

Working Landscapes—Providing for the Future

Annual Meeting of the Society for Range Management and the Weed Science Society of America

By Gary Frasier

Working Landscapes—Providing for the Future” is the theme of the 2010 joint annual meeting of the Society for Range Management (SRM) and the Weed Science Society of America (WSSA). This meeting, the 63rd annual meeting of SRM and the 50th anniversary of WSSA, will be held on 7–11 February 2010, at the Sheraton Downtown Hotel, Denver, Colorado.

The meeting will focus on key topics such as invasive species management, sustainable livestock production, managing for drought, weed management in agronomic and horticultural crops, and integrated pest management solutions.

We expect 2,500 attendees from the United States and 15 other countries to attend the conference, trade show, and symposia. Range managers, scientists, and representatives from private and public entities around the world will gather to share the latest research results, expand the awareness of critical emerging issues, and network and discuss solutions in vegetation management. In addition to a number of symposia, a total of 28 research sections will provide the forum for debate and discussion.

The theme of the meeting is exemplified by the cover of this issue of *Rangelands*. The cover is an original painting by Barbara East specially prepared for the meeting. Within the painting are scenes that represent the many topics that will be covered at the Symposia, Technical Sessions, and Posters in the meeting.

Following is a listing of items and what the items represent, which Barbara (in her own words) uses to describe the painting.

Thank you for this opportunity to take you on an interpretive tour of my recently completed painting for the promotion of the joint meeting of the WSSA/SRM Denver 2010, Working Landscapes, Providing for the Future.

Your eye enters the picture, following the movement of the cattle; the sagebrush foreground depicts rangelands;

both herding and the fence are representative of the many range management tools.

On the right, mule deer, a keynote big game species, and sage grouse, a candidate species for endangered species listing, represent wildlife.

The upper right edge, four ecosystems associated with ascending altitude (canyon land, oak brush, quaking aspen, and alpine spruce) are illustrated.

Coming towards the center right, behind the ranch, notice the checkerboard effect. Pivot irrigation and other uses of the landscape, both past and present, show the impact of agricultural use and how these functions influence the visual appearance of a landscape.

From the snow peaked mountain, the multiple roles of water are represented by a reservoir for municipalities, a riparian corridor, and flood irrigation.

The portion of mountains and city on the right represent Denver. The area between the city and the people shows alfalfa farming, pasture, and native hay operations.

In the upper center, the group of people represents the beneficiaries of healthy working landscapes that provide open space, esthetic values, wildlife habitat, recreational areas, and the multiple benefits of sustainable agriculture.

The left half of the painting focuses on tilled crops, urbanization, and weeds.

On the left side of the highway, leaving the city, a large sprayer represents control of weeds in crops. The area between the orchard and the city is empty, symbolizing land that is gone from the working landscape. This land, scheduled for urban development, also threatens the long-term viability of the neighboring orchard.

Following the highway back into the picture, you see new sources of energy from wind farms standing compatibly with orchards, fields of corn and wheat, reminding us that the people working these landscapes truly are providing for the world.

Invasive weeds and their control on disturbed land and wildlands represent the interface between SRM and WSSA. The center portion is dedicated to this subject. Shown here are biological control of thistle by grazing goats, and control of highly dispersed infestations in inaccessible areas common to wildlands using a sprayer and packhorse. The pernicious presence and impending spread of yellow toadflax threatens native communities, potentially resulting in bare ground and erosion. In contrast, the native Thurber fescue grasses depict healthy rangelands.

Subtly, represented within the botanic designs in the lower left corner, are the molecular structures of herbicides. The weeds in the botanical design are field bindweed, Canada thistle, leafy spurge, hounds tongue, yellow starthistle, spotted knapweed, and diffuse knapweed.

The bottom center botanical illustrates wheat, alfalfa, clover, and orchard grass.

The brands represent multigenerational ranches supported by sustainable rangeland agriculture.

Finally, western wheatgrass, Indian ricegrass, columbine, blue grama, alpine Timothy, willow, lupine, and purple prairie clover all represent the tremendous native biodiversity in Colorado.

The meeting coordinators in Hawaii designed their promotional art with a Hawaiian flare. Our piece has been designed, similarly, to share our Colorado with the attendees.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to help deliver the important message of Working Landscapes.

Featured 2010 Plenary Session Speakers

The meeting will start on Monday, 7 February 2010, with the Plenary Session. Following is a short bio of three of the speakers that will highlight the Plenary Session.

John Fielder

Mr Fielder, a nationally renowned nature photographer, publisher, teacher, and preservationist, will present "A Tour of Sustainable Landscapes in Colorado." In 1981 he founded Westcliffe Publishers, one of the nation's largest publishers of nature books and calendars. A former department store executive who turned an avocation into a career, he is the photographer of 39 exhibit format books, guidebooks, and children's books, most about his home state of Colorado.

Mr Fielder has worked tirelessly to promote the protection of Colorado's open space and wildlands. His photography has influenced people and legislation, earning him recognition including the Sierra Club's Ansel Adams Award, the University of Denver's Daniel L. Ritchie Award, and the Distinguished Service Award from the University of Colorado. He was an original governor-appointed member of the lottery-related Board of Great Outdoors Colorado, and speaks to thousands of people each year to rally support for timely land-use and environmental issues.

His latest book is *Maria's Mysterious Mission*, his second children's book. His repeat photography book *Colorado 1870–2000* is still Colorado's all-time best selling title with over 170,000 copies in print. His gallery, *John Fielder's Colorado*, has locations in Denver's Art District on Santa Fe and in Breckenridge. Currently, John is photographing 50 Colorado working ranches for a book, *Ranches of Colorado*, to be published in September 2009 to promote preservation of Colorado's remaining ranchlands.

Richard N. Mack

Dr Mack, a professor in the School of Biological Sciences at Washington State University, will present "Weeds in the Western Landscape." For approximately the last 30 years his research has been largely devoted to the ecology of invasive species. Much of his research has dealt with the aggressive invader *Bromus tectorum* (cheatgrass or downy brome) in the Intermountain West of the United States. He has also investigated plant invasions in Hawaii, the southeastern United States, and China. He is particularly interested in the population biology (including the immigration, demography, competition, and ecological genetics) of plant invaders and their environmental effects. He has framed much of his research with the goal of addressing applied aspects of combating invasive species, including the prediction of future invasive species and their early detection and eradication. He served as chair of the Department of Botany at Washington State University, 1986–1999. He served as chair from 1999–2001 for the National Research Council's Committee for Predicting the Invasive Potential of Nonindigenous Plants and Plant Pests in the United States. He has served on the editorial boards of *Ecology* and *Ecological Monographs*, *Oecologia*, *Ecological Applications*, and *Biological Invasions*. He also served on the Scientific Committee for Problems in the Environment (SCOPE) Executive Committee, and was a member of the Board for the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP) until 2003. He is currently a member of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) specialist group on invasive species.

Elliott West

Dr West, an Alumni Distinguished Professor of History at the University of Arkansas, will present "History of the Development of the West." West is a specialist in the social and environmental history of the American West and the author of six books and more than 100 articles and chapters in books. *The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers and the Rush to Colorado* received the Francis Parkman Prize as the best work in American history for 1998. *The Last Indian War: The Nez Perce Story* appeared in April 2009 from Oxford University Press. West has twice won his university's award as the outstanding teacher of the year, and in 1995 was named Arkansas Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Each of the three plenary speakers and a key session speaker, renowned historian Mark Fiege, have consented to pre-meeting interviews, which are presented in their entirety in the following set of papers.

In addition to the many technical sessions at the meeting there are the normal society activities such as Student Plant ID and Undergraduate Range Management Exam (URME), High School Youth Forum activities, awards presentations, and family social events.

This meeting is also the first joint meeting between SRM and the WSSA. It will provide an opportunity to meet and interact with individuals that normally would not be at either of the other's meetings, yet share a common bond and

interest in proper management of the nation's natural resources.

It is hoped these items will provide an incentive for all to come to the meeting. All sessions and activities are under one roof in the Sheraton Downtown hotel. It is within close proximity to some of the finest restaurants and shops in downtown Denver. It will be a meeting to remember.

Gary Frasier is co-chair of the Public Relations Committee, 2010 Annual Meeting of the Society for Range Management and the Weed Science Society of America (gfrasier@aol.com).