

THE RANGE RIDER

Newsletter of the Colorado Section of the Society for Range Management



CSSRM President, Dixie Crowe, demonstrating soil profiling at the 2023 Fall Annual Meeting in Canon City, Colorado.

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dixie Crowe

Dear Members,

Welcome to 2024! The section has some incredible range trainings in this year's lineup, so you'll want to mark your calendars now!

We're not following our usual program of a fall section meeting this year. Instead, we'll be out in Grand Junction on **March 12th** for the annual meeting. Our President-Elect Jake Courkamp is partnering with former Past-President Retta Bruegger of Colorado State University Extension, and the Canyonlands Research Center to put on a fantastic meeting on pinyon-juniper encroachment in the morning session and virtual fence in the afternoon session.

The summer ranch tour is set for **July 19th** at Prairie Canyon Ranch in Douglas County, our Conservation Award of Excellence winner for 2023. I for one can't wait to see the incredible results they've had from rotational grazing the meadow of smooth brome to restore native grasses! Camping is available on-site.

In the fall we'll have a tour, place and time to be determined, and our regularly scheduled business meeting where we'll approve the financials from the 2023 business meeting, but more importantly install our new board members and president-elect and give out our section awards! This will give our awards committee co-chairs Julie Elliot and Clare Hydock time to solicit nominations and go through the selection process. It will also allow for Past-President Courtney Hurst to find the nominees and send you our election ballot. I hope you will consider submitting your name for one of the two director positions or even run for president-elect or talk your friends into it!

Save these important dates:

- CSSRM Section Meeting, Grand Junction, **March 12th 2024**, BOD meeting **March 11th 2024**
- CSSRM Summer ranch tour, Prairie Canyon Ranch, **July 19th 2024**, BOD meeting **July 18th 2024**
- CSSRM Fall tour, TBD, business meeting, awards ceremony and installing new board members

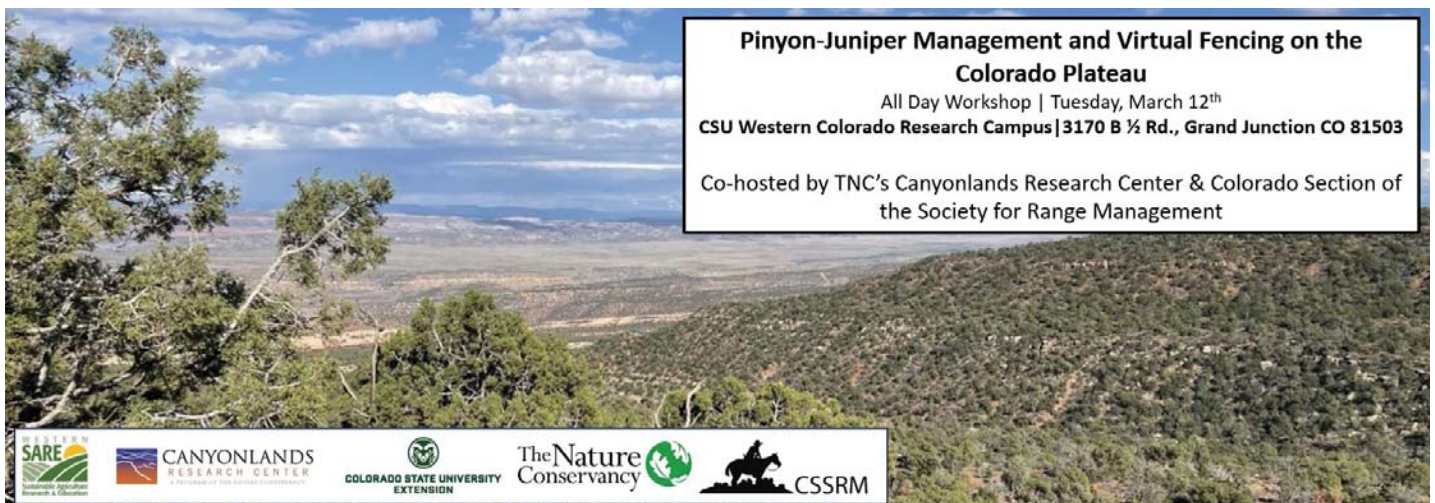


The Nature Conservancy's Canyonlands Research Center. Photo taken from the Research Center's website.

2024 Annual Meeting in Grand Junction!
Jake Courkamp, CSSRM President-Elect
jacob.courkamp@colostate.edu

This year's Colorado Section annual meeting will be co-hosted with The Nature Conservancy's Canyonlands Research Center, and will consist of a one-day workshop focused on pinyon-juniper management and virtual fences on the Colorado Plateau. The morning will feature an array of speakers and facilitated breakout discussions related to pinyon-juniper ecosystem management. Speakers will include scientists working to further our understanding of regional pinyon-juniper ecology, and managers balancing responses to tree encroachment and habitat conservation for important species like the Pinyon Jay. The afternoon will start with a brief introduction to virtual fence technology followed by an interactive panel discussion featuring producers currently using virtual fences to meet a variety of management objectives. Come learn more about the challenges, trade-offs, and emerging management strategies associated with these complex issues in rangeland management.




The meeting will be held at Colorado State University's Western Colorado Research Campus in Grand Junction on Tuesday, March 12th from 8am-4pm, with a meet and greet at [Gemini Beer Company](#) on Monday, March 11th from 5-8pm. The Colorado Section Board of Directors business meeting will occur immediately before the meet and greet 3-5pm, also at the CSU Western Colorado Research Campus. A virtual attendance option will be available for Board of Directors business meeting (please contact jacob.courkamp@colostate.edu for details). Due to generous support from Western SARE and the Nature Conservancy, workshop attendance is **FREE**, and you can find more information about the meeting and submit your registration by following the meeting link under upcoming events on the CSSRM website, www.cssrm.org. Attendance is limited and filling up fast, so don't delay! All presentations from the meeting will be livestreamed or recorded and made available online after the meeting.



**Pinyon-Juniper Management and Virtual Fencing on the
Colorado Plateau**

All Day Workshop | Tuesday, March 12th
CSU Western Colorado Research Campus | 3170 B ½ Rd., Grand Junction CO 81503

Co-hosted by TNC's Canyonlands Research Center & Colorado Section of
the Society for Range Management



2023 Fall Ranch Field Day at the Bader Family Ranch in SE Colorado: Huge Success! Ben Berlinger

The Colorado Section Fall Ranch Tour held on November 3rd was a huge success! Thirty-one participants registered for what turned out to be a perfect day of weather and shared knowledge on the range. The Bader Ranch, owned and operated by the Randy and Kelly Bader family of Kim, CO, was the gracious host for this educational range management event. In 2014, the Bader ranch received the CSSRM Excellence in Rangeland Management award.

The field day was centered around rangeland recovery following wildfire and drought using the tools of managed grazing & recovery opportunity. In June of 2011, a wildfire burned about 60% of the east side of the ranch. This disturbance, coupled with continued below average precipitation and periodic drought, presented major challenges to the grazing management employed by the Bader's.

From increased forage production to positive changes in hydrology, resulting from the wildfire removal of pinyon and juniper, the attendees had a chance to hear about how the Bader's changed their stocking rate and used plant recovery post-fire to manage their rangeland resources. Using the adaptive tools of moderate stocking, shortened grazing periods and long recovery time for the grazed plants, the Bader's have improved plant communities to increasingly diverse stands of New Mexico feathergrass, blue grama, vine mesquite, mountain mahogany, and skunkbush sumac.

Participants had a chance to observe areas of their rangeland where pinyon/junipers had been dozed-over, piled and burned. Kelly Bader noted that the wildfire was more effective in removing the encroached trees since all ages of trees were removed. The pushing and pile burning only removed the mature trees leaving a "younger-aged" stand of trees to continue growing.

The Colorado Section of the SRM wishes to thank the Bader Ranch for hosting an informative and educational fall field day on their ranch!



Kelly Bader examining big bluestem in burn recovery area.



Tour participants visiting burn recovery area.

2023 Trail Boss Award: Emmett Jordan Ben Berlinger and Courtney Hurst

Emmett Jordan of Jordan Angus Ranch received the Colorado Section of the Society for Range Management 2023 Trail Boss Award.

Emmett and his family operate Jordan Angus Ranch, located about seven miles east of Briggsdale, CO. The Ranch raises high efficiency, low maintenance cows by working within the constraints of the natural rangeland ecosystem. Jordan Angus Ranch also raises and sells registered angus bulls to ranchers throughout Colorado, Nebraska, and Wyoming.

Emmett has a lifetime of dedication to the art and science of range management. He also has the unique ability to translate technical range science into concepts that are useful to producers that help them better understand how to improve their grazing management. In 2017, Jordan Angus Ranch was recognized by the CSSRM and received the *Excellence in Rangeland Conservation* award and in 2018, the Section held the summer field day on the ranch.

Emmett is very active in the Colorado Section. His service on the CSSRM board of directors as president-elect, president, and immediate past-president was exemplary. Serving as president-elect in 2020 he coordinated an outstanding virtual annual winter meeting despite the COVID shutdown. His agenda featured special emphasis on sharing range management information via podcast personalities such as *Working Cows* and *Art of Range* podcasters. The agenda also featured discussions, and the showing of a documentary, on rural mental health that involved the Colorado Commission of Agriculture.



Emmett Jordan receives Trail Boss Award at 2023 CSSRM Fall Meeting, Emmett is third from left.



Jordan Angus Ranch receives Excellence in Rangeland Conservation Award, Emmett Jordan second from left.

As president and immediate past-president, Emmett was committed to facilitating the CSSRM's operating budget. His quality control skill was valuable to the financial management of the Colorado Section. Under his direction the Colorado Section has moved toward more financial accountability. As Emmett puts it, "To be honest, CSSRM has done more for me than I have in return. Serving on the Board put me well out of my comfort zone. I think I'm still processing the overall experience, but am a better person for having done it".

Emmett has also been involved with the youth activities program within the Colorado Section. On several occasions he assisted the Youth Activities Committee with the facilitation of the FFA range judging and plant identification events held across northeastern Colorado. His dedication to our Section's youth outreach efforts is very noteworthy and is an accomplishment of which he is quite proud.



When he is not running the ranch, Emmett is a free-lance writer and graphic arts specialist working from his home. As such, he participates in the development of numerous agricultural and natural resources related publications. In 2018, Emmett collaborated in the publishing of the 3rd edition of the book *Range and Pasture Management: A Source Unit for Colorado Teachers*. Many of the pictures in the book were taken by Emmett on his ranch. During the book compilation, he generously devoted many hours of his time, without compensation, to the professional design and photo-layout of this well-used range management educational resource.

PUTTING COWBOY KNOW-HOW TO WORK IN GRAZING MANAGEMENT

Following is borrowed, in part, from the *Noble Institute newsletter Noble Rancher* <articles@noble.org>. Titled "Just a Cowboy", author and rancher James A. Stuart shares his appreciation of how those who work cattle are an important influence on the well-being of livestock, land and livelihood.

The art of knowing the *appropriate* time, timing and intensity of grazing, and the ability to quietly move and settle livestock to strategic locations is within our influence. Cowboys who know the animals and are aware of these plant cycles need to be involved in the planning process where they can share their observations and experienced-earned input.

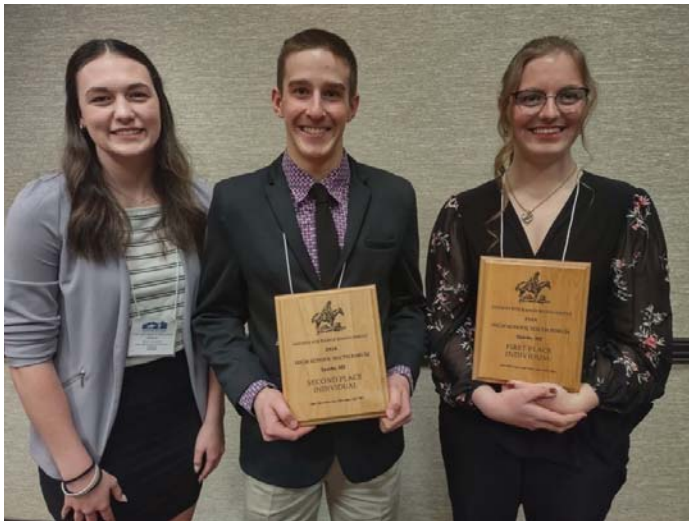
I have seen the positive impacts of proper livestock distribution over the range. I have observed forage production that increased six times over when it was managed for appropriate disturbance (grazing) and recovery. I believe that improving the health of the land and providing quality meat and fiber to the nation is a noble and valuable task to dedicate our lives to.

A cowboy's role is crucial to the balance and sustainability of an operation. This focus on the whole picture does not take away from those things that we love about cowboying. Keep improving that horse. Keep mastering the art of cattle flow and movement. Keep letting that encouraging holler out when your buddy sneaks that loop on a calf with a fancy shot; and while you're out there, observe what the grass and soil need, then respond with talent and confidence.

Our goal should be to increase our ability to read the land and the livestock each day. This is the art that completes the management on the range, where art and science must coexist for success.

["Just a Cowboy" - Noble Research Institute](#)





L to R: Adison Goldenstein, Tim Bedell, and Katelyn Huskins



This year there were nineteen delegates to the HSYF in Sparks representing nine SRM sections from across the western U.S.

High School Youth Forum, Sparks, Nevada, 2024 Ben Berlinger

Congratulations to our three delegates to the High School Youth Forum (HSYF) in Sparks! Adison Goldenstein, Holyoke, Tim Bedell, Oak Creek, and Katelyn Huskins, Rye. These three outstanding agriculture students were selected to participate in the HSYF based on their high level of achievements in FFA range judging and plant identification over the past two years. All three students did an awesome job writing their papers and presenting them along with sixteen other high school students from across the country. Katelyn was honored with FIRST-PLACE for her presentation titled "Our Disappearing Rangeland". Tim received SECOND-PLACE for his presentation titled "Smooth Brome: A Tolerable Invader?". Congratulations to these exceptional Colorado high school range students on a job well done!!

CSSRM and Range Judging: FFA/Ag Teachers/Students Workshops Held Around the State in 2023 Ben Berlinger

The objective of the FFA range judging and practice workshops is to:

- Provide practice for the FFA range judging Career Development Events (CDE)
- Sharpen students range plant identification skills
- Increase awareness of the ecosystem services provided by healthy rangelands
- Discuss range management principles
- Increase awareness of SRM and the CO Section



Hamilton Community Center near Craig on September 20, 2023

In total, eight workshops were held across the State and the table below summarizes each of the events.

Date	Location	FFA Chapters	Student Participants
8/22/23	Douglas County High School	Castle Rock	23
9/5/23	Prairie High School	New Raymer	18
9/5/23	Cardinal Community Academy	Keenesburg	15
9/6/23	Branson High School	Branson	35
9/7/23	Arikaree High School	Cope	50
9/13/23	Pueblo Community College SW Campus	Cortez	35
9/20/23	Hamilton Community Center	Craig	42
10/4/23	Clark Ranch	Monte Vista	24



Arikaree High School near Cope on September 7, 2023



Pueblo Community College Southwest Campus near Cortez on September 13, 2023



Clark Ranch near Monte Vista on October 4, 2023



Branson High School in Branson on September 6, 2023

CALL FOR AWARD NOMINATIONS!!

In keeping with our vision of "a well-trained and highly motivated group of professionals and rangeland users working with productive, sustainable rangeland ecosystems", CSSRM recognizes excellence among our membership. Awards recognize contribution at every level—from new member to lifetime achievement.



Josh Saunders (on right) receives Trail Boss Award in 2019.

Awards include: The Trail Boss Award, Excellence in Rangeland Conservation Award, the Outstanding Young Professional Award, and the Outstanding Publication Award.

Take this opportunity to shine a light on someone's good work. The awards criteria can be downloaded at CSSRM.org

Nominations or questions can be sent to Julie Elliott at jtbug3@pctelcom.coop by July 1st