



**2013 Board of Directors Meeting
May 30, 2013**

Minutes by Ashley Shepherd

**Arizona Section, SRM
2012/2013 Officers**

**Members in Attendance in
Yellow**

Mike Hemovich
President

Willie Sommers
President-Elect

Iric Burden
Vice President

**Alvin Whitehair, Shai
Schendel**
Directors- North

Dan Robinett, Steve Barker
Directors-South

**Ashley Shepherd/ Sarah
Noelle**
Executive Secretary

Ernie Gipson
Secretary-Treasurer

Kelly Bedson
ASU Chapter President

Alanna Riggs
U of A Chapter President

Doug Tolleson
Past President

Also in Attendance:
John Kava

1. Welcome/Call to Order – Mike Hemovich

10:05 call to order

2. Approval of the April 9, 2013 Minutes

Mike: Did everyone have a chance to look at the last minutes. I had a few minor corrections, nothing of substance. Anyone else have any corrections or additions? If not can we get a Motion to approve?

Dan: I move

Ernie: I second

Mike: The minutes are approved

3. Financial Report – Ernie Gipson

Ernie: I got to check \$7,900 from the winter meeting. I reported to Willie and Mike that is was more money than what I expected earlier. Nothing has changed as far as the last statement. We had a request for money from NCRWAY. I haven't opened it up to see how much it was. Mike you got that too, could you elaborate on that?

Mike: NCRWAY sent 2 students to the national meeting in Oklahoma. Our agreement was as a section we would pay to send one student to the meeting and NRCWAY would pay for another. The total came to approximately \$500 for the one student and Kim's trip as escort was another \$500. They are requesting the money. Doug is this in keeping with what we have done in the past?

Doug: I need to go back and look at the meeting notes but as I recall it's like you described we would pay for one student each year to go to the national meeting anything above and beyond that NRCWAY would take care of it. We should consider that because the meeting was in Oklahoma and closer the cost was not as much. Before we make a decision we should go back to the minutes and look at the baseline set and then go from there.

Mike: Ok, I will look at the minutes and Ernie and I can confirm.

Ernie: Is this a yearly allocation? If it is we should make it clear. There may be a point where we can't fund everything they ask for.

Mike: Maybe we can spell that out a little more detail for the future. Ernie and I will discuss and make sure it is what we agreed to. Hopefully our next meeting will be June 27th at NRCCWAY we can vote then on paying for the student by then we should know where we stand on their request.

Doug: We could do vote via email about reimbursement for that student before the meeting in June. It would probably be helpful to NRCWAY.

4. Unfinished Business:

a. Social media added to Newsletter Committee – John Kava

Mike: At the last meeting we talked about expanding to social media in addition to our regular newsletter. John is here to speak more about this topic.

John: This is kind of the way of the future and it may assist us in reaching the younger generation to become members and to stay members. I received several emails from people last month and earlier this month asking if they could put things in the newsletters. Those would be some of the type of things we could add to Twitter or Facebook, not they wouldn't

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also be included in the newsletter for people that aren't on Twitter or Facebook, but it's a more timely delivery of information, like a job outreach notice, range/livestock event that didn't make it to the newsletter previously. I think the more venues we can pass info to our members and to range people it may help membership retention and drive interest in SRM. I didn't hear everyone's opinion because I missed the last meeting but I'd like to hear them. I can start this and it can be open to other members of the board if they wanted to post information they have come about. So if Director North, Director South, President Elect or someone can post. There are many ways we can do this. Do we want to pursue this as a section for a way to get info out to interested parties?

Doug: I have some perspective because we just launched a new webpage and Facebook page for V bar V range program within the last month or so. I went through some of the same deliberations; do we have time to update the page, what will we accomplish by having the page, etc. I think in 30 days we have 58 people who have liked the page. It's been shared with many other pages. We could link a section page and V Bar V. It hasn't been as time consuming as I thought it would be. Chris and Lisa help me to put information on the page. We have been getting a positive response so far. I might start using it in the fall from a teaching standpoint to get word out to students. I will probably get a lot more activity then once I get student involved.

Mike: Your page is a Facebook?

Doug: We have a Webpage, Facebook, and Google+ but no Twitter.

Mike: Any more thoughts, does anyone have any negative views?

Willie: Not necessarily negative, I think during the last meeting I wasn't sure if it was a good idea. I don't use either site so not familiar with them actually. I think there is a need that these sites might address, like John said providing up to date information to our members in between the newsletter. Like Twitter feed, short but quick tidbit of information that could be put out quickly. This also might be accomplished by Facebook. I think there is a need for more information going out and more sharing in the section this might be a way for us to do this or email on the List-Serve. That is another way to share information to all the members with active emails on file.

Doug: I have used the List-Serve as a proxy for a Twitter to get information out but Twitter may be a better way to reach a different demographic.

John: One restriction with the email blast, we are only reaching paid up members. With Twitter and Facebook we can reach non-members who might be interested rangelands. The Twitter and Facebook can be linked, so if you post something on Twitter it automatically updates Facebook. This is something I have been doing and Steve Barker mentioned at our winter meeting we should be following Western Watersheds and Center for Biological Diversity on Twitter. I have been doing that and it gives me a way to educate their followers when they make outlandish comments. They only have about 100 followers but it gives us the opportunity as professionals in Range Management to share our education, knowledge, science background. It also gives us an opportunity to refute some of these comments, that's a whole other discussion. Visa versa the downside we may be getting people making discouraging remarks on our page, open dialogue is fine but we may have that issue.

Doug: As a follow up to that, on our Facebook page I'm reserving the right as gate keeper to remove anything. Open dialogue is good but if anyone makes for lack of better word "stupid" or inappropriate comments on the page I will take it off. The board may need to come up with an official position on what to take off, for example, if someone puts a rant of cuss words. We could come up with a standard of things to pull off.

Mike: Doug, do you see any decrease in V Bar V website activity now that you have put the Facebook page up?

Doug: In the short period of time they seem to be linked hand in hand. It will probably take a year to get a feel for how it will work since we have launched the webpage with a new addition of the newsletter and Facebook, so lot of things happened at once but right now they are hand in hand. If we post something on Facebook there is an increase in website activity. Six months to a year from now I could give you a better idea.

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Mike: That was my only question, will one detract from another. Our website would have more permanent information and Facebook could be more immediate.

Iric: There is a changing of the times good or bad and in my view you have to go with it.

Mike: I haven't really heard any negative thoughts about not pursuing it.

Doug: I think it's worth the experiment.

Mike: If there is no more discussion, I think we are in agreement to go ahead to make a motion to go forward, and John if you need help maybe someone could offer.

Ashley: I will volunteer to help John.

Doug: I was going to suggest this is a great opportunity for a young person to help and maybe bring in some students.

Iric: Can we have a mock set up by the June meeting?

John: Yes

Ernie: You said that it is possible to have someone to edit content?

Doug: I don't go on the page myself, Lisa and Chris do jt for me, but from my understanding you can remove content.

Ernie: Ok I think that would be important.

Iric: I make a motion to approve.

Mike: Motion approved.

b. Increased student activity in Section events

Mike: Alanna Riggs, President of UA range club, took a survey of students and shared some key points to help increase student activity. When scheduling meetings try and keep students in mind. Students would like to make presentations at meetings. I think it will be a good opportunity for them to practice before attending national meetings. Willie and I are trying to make upcoming meetings as compatible as possible with student schedules.

Willie: Something I'd like to do at the summer meeting is give the students time where they can introduce themselves and tell us. Let us know what their major is, why they chose a natural resources career/what brought them into the field, what their interests are for a future career. This will be a way to learn more about them and engage them.

Mike: I want to correct the students missing the talks by cleaning up. As a side note I am working as a middle man to set up an intern program with Arizona Cattle Growers Association and the UA and hopefully ASU at some point. The internship will give the opportunity for range students to spend some time out on a ranch, we think we will be able to get them University credits. This is another way to get the students out on the ground. If anyone has any other ways that we can include them, we are thinking about a fall tour of a ranch that Willie will discuss later.

c. Summer meeting update

Willie: I don't have anything concrete to report. We've got the Nordic Center established as our summer meeting. I wanted to get up there and do a tour of the place. I've been in communication with Bill Cordasco about Babbit Ranches and the program. I'll really be putting the pedal to the metal in the next two weeks to start to formulate more specifics of what we will look at on the CO Bar Ranch. I think Iric I'll be leaning on you for some technical range information about the Babbit Ranches, my understanding is you have been working on some of the inventory of the ranches.

Iric: I've got about 2 ranches done the CO Bar is the last one. I have some information on it from a vegetative standpoint. I have some information about the ranches and where it's at and where it's going and Billy has a whole host of things about it and tons of information about what they are doing.

Willie: Thanks Iric, there is no shortage of things that Bill and the ranches have going on. I think the opening of the meeting will be about Babbit Ranch and their constitution which guides their approach, philosophy and ranch operations how they work together as a large and diverse group of stakeholders. From the board, I need your help on one matter. Should the summer meeting have some kind of technical training associated with it to provide people with field training they can apply to their job? What I have in mind is Rangeland Health

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Assessment (RHA) and Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG) used by the NRCS. I think if we got some training instruction and have RHA/WHEG in some small teams it would be a draw of people to come to our meeting. If there are one or 2 individuals in AZ from NRCS that could provide this training or some of the authors of the rangeland health guide books could come and provide us with more in depth training. I want this to be a ranch tour and I think this would really add to the meeting if we could do a little bit of training.

Iric: For the WHEG part they are working on new modifications for pronghorn. Stew Tuttle and/or Steve Cassidy or anyone from NRCS could possibly give this training.

Willie: Thanks, Iric. Personally I haven't done that evaluation yet and I know its being added to resource management plans.

Mike: This fits also in with Alanna's survey and comments from the students, that they want opportunities to improve their skills. Jim Sprinkle he has been interested in education type workshops, "Reading the Range" he has groups are broken down into smaller groups out in the field and it was successful. Any hands on experience is really beneficial.

Willie: This has provided me with some leads. I will send out an email to UA and ASU chapters to give them a quick summary of our ideas. I did see Steve Cassidy last week and told him about the meeting so I will chat with him and Stew. Would Jim Sprinkle be a good resource for teaching the RHA portion?

Mike: When I was putting on the meetings I would turn to Jim, Doug, or Dan.

Doug: Jim and I have been talking about offering a class the day before, like we did with "Range 101" before the winter meeting. The class before the summer meeting would discuss what to do with data gathered during monitoring. We would offer that Wednesday morning or afternoon. It would not be in the field but in a classroom type setting on managing data. It might be a good addition, with ranch tour on one long day, field training the day after. If that is something you all would be interested in.

Mike: I was at Jim's workshop on data interpretation. We went into field to collect data and then broke down into groups to interpret data. Then we worked through the decision process for land manager or rancher. So we got to work it both in the field then come in to the classroom.

Alvin: What kind of data would we be using because I've noticed with BLM, FS, and BIA they have adopted VGS. Is that what we would be working with?

Willie: If you are talking about monitoring data I think that is a great way to interpret I think the field exercise would be more RHA and WHEG which helps identify resource concerns.

Doug: We could make it work either way. We have a lot data from a variety of sources. Jim and I are willing to work with you (Willie) to make it an addition and enhancement to the summer meeting.

Mike: What I learned last year, and Doug was a big help, advertising it is a good idea. Go to Cattle Growers, Game and Fish, Soil and Water, and other organizations. Let's start advertising for the meeting now.

Willie: The basic information will be in the section newsletter. I will make a couple direct contacts then make an email you could forward on to the membership. I will CC you on any emails or outreach that I make.

Doug: I will put an announcement on the V bar V page.

John: Facebook and Twitter

Dan: Just a comment on the range health part, Steve Cassidy has done some training up there for Game and Fish personnel. Shai could also help you because they know those sites better than someone from down here would.

Willie: Stew Tuttle might be able to lead the WHEG component. Steve Cassidy and Shai could do rangeland health component and even Iric as well since those guys know that area.

Shai: I was hearing about WHEGs and RHA, have you talked to Bill about the brush management they have done up there?

Willie: Yes, that has come up and that would certainly be something to talk about and go see.

Shai: I was thinking, with the WHEGs that ties into a lot brush that has been cleared because of the antelope habitat and then inventory too as far as preplanning and post treatment and tying all of those together.

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Willie: There is a researcher out of NAU that did a study to determine if junipers are taking over and why so we are definitely going to talk about that. That area is interesting because its shrub steppe and grasslands, which are important vegetation types in AZ. So all that goes into evaluating that grassland and shrub cover we will talk a bit about that.

Mike: Thanks Willie

5. New Business:

Mike: Thank you Alvin for putting on the wild and excess horse section at the winter meeting. It is becoming a national issue, there are various meetings going on throughout the country about that topic. Yesterday Jim Sprinkle sent out a grant application to Public Lands Council for his "Reading the Range Program", here in Gila County we hope that it goes through he had a lot of letters of support.

a. 2017 SRM Annual meeting offer to Arizona Section

Mike: I'd like to bring everyone up to speed about where this meeting is. I think in 2008 Al Medina raised the question about having a national SRM meeting in AZ. The drawbacks are Tucson doesn't have adequate facilities to handle 2,000-3,000 people and Phoenix is too expensive during the winter months. The National SRM has a consultant that looks at costs of all the cities that could possibly host meetings. I received an email from the SRM Advisory Council Chair asking if AZ would be willing to host a meeting somewhere else. Utah was discussed or a location far from AZ, for example Alaska. The local section would organize the accommodations but AZ would put together the program. The AZ section would like to see the dollar amounts that were quoted for having a meeting in Phoenix. The National council came back and said SRM would consider changing the date of the meeting to make hotel prices more compatible for the winter meeting. When I get more info I will let everyone know the concept of having the meeting in Phoenix, we have taken a step forward. If they come back and say no we want to have the meeting in Alaska and have AZ participate when can discuss it later.

Fall field tour of Willow Springs Ranch

Mike: We talked about not just having meetings 2 times a year; I think this is something that can be aimed at students and young professionals

Willie: Katie Kline with NRCS in Tucson responded for my email to participate on a Saturday, probably in October. She did inventory on half the ranch. She will talk about range inventory and ESDs on the ranch. This will be geared towards UA and ASU students. With the summer meeting I'm not as familiar with the area but with this I will know much more about personally. We will do this with NRCS and possibly Game and Fish, but I haven't heard back from them yet. I wanted to have Game and Fish show us 2 different water catchments and have them talk about that whole program, he has footage of all kinds of animals using these waters. I will talk about state trust land. That area gets a lot of recreation use, Arizona trail goes the ranch, hiking, off roading, etc. Jaque, the President of willow spring ranch can talk about livestock and recreation. There will be a tour of the ranch, talk about those topics. Soil and Water Conservation Society is interested in working with the section to have a joint meeting. I have already talked to one of their member and will talk o them further about joining us for this meeting. I still need to pin down a date.

Dan: October 24-25 ARS is having their 60th anniversary at Walnut Gulch that will a big event for ranch people here. Then RISE in Tucson is October 12.

Willie: maybe I will look to later September it seems there is a lot going in on October.

b. SRM annual awards

Mike: Jamie Wages is doing the awards for us. In the newsletter she is asking for nominations. We had one question; it clearly states for some of the awards that the person receiving doesn't need to be a member of SRM. For the young professional it didn't specify, should we open up all the awards to people regardless of membership?

Ernie: It should be open for everyone.

Willie: To serve on the board you need to be a member, but I think to keep it open. We can hope the person would become a member after being recognized by the AZ Section.

Mike: I will pass that on to Jamie.



c. SRM booth and guest speaker at AZ Cattle Growers Convention

Mike: I solicited National SRM to set up table display at the annual Cattle Growers Conventions, they will send out the materials for the booth. Since I am member of the Cattle Growers it will cost \$375 and SRM national will cover ¼. If the board agrees myself and some other ranchers, Bob Beeler and Terry Wheeler, will man the booth at the convention. Our goal is to attract more ranchers to SRM. Would someone make a motion to approve the section to pay \$93.75 for the booth and materials?

Willie: I make a motion we pay for the booth.

Dan: I second that

Mike: Thanks, I appreciate it. The other item I have on that, Terry Wheeler is pursuing a speaker. We have an hour block set aside at that convention for our ranchers committee with SRM. He is in contact with Alan Savory he might be able to come and be an evening speaker for the hour of allotted time. Terry was very optimistic but it is not set in stone yet.

John: Alan Savory is great speaker but it has been my impression even back in grad school and everything I have and read/heard about is his methods are not science based. My question is it that a conflict with SRM, the society bases their profession and management on science based management. Would it be in our best interest to promote him and his method?

Mike: I have not heard that about him before, I know his holistic management methods. Terry and I really want to attract more ranchers to SRM so we were looking for a dynamic well known person to speak to attract more people. Your point is well taken, I have never heard that view expressed before. I have listened to Holcheck present thing that were not agreed upon by audience but it was good to hear a different perspective. Does anyone else agree that he is not science based?

Dan: I agree also.

Iric: I agree.

Doug: I haven't had the opportunity to do this yet but you might want to go and look at the most recent speech he is made that has had a lot of publicity about TED? Mikes point that he would be a big draw which is correct. He might be a controversial figure, always has been. Maybe we should take pause and consider see if that's where we want to go.

Iric: Are you talking about an SRM sanctioned speaker for the Cattle Growers?

Mike: It would be part of the Cattle Growers convention. The SRM ranchers committee that Terry heads has an hour at that convention and we have used that hour in the past to attract ranchers to that subject.

Willie: If it's more Cattle Growers related, I guess we wouldn't be directly involved.

Iric: If SRM is tied to it, some of the background on that TED talk there are a few people that have been sending around emails about it, if you look at the comments section under the video, some of them are pretty old now, but there are almost 1500 posts that have been put on that talk. It's not necessarily what he says or presents in his talk but what is alarming is the comments. Quite a few researchers that are very well known make comments the followers of the TED talk were very dismissive. The aspect that concerned me was it dismissed science in general. Yes he will be a big draw but he will also get a big following with ranchers again we have been down this road in Arizona. There are people more experienced than me but more times than not we have gone out on ranges and seen it doesn't work and we don't want to go down this road again, in my opinion.

Mike: Does he have a variety of topics to discuss or is it the same thing? I've never heard him speak.

Dan: I haven't kept up with it since the early years.

Ernie: Anyone can have their own opinion but anecdotally I've never had permitte walk through the door and want to embrace that methodology.

Iric: There were people during 80s and early 90s that followed it. I guess I would be worried about a repeat of people walking through the door again.

Willie: I received a book from a consultant here in Phoenix called "How to Make State Land More Valuable", it's about how holistic management can make state trust land more

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valuable. There still are people buying into the concept and pitching to state lands department it on behalf of the Savory institute.

Alvin: Maybe have him do the talk in a format where you invite other people to speak about multiple methods so it doesn't seem like AZ SRM is only endorsing Alan Savory.

Mike: At this point I am not sure how sure Terry is to getting him come to the Cattle Growers. We were talking about it last year too but he is a busy guy and may not even come. That is a good point Alvin to have it as more of a discussion. I will keep everyone informed.

6. Directors/Committee Chairs reports or comments

Alvin: I wanted to take a step back and go back to national SRM being in Arizona. What about the Tribes and the use of their casinos as a hotel option? There is a Tribe in the Mesa/Phoenix area may be I can try and work with them.

Mike: I've been waiting to see what figures the National SRM was would give us for hotel costs. I wanted to go out and check things ourselves, but yes the Cattle Growers meeting is being held at Wild Horse Pass. Any info you can get from them would be worthwhile. Keep in mind government agencies and funding issues for people to travel but I would consider 1500 plus people might attend.

Alvin: Phoenix and Mesa might be an option.

Ernie: One thing to also keep in mind is all the break out rooms that are required at the hotel. I don't know if they have screened Flagstaff as an option?

Alvin: If we look at Flagstaff there is a new casino the Navajo Tribe has built.

Willie: Twin Arrows Casino east of Flagstaff is the new casino. That is a good point Alvin; there are many casinos in Arizona and the Phoenix area, I wonder if they were overlooked.

Mike: I think what Ernie said is really critical, I think they used between 30-40 smaller rooms at the last meeting which is something a lot of places don't have. As soon as I hear more info I will let you know.

Willie: If they contact you again you might want to let National SRM know or remind them to research tribal lands in Arizona for hotel options.

Alvin: It will also be a good way to get more tribal involvement at the meeting and get more SRM members.

Mike: Thank you Alvin.

7. Schedule next BOD meeting

Mike: June 27th at NRCWAY, if you haven't gone in the past I encourage you to go and look at the camp and witness firsthand what they do with the NRCWAY kids.

Dan: Does that start at noon?

Mike: I have to get in touch with Kim about the details. Last year we got there before lunch time, had lunch with the kids then had the meeting afterward and were done by 3. I'm assuming it will be the same schedule. They will ask people if they would like to spend the night.

Dan: How far from Phoenix?

Willie: 2 ½ hours from Phoenix if you go through Prescott valley

Doug: You can get to it from either side of the mountain. I'd add 30-45 minutes to Cottonwood for Camp Verde from that area.

Dan: Will there be a map?

Willie: There is one on the website with NRCWAY information.

8. Adjourn

Mike: Thank you for your participation look forward to seeing in June at NRCWAY. Motion adjourn

Ernie: I first

Dan: Second

Mike: Motion approved. Thanks everyone.

Meeting adjourned 11:30