

The Range Management Rodeo

Buster Lindley

Most people may not think of the range management and rodeo professions as having anything in common. However, my experience has shown that there is a great deal in common between the two. Rodeo evolved as a sport from the range livestock industry and is providing society with an appreciation for a part of our heritage. The range management profession also evolved from the range-related industries. It is providing society with improved effectiveness of range management to obtain from range resources many of the products and values necessary for man's welfare.

Range management is both a science and an art. The science of range management relates to the broad basic principles and laws of nature concerning resource management. Such basic laws as how plants grow and the relationship of soil, water, plant and animals to each other are the science of range management. These basic laws of the science of range management are applicable anywhere in the world.

The art of range management is the application of the science of range management to a particular area and a particular set of circumstances. Each ranch is different from every other ranch and has its own set of circumstances. The land and resources must be observed on each given area and the kind and amounts of animals kept in balance with the kind and amounts of vegetation for that area. This provides for maximum flow of energy from the sun through the plant communities and on to market in the form of livestock products, wildlife, recreation, wood, and many other products needed by man. It also provides maximum protection to the resource base for that area of land. Thus we can see the art of range management is necessary in order to put the science of range management to work on the land.

The range manager continually strives to improve in the basic science of range management. Also, his day-to-day and season-to-season adjustments in management allow him more nearly to stay in balance with current and continually changing situations.

The rodeo profession is also a science and an art. The science of rodeoing relates to the broad basic principles of rodeo riding, roping, bulldogging, clowning, or any other phase of the game. Such basic principles as how to position and use your whole body on a bucking animal to effect the best balance and score for maximum performance, as well as how to position the animal you are roping or bulldogging, and the animal you are riding, for the most efficient flow of time and motion from start to finish are necessary for every performance made anywhere.

The art of rodeoing is the application of the science of rodeoing to a particular performance and a particular set of circumstances. Such things as how the particular animal to

be roped, dogged, or ridden performs, arena conditions, condition of equipment, condition of roping or dogging horse, and many other conditions make the art of rodeoing necessary for maximum results. Adapting current conditions



The range manager applies the science and art of range management to result in maximum and most efficient flow of energy from the sun through the plant community, and on to market for man's use. This also results in maximum protection of the resource base of soil, water, plant and animal life.



The rodeo performer applies the art and science of rodeoing to obtain maximum and most efficient flow of time and motion from start to finish of a performance. This results in the highest potential accumulation of high quality performances. The above photo shows the author performing at a Sul Ross State University Rodeo in Alpine, Texas in 1950. It was the instant that he decided to pursue the range management profession.

The author was raised on a goat, sheep, and cattle ranch in southwest Texas. He graduated from Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, in 1950 and has been range conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service in Texas and New Mexico since 1952, currently at Silver City, New Mexico. He was a professional rodeo performer in the late 1940's and early 1950's.

to the set of circumstances at hand is the real art of rodeoing and results in the highest potential accumulation of quality performances over a given period of time.

The rodeo performer continually strives to improve in the basic science of roping, riding, or dogging. Also, at every performance that he makes, he may make adjustments to fit the current set of circumstances for maximum results. This is how he applies both the science and the art of rodeoing.

Both the range manager and the rodeo performer make

mistakes and have successes. In this way they obtain experience and condition themselves to react to whatever the current situation and circumstances may be for maximum results.

My experience in the range management profession, and rodeo as my favorite sport, have shown that each of these professions will produce maximum results when both the science and the art are applied.

Ramifications of Vegetative Manipulation on Rangelands

T.C. Byerly

This article is intended to identify objectives, issues, methods, and implications of vegetative manipulation on range land. In the absence of manipulation by man, weather, wildfire, plant succession, insects, and wildlife change rangeland vegetation. The basic question always is: Will man's deliberate, planned manipulation benefit or harm rangelands when compared to *laissez-faire*?

Management of range vegetation is intended, on selected sites, (1) to increase and sustain yield of preferred forage species; (2) to reduce or eliminate plant species of low nutritive value, palatability, or yield; (3) to control poisonous plants; (4) to control erosion; (5) to increase sustained yield of water of good quality; (6) to provide wildlife habitat; (7) to preserve and enhance natural beauty and open space; (8) to increase recreational opportunities; and (9) to maintain genetic diversity in ecosystems.

Economic benefit/cost may determine that particular objectives be given first priority on some sites. Multiple use should be a primary consideration on all rangelands. Whether or not multiple use should be applied to all rangeland sites is arguable. One view is that soundest land use programs are those that put the land to its best use first. Other uses are added only if the benefits derived from them offset the losses to the primary use, or if they do not interfere with the primary use.

Man, his flocks and herds have been charged with defiling grazing lands since ancient times when the prophet Ezekiel lamented (34:18): "Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? And to have drunk of the deep water, but ye must foul the residue with your feet."

Backpackers leave body wastes and campfire ashes in the wilderness; ecologists pollute the biosphere and other areas they study; bird watchers disturb the habitat of the birds they watch; campers leave residues and trample vegetation, so do hunters and anglers. Herds and flocks of livestock trample and defecate on grass and water just as they did in biblical

times. So, too, do all wild herbivores, and even fish must defecate.

There is a widely held assumption that, unlike plants and other animals, man's relation with the earth and all its resources is always destructive. This assumption is subject to challenge. Historical accounts of range condition vary widely. Early tales of grass belly-deep to horses were often reported. Millions of acres so described are now dominated by brush. Why? Has uncontrolled grazing reduced or eliminated preferred forage species?

Fire has been described as the first great force employed by man. Burning by primitive people may have been the determining factor in the establishment and maintenance of the grasslands of America. In the absence of fire, forests may invade and replace moist prairies. Brush invades and eventually dominates semiarid areas. It is arguable that all grasslands continue to exist only as grazing pressure, fire, and human activity prevent succession to brush or woodland.

There is a generally held opinion that overgrazing by livestock is a major cause of range deterioration. Yet heavy stocking may produce more liveweight per acre than light stocking, even after many years of such stocking.

Rangeland in the seventeen western states grazed by livestock in 1970 provided about 150 million animal unit months (AUM's) of livestock grazing. Each AUM is equivalent in feeding value to about eight bushels of corn, or about \$20 per AUM at 1979 prices, or \$10 per AUM at 1970 prices. An estimated 20 bushels of corn-equivalent feed units disappear for each 100 pounds liveweight of cattle and calves produced.

Can forage production from range compete with grain production? About 62 million acres of pasture and range have a high potential for conversion to cropland, about 32 million acres in the 17 western states, 16 million in the southeast and 12 million in the northeast. Vegetative management on these lands to make their production of forage equal in economic value to cropland is essential if they are to be retained as range. Major factors determining future use of such lands include cost/effectiveness of vegetative management, fertilizer prices, grain prices, beef prices, and, in the semiarid areas, priorities for water use. Industrial, urban, and household use are likely to have higher priority of water use,

The author is staff consultant, Winrock International, Morrilton, Arkansas. This article is based on a paper presented by the author at the National Rangeland Symposium, Tucson, Arizona, January 1979.

Editor's Note: We have had several articles on this subject the past few years but it is still a popular and favorite topic of many SRM members.