing animals. A range technician in the future must have knowledge of the habitat requirements of native animals that are to be retained as part of the ecosystem, he must know something of the water budget of a watershed, he must know something of the economic and aesthetic values of range lands, and most of all he must be knowledgeable of the social reactions to multiple-use programs. With some college training in these areas of learning, a range technician should be able to reasonably evaluate the demands of other users for range lands. He should be qualified to prescribe a program of multiple use on grazing lands in a rational manner with only minor aid from other disciplines. He should be so trained that he can scientifically defend and justify livestock grazing on multipurpose lands.

Grazing and Other Uses

Paradoxically it seems, the better we see the future the more overwhelming becomes the uncertainty. As scientists we should not resist change but rather should adapt with it. Admittedly there has been a shift of emphasis in management of range resources on public lands. In our efforts to place more emphasis on other resource uses of range lands, we are unknowingly de-emphasizing grazing. Current emphasis on other land uses should not mean a lessening of the biological, economic, or social importance of domestic livestock grazing.

Shifts of emphasis to watershed, wildlife, recrea-

tion, and aesthetic values may be consistent with multiple-use programs but the question remains how far and how fast? Grazing should not be a left over or residue use, but rather, should be considered an important use and should be incorporated into a multiple-use program in all cases where the land is suited and the need is apparent. Range technicians have a tendency to declare a moratorium on range improvement and changes in management systems because they are bewildered by all the objections from other users. It has been rather conclusively shown that these other uses can be integrated into a multiple-use program without sacrificing the grazing values materially. The range technician must bolster his confidence and display his competence in planning an integrated program with grazing as an integral and important part of a multiple-use plan on public rangelands.

Should Range Management Become Sophisticated?

Many people feel that Range Management needs a new image. They feel that it can never be recognized as a science as long as people think of us as common western cowboys. Certainly, we in the Society know that this is not our area of function, but what about our allied scientists and people in general. We, as range managers or as a Society, could change our name and carry out essentially our same functions as scientists if this would benefit our scientific endeavor. We could change our terminology and converse in more scientific phraseology. These are ideas that we should consider seriously as we plan for the future.

If we recognize that both plant populations and animal populations vary widely over time, we are readily aware that any ecosystem (range) can be managed for greater efficiency. Management of our natural biotic resources for people now and in the future includes all plant life and all animal life either native or introduced, natural or domestic. Research can identify factors that are limiting optimum efficiency in productivity for any particular plant community. Therefore, modifications of the floristic composition of the ecosystem can be made for more efficient conversion of solar energy by plants and thus a greater quantity can be converted to sustenance of animal life. In like manner, animal populations may not convert plant growth into their own body components or may not reproduce effectively unless adequate nutrients are supplied for their many physiological functions throughout the year. Thus management or manipulation of plants and animals can make most ecosystems or ranges more productive. It is this opportunity for increased efficiency that in-

tures that range science or range management is destined to survive. It may, however, progress more rapidly under a new title and with specialists trained somewhat differently. When the study of ecosystems and nutrient cycling are identified with purpose such as maximum primary productivity in terms of red meat for the table, the trained range manager is needed. What better purpose could we serve than in the realms of dedicated effort towards man's future welfare?

Is This a Society for You?

A college student entering school for a degree in range management wants to see the time when he graduates and affiliates with a profession of high professional stature. A profession, if you please, that will delineate the area of resource management where his competence allows him to display excellence and become a man among men. We hope we are reaching that period.

Range technicians who are working in the field of range resource management want to see the time when their area of concern is scientifically and professionally dealt with in a manner that truly identifies it as an area of specialization that no other discipline can claim.

Does not a range livestock producer want a highly trained technician to help him with his range and livestock husbandry problems? Does he not want practical and rational solutions to the public range controversies? Does he not want these matters dealt with by knowledgeable and well-trained range management specialists? He may not realize that he does but certainly and surely this is the only solution to his range management problems.

Regardless of the name of our Society or the terms used in our communication as scientists, professionals, technicians or specialists, the renewable forage resource needs our attention and who is better trained to provide it than we are?

On the Bright Side

People are slowly but surely becoming aware of the need for range scientists. (1) Real estate appraisers are employing range management consultants to aid them in assessing the value of ranges. Many technically trained range men are serving as real estate appraisers and are proving that they can do ranch appraisal work better than non-trained range men. (2) Land management agencies are sensing the value of a well-trained and astute range scientist. (3) Ranchers are employing range-trained men to serve as foremen or managers. Livestock people are using more range consultants in their decision making operations. (4) Foreign Aid programs are beginning to realize the need for the bonafide range-trained scientist. Heretofore range problems abroad have been dealt with entirely by other disciplines such as Agronomy, Animal Husbandry or Veterinary Science.

All people directly concerned with the management and use of the range resource sense the need for more range research. Therefore, more range scientists will be employed throughout the world to contribute answers to our multitude of range problems.

Range management course work is truly becoming more scientific. Teaching has more research knowledge to draw upon, thus we have better instruction and better students. Range Science has developed to the stage where advanced degrees are awarded. Many universities are currently offering both M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Range Science. Although Civil Service requirements for a professionally trained range man are still too low, they are twice as high as last year.

And last but not least, your Society is not standing still. Progress will continue if we can obtain your support. Certainly the potential of this Society is tremendous, but that potential can be obtained only through full and active membership participation.

AAAS AFFILIATION

Members will be pleased to know that the Society was elected to affiliation with the American Association for the Advancement of Science at a December meeting of that body. One Society member will be named to represent the Society on the Council of A.A.A.S.