

**High School Youth Benefit from Rangeland Management Forum in Orlando, Florida**  
By Ben Berlinger, Colorado Section of the Society for Range Management, Youth Activities Chair

The Colorado Section of the Society for Range Management (SRM) was well represented at the 2014 High School Youth Forum (HSYF) held in Orlando on February 9-12, 2014. This year there were 24 delegates representing 12 of the SRM Sections.

This year the Colorado Section SRM sponsored two delegates to Orlando. **Jacob Walter** of Hoehne and **Tessa Zee** of Erie were selected to participate in the Forum. Both delegates were chosen based on their exceptional achievements in rangeland management programs. **Jacob was the high scoring individual** at the *Eastern Colorado State FFA rangeland judging contest* held in Stratton, CO on October 9, 2013. **Tessa was selected based on her outstanding participation** in the *Rangeland Management discipline at Camp Rocky*. Camp Rocky is Colorado's premier outdoor learning camp for youth interested in the management and conservation of our natural resources.

The goals of the HSYF are to recognize youth for outstanding accomplishments in rangeland management activities and to provide young people the opportunity to discuss rangelands, career options, and meet with leaders in the field of range management. One requirement of the HSYF is that each delegate must present an illustrated talk on some aspect of rangeland conservation or management. Jacob's presentation was titled ***Overgrazing and its Effects on Rangeland***. In his paper Jacob wrote the following abstract.

*Overgrazing is when plants on a specific area of land are grazed beyond the plants ability to grow, photosynthesize, and all together maintain their place in the ecosystem. Some agriculturalists don't realize that overgrazing can lead to more extensive problems. These problems are very serious to the health and vitality of rangeland, and need to be addressed in order to protect and sustain rangeland. The three effects of overgrazing are loss of native plants, soil erosion, and difficulties for agriculturalists. Overgrazing can be resolved with proper management. Healthy rangeland resulting from proper grazing benefits everyone either directly or indirectly.*

Tessa's presented a talk about the effects of the September 2013 flooding on the rangelands of north-east Colorado where she lives. Her paper's abstract stated the following.

*Major Colorado flooding in September 2013 sparked renewed awareness of the massive impact natural disasters like floods can have upon rangeland. The livestock, plants, and water on the range are put in danger from contamination by runoff and sediment deposit. Disturbingly, research also shows that climate change increases the frequency of natural disasters. However, ranchers have the power to manage their land properly to recover after a natural disaster through prevention as well as cleanup. General environmental awareness is the best way to help minimize the negative consequences of climate change and the severity of damage that future natural disasters like floods can inflict upon the beautiful rangelands of Colorado and the world.*

(l-r) Tessa Zee & Jacob Walter were the Colorado delegates to the 2014 SRM High School Youth Forum held in Orlando, FL on February 9-12, 2014.



## High School Youth continued from page 3

Both of their papers and power point presentations can be accessed at the CO Section's website at [www.cssrm.org/](http://www.cssrm.org/). The **Colorado Section SRM** congratulates Jacob and Tessa for their outstanding achievements in rangeland management and wishes them the best of luck as they further pursue their ambitions in the field of natural resource management. Contact Ben Berlinger (719-384-5408) for more information about the SRM High School Youth Forum.



Delegates from 12 of the 21 SRM Sections at the High School Youth Forum in Orlando enjoyed an ecological field trip to the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge on the Atlantic coast of central Florida. The delegates had an opportunity to learn about Manatees (also called sea cows) that use the refuge among other important wildlife species.



Jacob Walter (left) and Tessa Zee (right) accept their certificate of completion of the SRM High School Youth Forum from President Heston Henry of the Texas Section.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT...

The only constant is change

What a change.....summer has arrived throughout Colorado. The reports have changed from snow depth to river flows, hills have turned from brown to green and change is all around us! Let me first express my humble gratitude for the honor of being able to serve as your Section president-Thank you. So, there has been a lot happening in your Section and the Society! The annual winter meeting entitled, "Forging Resilience: Lands, Communities, and the Next Generation" was held on December 4-5 in beautiful LaForet Resort in Colorado Springs. I would like to thank all the speakers and attendees that braved the winter storm to make the meeting a success. The warm and intimate venue was a change from the usual, but was a great gathering spot for listening, learning, catching up with old friends, and making new connections. Speakers included: Courtney White as the keynote speaker from the Quivira Coalition, Joel Moffett- NRCS- District Conservationist, Joel Vaad-Manager of the CSU Maxwell Ranch, Dr. Maria Fernandez-Gimenez with Retta Brueger and Hailey Wiler-CSU and the Learning from the Land project, William Burnidge and Terri Schulz-The Nature Conservancy, Dr. Emily Kachergis-Ecologist at the BLM National Operations Center, Dr. Doug Tolleson-Range Specialist at the V bar V ranch in Arizona, and Wink Crigler- rancher/ ranch manager/ cowgirl extraordinaire from Greer, Arizona. They all did an unbelievable job of outlining the challenges that exist in managing rangelands and presenting thought provoking science and information on how to maintain and build resilience in these complex systems. I am so grateful that these extremely busy individuals would take the time to share their science, experience, and passion with us! If you did not make it, you missed a good one, just ask anyone that attended.



More change.....New officers were announced at the lunch business meeting held at the annual conference on December 4th. Randy Reichert was announced as president-elect, while Natalie Edmundson and Vickie Russo were announced as Board of Directors for 2015-2016. Shaan Bliss stepped down as secretary/treasurer. Shaan served from 2011-2014-Thank you for your dedicated service Shaan. In his place, Meaghan Huffman has generously offered her services as secretary/treasurer. Congratulations and many thanks to them for their willingness to serve their professional Society.

Still more change.....Two Board of Directors meetings have occurred: 1) December 3rd at the Colorado Mountain Brewery in Colorado Springs, 2) February 11 at the SRM Annual Meeting in Orlando Florida. In an attempt to keep up with the changing times, a resolution was presented in Florida to update the Section By-laws to accommodate those changes. This would require a vote by the members; a mail-in ballot vote is anticipated this fall. Please stay tuned to this issue. The resolution will be posted on the Section website soon.

And more change.....YES there is more! The Section officers have recognized that there is a wide demographic in our membership. We are in a time where we have such a varied membership that we are attempting to accommodate each demographic. This means that we have members that like to get mail from the mailbox on the street and members where that mailbox is on a phone in the palm of the hand. It is challenging to accommodate the varied needs of all the membership, but we are making every attempt to accommodate all our member's needs.

Some of the things you may not know about:

Our Section website: <http://www.cssrm.org/>

All of the finalized Board of Director meeting notes are posted on the website. In addition, any other information that we feel may be important or useful to our membership is posted to the website.

**granite**  
**SEED**  
and erosion control

Quality seed provided by professional native seed experts.  
Your one stop shop for all of your pasture and custom mixes.

490 E. 76th Avenue  
Denver, CO 80229  
720.496.0600

**Arkansas Valley**  
**Seed Solutions™**

[seedsolutions.com](http://seedsolutions.com) Seeds for Growing Success

*The Preferred Alfalfa, Native Grass, Pasture  
Grass and Wildflower Supplier for Your  
Conservation Seed Needs!*

Please call us for the best varieties, custom mixes  
and prompt service.

**\*\*Quality Assured in Our Own Seed Lab\*\***

4625 Colorado Blvd. Denver, CO 80216 (877) 957-3337	I-25 & Hwy. 66 Longmont, CO 80504 (877) 907-3337	12th & Santa Fe Tracks Rocky Ford, CO 81067 (719) 254-7469	195 N. Washington Monte Vista, CO 81144 (719) 852-3905
---	--	--	--