

Journal of RANGE MANAGEMENT

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Presidential Address—Fifth Annual Meeting
The American Society of Range Management
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FELLOW members of The American Society of Range Management—and friends: Our fifth annual meeting is under-way. We hope that it will be a successful one. Each of our previous annual meetings has been more successful than the one before. If this meeting is successful it will be due entirely to the individual efforts of Committee Chairmen, Committee Members, and a host of individual Society members all impelled by a love and a feeling of duty toward a common interest and objective.

When our Society was organized, one of the functions to be fulfilled was to provide an avenue for exchange of ideas and experiences among range workers. Our Society has gone very far toward fulfilling this function. Our annual meetings contribute a large share toward it; our excellent *Journal of Range Management* does likewise, and the large number of meetings and field trips put on by our Local Sections contribute an even larger share to this particular function.

But, in addition to providing an exchange of experiences, it also provides many of us with some of the "experiences" themselves. Our meetings bring many of us to scenes and experiences with which we were previously unfamiliar. We all make acquaintances and are exposed to

different viewpoints. Many individual members of our Society have told me of incidents illustrating the case where the functioning of the Society has provided the "experience" itself, as well as the avenue for exchanging it with other workers in our field.

My greatest experience to date is the opportunity you have given me to serve you as your President during the past



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year. I wish to express my gratitude to you for giving me that opportunity and that experience.

I will not attempt at this time to cover all of our Society activities during the past year. A large part of our work is done by our Treasurer, our Secretary, and by Committees. Most of their reports will be available to you.

I do want to express my appreciation to the other officers and directors and committeemen who have labored so diligently on our behalf during the past year.

I especially want to commend our Editor, Bob Campbell, for the fine job he is doing with our Journal. That it is interesting, attractive, and scientific, without being too technically boring, is due largely to his efforts. One of the big chores of the new Board of Directors will be to find a man to succeed Bob at the end of the present year.

I must also commend the National Advertising Committee, whose Chairman is A. L. White of Berkeley, California. Mr. White reports that a gross of \$1200 worth of advertising is already under contract for the 1952 Journal of Range Management.

It might be helpful at this time to review briefly the addresses of our past-Presidents, Joe Pechanec at Denver in 1949, Fred Renner at San Antonio in 1950, and Dave Savage at Billings in 1951. In a sense, these addresses are history and it is debatable if history repeats itself or if it is a valid guide to the future. Regardless of that, it seems obvious that history does give us a better understanding of where we are and how we got there, and that should be useful information to have before we decide where to go and what route to follow to get there.

Dave Savage, last year, pointed out to you the demand and the need for

greater production of livestock products, and that our Society filled a critical need not provided by any other organization to which range officials and stockmen belong. He stated that the high ideals, practical aims, and feasible accomplishments of our organization demand extensive expansion, and that our objectives cannot be accomplished without the wholehearted cooperation, support, and concerted action of all stockmen and officials. Local Sections were pointed out as "the backbone of our organization", and the most effective means by which our objectives could be translated into positive realistic action.

Another very important angle stressed by Dave was the desirability of more comprehensive research to make possible even greater production, and that the importance of the range livestock industry demands a complete program of research, demonstration, and extension on range and grassland problems comparable with that now applied to cultivated crops.

Fred Renner in 1950 reported to you on the important developments during the preceding year and called your attention to some of the problems then confronting the Society. Very material progress had been made during the year. The Society had attained increased recognition in national affairs. The Society membership had nearly doubled during the year, and the largest percentage of increase had been among students and ranchers.

Then Fred pointed out a fundamental problem that all organizations have to face. Do we want 2000, 4000, or 10,000 members? It must be recognized that as an organization grows in size the interests of members tend to become more diverse; beyond a certain size our Society might find itself unable to function because of the divergent interests and viewpoints of its members. On the other hand, larger

organizations do have marked advantages. Divergent views provoke thought and discussion, and thereby lead to progress. A larger membership would certainly ease the financial problems, allow more and better Journals, and sponsorship of more and better projects in general. Fred did not answer the question for us; he stated, "The decision is up to us." He then said that the thing of even greater importance was the need to plan how best to maintain the interest of members and to increase their participation in Society affairs.

At Denver in 1949, Joe Pechanec spoke on the subject of "What's Ahead For the Range Society?" He pointed out two alternatives. We could ride on our laurels, be paper-readers, technique-perfecters, forever doomed to mediocrity, or we could accept the challenge presented by our objectives and become a constructive force in our field of range management. As Joe said, the first course would require little effort, but the second course would require personal effort, imagination, leadership, and participation of all members.

To me, it seems that this plea of Joe's for personal effort, imagination, leadership, and participation of all members is of vital importance. The same idea is expressed or implied in all of our presidential addresses to date. The success we have in getting individual member participation and individual effort and responsibility will pretty well gauge our success in moving in the direction of our objectives.

We must always remember that our Society is a "scientific" or "technical" society. We are interested in the practical application of the science just as much as we are in the science itself, but we want our application to be technically sound. We know that if it isn't practical, it isn't truly "scientific." We are developing au-

thors to write in understandable and popular language, but we insist that they be scientifically, logically and quite precisely correct in their writing. We are attempting to discover and make available scientific facts which may be logically used to improve our "practical" performance. All this we are trying to keep as independent as possible of human emotion and folklore.

James Michener, in his book, "Return to Paradise," speculates that, considering all the people in the world, perhaps the only universal dramatic form ever conceived is the Western movie. If this be true, then there is probably more misinformation in the world about the range than there is about any other one subject.

I have heard that excavations in old lake beds in the Southwest indicate that groups of people have settled the area from time to time during prehistoric days. The remains of plants found indicate that no great change of climate has occurred. Apparently the people have just failed to adapt themselves to the environment in which they tried to live.

I have an 1885 map of the area in which I live, giving the location and names of the ranches in the area. Not one of the names on the map is known in my community today. Of the names which came into the community after the winter of '86 and '87, only two are still operating, and of the names which came into the community during the homestead days, only a comparative few are left, and their places are gradually being sold to new names. In my opinion, that is not conducive to good living, love of the soil, good range management or anything else good.

Individuals have time and again adapted themselves quite well to the environment. In general, it has been the

group activities that have provided the biggest barriers.

For examples of this, I will use some with which I am personally familiar. The lines of the county in which I live are so drawn that I can't truck stock to my own shipping point without a brand inspection. It is easier to get an extension man from our state agricultural college to talk about horticulture than to get him to talk about grass, and then easier to get him to talk about introduced grasses than about native grasses. What the Federal Reserve System did to our Montana Banks is too long a story to go into here, but Joe Kinsey Howard has a chapter on the subject in his book, "Montana, High, Wide and Handsome." The Federal Land Bank made the most inflationary land loans ever made in my community during the World War I land boom. During the depression of the Thirties, it wouldn't lend a penny in the community, nor would it compromise a penny on loans it had made during the boom, while making such compromises compulsory on private lenders in areas where it was making loans.

The marginal land buyers purchased the best crop land within our present ranch boundaries and the A A A put the wheat acreages on poorer land. The community contained about 3 percent Federal Range, so the Grazing Service put it into a Federal Grazing District.

Several years ago, I read a book by a broken down cowman who traveled all over the world looking for another open range. He lamented the fact that even the Indians had been left a few reservations to exist on, but no reservation had been set up for the cowboys. Now that he has been taken care of, too, because Louise Peffer, in her book, "The Closing of the Public Domain," treats of the Federal Grazing Districts as "Reservations", so now I am on a reservation just like the

Indians, except that we pay taxes on most of the land in the reservation. Incidentally, this book of Louise Peffer's has a lot of good history in it. I commend it to you.

As an illustration of how insult may be added to injury, the marginal land buyers bought a tract of land in our ranch, including the fence all around it. We owned half the fence before the land was bought by the government, then the government owned it all. To straighten that out, we bought back all the fence from the government, including our own fence. Now, as a condition to the use of that land, we must keep up the fence which we built at our own expense and then bought back from the government to avoid the chance of its being rolled up by the W P A.

I cannot give examples, with which I am personally familiar, involving the Bureau of Reclamation, the Indian Service, or the Forest Service because those agencies do not operate in the area in which I live.

The examples I have given are not intended as criticisms of anything or anybody, but they are an indication that we (and I include myself in that "we") are still a bunch of Honyockers, stumbling around in an environment that we know practically nothing about.

During the first year of our Society's existence, the membership voted to keep it predominantly an organization of range men. This gives us a common interest, and that common interest is tied pretty close to that sub-humid area in which so many of us live and work. Our greatest effort is in the field of developing facts about that type of an area. Ours is probably the only organization, with broad membership requirements, which is specifically directing its major effort toward study of problems of this environment.

A few moments ago, I suggested that we don't know all the answers to some of

the broad general problems. In considerable part, this stems from the fact that we don't know the answers to the simple little scientific facts. We all know that we should use salt to get better livestock distribution in pastures. I know it, but I don't do it. How do I know it? Just because everybody knows it. I tried it a little while one summer, but I didn't notice much result. I have seen pictures of a salt box close to water, and the grass closely grazed in the vicinity of the salt box. It was only a few days ago that I stopped to think that I had seen closely grazed range around a water hole where there was no salt box. Does salt aid in getting distribution under various specific conditions throughout our area? No sound experimental evidence of a positive nature on this question has been brought to my attention.

We all recommend feeding of bone meal wherever we have any reason to suspect a phosphorus deficiency. A number of ranchers in eastern Montana have been feeding various phosphorus supplements and their results do not seem to indicate that bone meal is the proper thing to use. Have we any clear experimental evidence to provide the answer to this little problem? Apparently not.

In my opinion, Dave Savage was more than justified in stressing the need of a research program on range problems. I believe it is a subject on which we can get a considerable degree of agreement of opinion among all segments of our membership.

Dave Savage called attention to another extremely important point, the demand and the need for greater production of livestock products. This need of livestock products for human nutrition has been stressed in several Journal articles during the past year. It is especially important to range management because the need creates a demand that makes it economically possible to de-

velop more range lands for greater production. This is the main reason that range management will progress at a much greater rate of acceleration than it has in the past.

The rate of progress of recent years has not been slow. The amount of fence that has been constructed on privately owned rangeland in the past few years must be tremendous. The demand for all kinds of fence posts has been so great that we can seldom find any in stock in local yards. Thousands and thousands of posts have been trucked from Texas to Montana and other points in the range area. Even under the comparative insecurity of tenure on the Federal Range, much livestock money has gone into fences. On this land, which a few years ago we all knew couldn't be fenced at all, there is now enough sheep tight fence that the effect of this fence on the movements of game animals is a hotly debated issue.

To me, it seems an absolute cinch that if this need of animal products continues, we will, in a very short time, be practicing fine management practices undreamed of today.

So far as our organization itself is concerned, it was Fred Renner who asked the \$64 question. How many members should we have in our Society? Fred didn't answer the question, and I won't either.

The financial benefits of a large membership would be especially notable during inflationary times such as these. We undoubtedly should and can and will continue to increase our membership. However, I do think it a debatable question whether or not we can double or triple our present membership in the very near future without losing a valuable part of our present common interest. That common interest is, of course, in the field of range management, but, because of the many angles from which that field may be viewed, we do have plenty of viewpoints

to provoke the thought and discussion that Fred Renner rightly considered essential to progress.

I don't think that any of us want our Society and our Journal to go into the field already so ably and fully occupied by the farm journals. Neither do I think we can go into the broad fields of the so-called conservation associations without weakening our effectiveness in our own primary field which is set forth in our Articles of Incorporation.

If this be the case, then the occupational group from which further large membership increase must come is the rancher group, and there is a limit to the rate at which that increase can occur.

That limit is broadly fixed by the rate at which we can enlist the ranchers interest and give sound answers to his questions resulting from that interest.

The Society of Range Management will not solve our problems for us. It is an extremely useful tool which we can use in solving our problems. The solution of those problems is a "blood, sweat and tears" sort of job, even with the aid of that tool, which we call our Society of Range Management.

The Society of Range Management has a job to do, and a membership willing and able to work on that job. These are the facts that assure the successful future of our Society.



CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The Nominating Committee calls for nominations for 1953. To be elected are President, Vice-President, and two members of the Board of Directors. Petitions must be signed by at least ten members of the Society in good standing. Consult Articles II and III of the Bylaws for eligibility, conditions, and procedures (See March 1951 Journal, Vol. 4: 131-132).

Petitions should be accompanied by a letter from the petitioners stating that their nominee or nominees will accept the office if elected, and a brief biographical sketch of each person nominated. So that the list of nominees can be completed in time for the ballot to be sent by the Executive Secretary to the members before October 1, it is essential that petitions be in the hands of the nominating committee by August 1.—*Fred H. Kennedy* Chairman, Nominating Committee. U. S. Forest Service, Denver Federal Center, Building 85, Denver, Colorado.



CALL FOR PAPERS FOR 1953 ANNUAL MEETING

Members who wish to present papers at the annual meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico in January 1953 are invited to offer them now. This is in accordance with Article V, Section 6 of the Bylaws (See March 1951 Journal, Vol. 4: 134).

Titles and approximately 200 word abstracts should reach the Program Chairman as early as possible to permit consideration by the Program Committee in completing a well-balanced program.—*B. W. Allred* Chairman, Program Committee. P. O. Box 1898, Fort Worth 1, Texas.