Current Literature of Range Management

This section has the objective of alerting SRM members and other readers of Rangelands on the availability of new, useful literature being published on applied range management. Your recommendations on making this bibliography more useful are requested. Also, the compiler requests readers to suggest literature items—and preferably also contribute individual copies—for including in this section in subsequent issues.


Eastern Red Cedar Control in Kansas; by Gerald L. Crathorne, William T. Scott, and P.M. Ritty; 1982; Down to Earth 38(1):1-6. (Reprints available from Dow Chemical USA, Midland, Mich. 48640) Describes the eastern red cedar invasion problem in Kansas and reports on a series of mechanical and chemical control experiments conducted in south central Kansas.


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List of Published Soil Surveys: January 1982; by USDA, Soil Cons. Serv.; 1982; USDA, Soil Cons. Serv., Washington, D.C.; 18 p. (Copy of this list is available from USDA, SCS, Washington, D.C. 20250) A listing by state of both out-of-print and available published soil surveys. Suggested sources for personal copies of desired soil survey reports are local and state SCS offices local county agents, or congressmen. Copies of both out-of-print and current surveys are available for reference use at agricultural libraries and local and state SCS offices.

Nitrato Accumulation in Altai Wild Ryegrass, Russian Wild Ryegrass, and Crested Wheatgrass; by T. Lawrence, G.E. Winkelman, and F.G. Warder; 1981; Can. J. Plant Sci. 61(3):735-740. (Agric. Canada, Research Sta., Swift Current, Sask. S9H 3X2) A report on the accumulation of nitrates as influenced by nitrogen fertilizer and date of cutting; toxic levels of nitrates were reached when annual rates in excess of 200 kg N/ha were used.


Portable Self-Feeder for Supplementation on Ranges; by James G. Morris and Richard E. Delmas; 1982; J. Anim. Sci. 54(3):500-503. (Dept. Anim. Sci., Univ. of Calif., Davis, Cal. 95616) Describes a portable, self-contained unit which permits group or individual cattle feeding by means of electronic control gates; developed for use with pasture and range experiments but may have practical application also.


Range Seeding and Brush Management on Arizona Rangelands; by Gilbert L. Jordan; 1981; Ariz. Agric. Ext. Bul. T-81121; 88 p. (Coll. of Agric., Univ. of Ariz., Tucson 85721) Describes the major land resource areas (range ecosystems) of Arizona and provides detailed recommendations for range plant control range seeding; well illustrated and includes a table on precipitation requirements of selected species useful in seeding and a table on individual plant control treatments.

A Review of the Plant Physiological Effects of the Phenoxy Herbicides; by Wendell R. Nullison; 1982; Down to Earth 38(1):12-15. (Reprints available from Dow Chemical USA, Midland, Mich. 48640) A concise discussion of the physiological effects of particularly 2,4-D on plants for both the layman and the scientist.

Seeding and Fertilizing to Improve High-Elevation Rangelands; by William A. Laycock; 1982; USDA, For. Serv. Gen. Tech. Rep. INT-120; 19 p. (USDA, For. Serv., Intermtn. For. and Range Ext. Sta., Ogden, Utah 84401) Summarizes the available literature on seeding and fertilizing high-elevation rangelands to assist those charged with revegetating or increasing productivity on such areas.

Book Review

Failure on the Plains: A rancher’s view of the public lands problem

by Dan Fulton

Dan Fulton and his father, William, have been personally involved in the public lands problem in eastern Montana for more than 90 years, from 1890 to the present. They lived and experienced 90 years of what was happening to the native grasslands of the Northern Great Plains.

The book is written in an interesting fashion with factual information about the people, land, and problems of the area during the 90-year period covered. Fulton tells the story in his own words and one knows he is telling it the way it was and is because at times his words and inner emotions are quite evident underneath the written words.

The main point that comes across is that the underlying most important and unresolved problem on public lands in the United States, particularly on the Northern Great Plains, is land tenure for the rancher using the resource.

This 234-page booklet was especially interesting to me because I knew many of the people mentioned. It has come out at an opportune time, just after his article, “Success at Last—On the Mitchell Grass Downs,” appeared in the April 1982 issue of Rangelands. His article and the book certainly make compatible and interesting companion pieces.

Fulton lived the experiences he speaks of. He was born in 1904 and lived all his life on the family ranch near Ismay until he sold out in 1959. After that he has made a number of trips back to his old stomping grounds where he knows the land and people intimately. After selling the ranch he worked for the state of Montana on land problems for 5 years.

Following his 5 years with Montana State Government, he and his wife, Mary Ann, traveled extensively all over the United States and Canada and have made several trips to Mexico and one journey to Australia. During this time he found time to return every year or two to his “roots” in Montana to visit land and people he was so familiar with.

He relates the optimism and disappointments of the homesteaders who flocked to eastern Montana by the thousands during the period of 1908 to 1918. The 160, 320 and 640-acre size homesteads were not nearly large enough to support a rancher trying to make a living off grazing land. The farming homesteads were at best marginal because of the low and erratic moisture patterns for that area. Crops were harvested some years while other years hardly anything would grow because of lack of rain. By 1922 80% had starved out or given up. Many of these old homesteads, all sizes, are now back in native and introduced grasses for livestock use.

Government meddlers and planners are given a hard time because hardly anything turned out as planned or hoped for. During a 30-year period beginning in the 1930’s there was too much bickering and jockeying for power between personnel of the Departments of Interior and Agriculture and the Land Grant Colleges. Gradually, these differences have largely disappeared. There is much more cooperation now for the benefit of the land.

Fulton strongly believes that the long-time maintenance and improvement of public rangelands in the Northern Great Plains rests almost entirely upon the rancher, the user of the land. Government cannot do this job. It is the man on the ground who will get the job done. He says, “A big step in the right direction would be to give the user longer tenure.”

Dan was the first rancher president of the Society for Range Management and served as its 4th president in 1951.

The book may be purchased for $9.00 from Big Sky Books, Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana 59715.—J.D.F.