

**1. Welcome call to order - Willie Sommers 8:06**

**2. Unfinished business-**

**a. President elect and treasurer position-**

*Willie:* We talked to a few different folks in the past month or two Mike is there an update?

*Mike:* No, some of the people asked for a little more time to make a decision. I asked Bob Benne for treasurer position and he was interested but there is no Chase bank in Young.

*Willie:* I am going to meet with Ernie in Phoenix and pass along all the information to me and I will get up to speed on the accounts and get that information. Ashley offered to do the duties if no one else can do it.

<b>Arizona Section, SRM 2014/2015 Officers</b>
<b>Willie Sommers</b> <i>President</i>
----- <i>President-Elect</i>
<b>Chris Thiel</b> <i>Vice President</i>
<b>Kelsey Hawkes, Shai Schendel</b> <i>Directors- North</i>
<b>John Hall, Steve Barker</b> <i>Directors-South</i>
<b>Ashley Shepherd</b> <i>Executive Secretary</i>
<b>Ernie Gipson</b> <i>Treasurer</i>
<b>Kelly Bedson</b> <i>ASU Chapter President</i>
<b>Alanna Riggs</b> <i>U of A Chapter President</i>
<b>Mike Hemovich</b> <i>Past- President</i>
<b>Also Present:</b> <b>James Holden</b> - <i>Public Relations, Recreation and Outreach Committee Chair</i>

I think in the past we have had a secretary and treasurer combo. We can discuss that more.

*Mike:* Do you have a date set up with Ernie yet?

*Willie:* No, Ernie do you want to try and set up a day where we can meet in Phoenix?

*Steve:* Who has authority on the account?

*Mike:* I do now; they won't let us take old names off. There are really old names on there to where no one knows where who they are. We might have to close that account and open a new one.

***Ernie: I don't have a date yet. I don't have my calendar so I will need to all. I will email you. More than likely the week of the 28<sup>th</sup>***

*Willie:* Do you have any new account information from the last few days?

*Ernie:* No, I haven't added anything up.

*Willie:* I have a check for you from Ray Tanner matched funds to go towards the Chihuahua.

*Kelsey:* Do auction forms need to be kept?

*Ernie:* Yes, people might want to use them for a tax write off.

*Willie:* Let's keep them for a year.

*Kelsey:* There is a place for the treasurer to sign does Ernie need to?

*Chris:* I had Ernie sign it in the past for people for tax purposes.

*Willie:* Maybe send an email out to the member's asking if they want those forms back.

**3. New business**

**a. New Directors**

*Willie:* I will email out the guidelines and duties for the new board member's. As it is written in the guidelines our past president also serves as nominations committee. The Vice President goes will serve under the President and President-Elect to help where needed and can also act as member of the advisory council for National SRM and serve as a direct liaison between Young Professionals Committee (YPC) and Science Committee. I think YPC will be important. For the new directors, I will give you something that describe s your duties. Positions 2 and 4 are installed in even years. Positions will be as directed by committees as they need assistance.

**b. Public relations, Recreation and Outreach Committee**

*Willie:* James Holden has been appointed to this committee. I would like us a board to describe what he can do for the section. We haven't done much with it but I would like to address that. In the guidelines it says develop and maintain a group of people outside SRM that are concerned with rangelands. It's a networking type position. Maintain contact with organizations and groups interested in rangelands. Develop displays for throughout the state, for example at the Cattle Growers Association meeting we had a display. It also says review EIS statements and prepares response letters for the President to sign. Keep abreast of activities of local and state government that effect rangelands. I wonder if we can narrow it down and talk about just having a focus going forward. We also talked about getting sponsors for our meetings. What I'm hoping is we can take the broad duties of that committee and narrow it down and focus on task or two. Does anyone have any thoughts on that?

*Mike:* When you mention other people that might be interested in rangelands, joint meetings with other societies has come up; however, we have never had any direct contact with them but that idea of sharing a meeting is an interesting one. It would double the size of the meeting and topics would have to be worked out before hand. The auction is also an important thing we do so maybe we can think of ways we can we expand and improve it. When Erin was Secretary she came up with a list of possible donors. Other organizations often get donations for the auctions from Cabela's or Bass Pro Shop. So maybe we could find people that could donate gift cards. As far as advertising the AZ Cattle Growers Association will put announcements about our upcoming meeting. Would that fit into James's role?

*Willie:* I think we have identified two paths for the committee, bolstering the auction and getting donations I think that will be good and then maybe making a direct connection with AZ Cattle Growers Association we have always talked about getting more ranchers to attend our meetings. There is also the Soil and Water Conservation Society and the Wildlife Society or other organizations that network with those. I think that would get us off on the right start. The committee should have at least 3 committee members to work with James.

*Kelsey:* I can join and continue to help with the auction.

*Willie:* Ok

*Ernie:* A lot of the policy statements are already written by our parent society. We may have crossed over by trying to delve into politics but we are more of a scientific based society. It's something I noticed it's mainly with government people but when we project to the public we should stay out of politics.

*Willie:* Yes having a position on a certain issue and have declined to get involved in some issues. Is that ok James with you to keep involved with other societies and getting sponsors? Are there members in your BLM office that are members of the Wildlife Society?

*James:* Yes.

*Mike:* There were some issues with the Wildlife Society this year because they didn't involve us when they had a large symposium that was about rangelands so that will be interesting to connect with them. Getting more ranchers would be good but it is a tough thing to do we have been trying to entice them to come to our meetings by having displays AZ Cattle Growers Association meetings but that hasn't spilled over to our membership. I think it's something we could still work on.

*Chris:* As far as future sponsors, John Kava mentioned the Maughn Ranches were interested in possibly sponsoring us.

*Mike:* Also Babbit Ranches could be a possibility.

### **c. Spring tour**

*Willie:* I'm thinking of having an April 1<sup>st</sup> one day event. We talked about having directors work together on that. Jeff Schalau thinks Yavapai Ranch would be willing to host us. They do annual monitoring there so that might be an option that we go with.

*Chris:* They have spring and fall monitoring. Fred Ruskin loves to host people at his ranch. They are checker board land status ranch that goes from grasslands to pine. It's at the very north end of the Chino Valley.

*Willie:* We could talk to the two Director North's and Jeff Schalau to see if we can get that going.

*Steve:* I like the idea of Directors to help with this. I can put one together in Phoenix for ASU kids.

*Chris:* There are already dates set for the spring monitoring so it would be easy to set it up.

*Willie:* Spring and fall tour/workshop, the fall maybe Director South could do something

*Mike:* For the south Dan had mentioned the empire ranch. He was also thinking even a summer meeting because they have good facilities.

*John:* I don't have many large ranching operations near Yuma but I could focus on burro monitoring.

*Willie:* In that part of Arizona you could talk about monitoring in dryer ecosystems. Mohave Desert people might be interested in that.

*Steve:* One day workshops are a good way to get ranchers involved that way they don't have to pay for hotel and it's just a one day thing.

*Ernie:* It seems like there was a decent rancher turnout at this meeting.

*Steve:* There was but not as many in the past.

*Mike:* There were many ranchers at the UA workshop

*Steve:* I kind of wish that would have been part of our SRM meeting. They put on a really good program.

*Willie:* We try and structure the meeting with something for everyone so that people want to hear at least one person talk but then they are drawn in and stay for the whole meeting.

*Mike:* When you bring that up to the extension they always want to keep it separate. The T&E session was really good and that is a rancher topic event though you might not think about it. Too bad we couldn't have put the workshop or animal nutrition talk in the middle of the T&E. We could do a one day tour that is a workshop so it doesn't have to be to a ranch and we would have a training workshop and offer CEUs for a technical training.

*Steve:* That has happened in the past.

*Chris:* That is a good thing to capture. We could also show new technology, like the VGS program Del is working on and show that at the one day tours.

#### **d. Summer Meeting**

*Willie:* I want to start planning it. So far we have the idea of having a meeting on rotational grazing or livestock distributing on Arizona rangelands. So talks about rotation grazing, deferment, next best pasture, etc. It will be a comprehensive meeting about grazing systems and bring in experts and ranchers who are implementing these practices on the ground. There are a lot of topics there to discuss. I would like to have Matt Barnes come. He is a range professional that was the President of the Colorado SRM Section not too long ago. He has written a few papers in "Rangelands" about his work and he put on a similar program for the Colorado Section. He found the ranches that rotate their cattle have less predation in Montana. That could maybe translate over to AZ with mountain lions. Does everyone like that topic?

*Chris:* I think it's been a while since we talked about that.

*Mike:* It needs to be expanded a little more than just rotational grazing because we all do that. We should look at all of them.

*Chris:* We could talk about ways to adjust distribution, like supplements, water and invisible fencing.

*Mike:* We had a shot at getting Alan Savory but people were keeling over. We don't have to believe what he was saying but I would still like to hear what everyone has to say.

*Steve:* The TED talk that Alan put up is what got Iric going.. David Briske out of Colorado found that rotation grazing isn't supported by research. He is using high intensity short duration grazing. A lot of the literature shows most research only goes for 2-3 years and that is an issue that needs to be brought up.

*Ernie:* Many times it is a distribution issue.

*Steve:* We need to hear from the ranching community as to why they rotate.

*Ernie:* Fencing is expensive and many people can't afford to build fences.

*Chris:* The government also can't afford to maintain them in some cases.

*Kelsey:* Some people think fencing is fragmenting for wildlife.

*Willie:* I think there are many things we can do with this topic. The AZ Cattle Growers Association has their summer meeting before ours. Last year the section had a session and it was well attended. At the meeting this year maybe we can do a teaser about what we will be talking about at the summer meeting to entice them to come to our meeting. So we could have a couple of speakers to give a preview.

*Mike:* The Matt Barnes topic would be good. Wolves are a huge issue and I think that would bring in a lot of people.

*Willie:* Matt would be a good person to speak at the Cattle Growers meeting

*Mike:* If we have Alan Savory come to speak then we could bring in someone who has the opposite opinion to also speak. I think before some board members were afraid that people would think that we as the SRM promoting Savory's practices. Personality wise he is such a draw. Are there ranchers that are still using the system and we could bring one of them in to also speak.

*Steve:* There are a few ranches.

*Ernie:* Daggit Ranches use it and we have talked in my office about going. But I haven't had anyone come into my office and ask me about how to use it or wanting to use.

*James:* I have a ranch that uses invisible fences with goats.

*John:* I have never been to a Cattle Grower meeting what are their talks directed towards?

*Mike:* It's a two day meeting. They will have a session on state and public lands where they bring in people from around the country. So they talk about economic issues around the state or wildlife session which will probably be about wolves this year. There is also a tradeshow. We have a short winter meeting where we meet with legislators from the state and get to voice our concerns as ranchers.

*Steve:* They also talk about legislation that could affect the industry or food handling safety issue.

*John:* How much outreach does the section do to local Cattle Growers?

*Mike:* I go to our counties but I'm not sure about other counties, but it's a good idea to go and give a short 10 minute talk. Maybe Directors could go to that in Gila County and Yavapai County

*John:* Mohave County

*Willie:* At those meeting committees put on the conference maybe we could do that in the section. Rancher's Committee or Young Professionals Committee could each put on a session in the future. It's an interesting model that they use at their meeting. We could try that in the future.

*Mike:* Iric really wanted to turn the summer meeting over to the Young Professionals Committee, but I'm not saying we still have to go that route.

*Willie:* In talking about Cattle Growers, I think we should have committees consistently helping with the sessions.

*Steve:* It could ease the work load of the President.

*Chris:* When I was previously on the board Jim Sprinkle was trying to get the committees involved more

*Willie:* Going back to the summer meeting, does anyone have any thoughts about meeting locations? Iric had said Flagstaff and Flagstaff.

*Steve:* We might not want to commit to that until we see who will step in as President-Elect.

*Mike:* Dan had mentioned Empire Ranch for summer.

*Chris:* Vanessa is now working on a Dennis Moroney's ranch since she is in southern Arizona.

*Ernie:* What about a joint meeting with New Mexico?

*Chris:* That ups the cost for travel though.

*Willie:* Ok then it sounds like it's too early to figure it out.

*Mike:* What if we went to Young Professionals and say this is the topic we want to discuss and then have them go forward with putting it together.

*Willie:* That might work since we don't have a President-Elect.

*Chris:* Are there multiple people on that committee?

*Kelsey:* Yes, at the meeting in Flagstaff we met but I don't know how many will stick around and help

*Chris:* It is something to ask Vanessa about.

***Willie:* I will follow up with Vanessa in regard to the Young Professionals Committee and summer meeting to see if they can run with it.**

#### **e. Native Range Committee**

*Willie:* Tony with BIA told me at the summer meeting that section should considering having a MOU with BIA so native range managers can attend our meetings. The MOU would outline objectives and purpose of AZ section and describe what we offer to members. He thought that would help native range and Native American participation at our meetings.

*Ernie:* I would go with what the parent society says. That work has probably already been done at a higher level.

*Steve:* At the parent level are there MOUs between Forest Service and BLM?

*Ernie:* I don't think so. Did he say MOU specifically?

*Willie:* Yes

*Steve:* He was saying if there is something more professional to get them to join?

*Mike:* I think there is a big Native Range Committee at the national level

*Willie:* Maybe we could go to that session at the national meeting in Orlando and see how they are involved at their local sections.

***Mike:* Willie, you should touch base with Alvin to see if he still wants to be the head of the Native Range Committee since he is no longer a Director.**

*Willie:* Ok.

#### **f. Winter meeting**

*Willie:* While we are all here, at the general membership meeting Jim Sprinkle mentioned having a session about archeology or geology and I wrote that down for a topic of interest. Maybe we could brainstorm potential topics like that for a future meeting.

*Ernie:* In the future having a session on the wolf or something like that to get ranchers involved because with budget cuts I think we are going to lose a lot of agency people.

*Chris:* The new NEPA objection process could be a topic. What are environmental groups doing with these objections? A year from now we will have had a few objections. The idea of the objection is to sit

down and talk in the group and hear why they are objecting and how to fix the issue. We have 45 days to resolve that issue they are having with our document. It's a new process to us.

*Mike:* Doug had the brought up talking about photography.

*Willie:* I think that will be at the summer meeting. Whether that's rolled into registration fees or if it will be a separate workshop put on by UA I'm not sure.

*Mike:* We are in danger of losing Jim Sprinkle's reading the range program, in anticipation he has had to cut back so we are doing our own monitoring now but not all ranchers were capable of using the software. We put on a workshop similar to that because we won't have man power and ranchers wanted to learn simple methods we could use, like repeat photography. That might be something to consider.

*Ernie:* Where did you hold that?

*Mike:* In Young at our place. It was late spring, early summer.

*Steve:* Another possible topic; There was a monitoring handbook put out by Arizona Grazing Land Conservation Association with help from NRCS districts, AZ Cattle Growers Association, BLM, Forest Service, and U of A that came out a year and a half ago. It was a very well developed guide and I think we should put on a session to keep that going.

*Willie:* UA did some workshops about that.

*Steve:* There is opportunity for the section to get those handbooks and have them for sale at our meetings. We could get a few boxes to sell at the meeting but also that handbook would be a good workshop topic.

*Willie:* I like what we have for the summer meeting; we have training and a really good topic. I will pursue the Young Professionals Committee and see if they can run with it.

*Ernie:* If you wanted to talk about invisible fences Eddie Alford and Dr. Dean Anderson from ARS Las Cruces would come here and talk about it. Dr. Anderson is the best person I can think of to talk about it. I think it would be an interesting presentation

*Chris:* Me too because fences can be expensive for us and the rancher.

#### **a. Student funding to Orlando**

*Mike:* Ernie gave me a letter from Eddie Alford. Every year we give the student chapters a chunk of money for travel to the national SRM meeting. Eddie says the trip to Orlando will be more expensive this year compared to previous years.

*Kelsey:* I think you should take the number of students from the student chapters going into account. In the past UA has had more students going to the national meeting than ASU but have gotten the same funding.

*Mike:* They are requesting more than the \$1,000 that is given out.

*Ernie:* He doesn't want ASU to get more money than UA but he would like to have it go up a little bit. It's a dilemma because we have made good money from the summer meeting so I think we could increase it; however, if we don't give them more we could decrease the cost of the next meeting. But I think we should increase the money for the students.

*Willie:* So Kelsey you think that each college student should receive the same amount for example each student should get \$200?

*Mike:* But what if next year 38 students want to go.

*Kelsey:* You could say that this is the total amount we want to give and prorate that to each student.

*Willie:* So ASU requests the section give \$1700 for 5 students to attend?

*Mike:* Kelsey how does UA student chapter earn money?

*Kelsey:* Small projects, little events, contracting work with different ranches for fundraising. They worked also for Doug Tolleson at V Bar V. We also served meals at the summer meetings.

*Mike:* It seems like UA did more fundraising attempts and efforts. All ASU did was serve lunch. Not to compare.

*Chris:* We can give out up to \$2,500 for contracts. That could be something in the future, my office could hire the students.

*Ernie:* Maybe we could do a matching funds scenario.

*Willie:* Have we received a request for funding from UA?

*Mike:* No

*Kelsey:* I will touch base with Alanna through text..

*Willie:* the request is \$1,700 last year we gave \$1,000 I think we should offer and provide \$1000 to be consistent with last year and go from there.

*Steve:* And \$1,000 to UA?

*Willie:* Correct.

*Steve:* Ernie, do you think we can increase how much we give the students?

*Ernie:* I think we could get them a little more but not \$1,700, maybe \$1,500.

*Steve:* Then I make a motion to give them \$1,500.

*Mike:* What if we say we have \$3,000 and we divide by the number of students going to national SRM meeting at each school to make sure each student gets an equal amount.

*Steve:* So 6 student from UA and 5 students from ASU. They each get \$300 to travel to Orlando. I make a motion.

*Ernie:* I second the motion

*Willie:* The motion carries. Should we set out next meeting? SRM I the middle of February, we could meet after that. **The second Friday of March is the 14<sup>th</sup> 10 am telephone conference.**

Meeting adjourns at 10:00am