

## President's Message Fire Return Intervals in the Idaho Section

*Kim Ragotzkie*

After a few good freezes recently, it is finally feeling like fall here in eastern Idaho. Another smoky summer has passed and we were again reminded that whatever your views on fuel-loading, fire return intervals, and fire management, fire is a part of our ecosystem. This newsletter's focus is on fire in rangelands. Once again Steve Seefeldt has reviewed information available on the web for us.

Please welcome our new Idaho Section Newsletter co-editors: Roger Blew is an Ecologist with Stoller Corp., and Juley Hankins is

a Rangeland Management Specialist with BLM, both in Idaho Falls. I know they will do a great job with our (your!) newsletter, but they need you to submit articles, information about upcoming symposia and meetings, and news about our members.

President-elect Bruce Hanson is hard at work organizing this year's annual meeting. Plan to attend, December 4-5, in Boise. Look for registration details in a separate mailing in early November. It is time for elections again. We have several very qualified candidates, but feel free to write in an alternate if you wish. Candidate information and a ballot are later in this newsletter.

The theme of this newsletter is fire, and what I really would like your help doing is lighting a fire in the Idaho Section. I know many folks were "burned out" after the 2000 Boise meetings, but we've all had time to recover by now. Our membership is



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growing. If you can help Bruce with the annual meeting, or help organize the summer tour, or have an interest in youth or high school activities, or can tape an interview with SRM Charter Members in Idaho, please contact Kim Ragotzkie, Bruce Hanson, or any of the Directors.



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### Idaho Section Annual Meeting

**December 4-5, 2003  
Boise, Idaho**

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# Where to go on the Internet for Forest Fire Information ●

Steven Seefeldt

I thought it was going to be fun writing this column because at the time when it was announced that the topic was fires, there was a sagebrush fire that grew to 38,000 acres (the Deep fire) just west of the U. S. Sheep Experiment Station where I work. Soon after there was a fire in the Centennial Mountains that threatened part of our summer range. With both fires, my initial thinking was quick: Put them out! But within a few minutes of learning about each of these fires, I realized that both of them had positive aspects. The Deep fire would provide a wonderful opportunity to study leafy spurge recovery, spread, and control after the fire. (As of Sept 12 the leafy spurge has sprouted back and, with Canada thistle, is the only green to be seen in some very large areas.) The Centennial fire could clear out lots of dead trees (about 50% of the forest) on our range and restart the succession process that is natural on these lands. Sadly, the Centennial fire did not make the run our direction, but then maybe that was a good thing, too. Regardless, I found myself frantically searching for forest fire information on the web to learn about these two fires on a day-to-day basis.

Unfortunately, I was unsuccessful. Our administrative officer got lots of good information through her husband who works for the Forest Service. However, this information was unavailable to non-Forest Service employees (such as myself), and I had to be content with the sites below:

The first site, [www.nifc.gov/information.html](http://www.nifc.gov/information.html), the National Interagency Fire Agency site (updated daily) has lots of information on it, but I found it to be uninformative on details for any given fire. (Where were the detailed maps? Where were the projections?) Then I asked myself, "As a taxpayer, do I want heaps of money spent for people to create and update fire sites for each fire on a minute-by-minute basis?" (Like I

can get from ESPN for the Houston Astros). And again reason prevailed and I just watched the smoke and made comments like, "It seems to be headed east today." Still, the site does have state-by-state information and links to all kinds of related sites. There are wildland fire maps (always a week or so old), smoke maps (reasonably updated), information on what to do in case of fire (reminds me of a movie I just saw with the same title – I highly recommend it by the way – foreign section – German with English subtitles).

The second site, [www.firelab.org/current%20fire%20info.htm](http://www.firelab.org/current%20fire%20info.htm), the Current

## Forest Fire Information Web Sites

- [www.nifc.gov/information.html](http://www.nifc.gov/information.html)
- [www.firelab.org/current%20fire%20info.htm](http://www.firelab.org/current%20fire%20info.htm)
- [www.fs.fed.us/land/wfas](http://www.fs.fed.us/land/wfas)
- [www.firelab.org/](http://www.firelab.org/)

Fire Information Center, has good (the coordination center) and bad (e.g. the satellite) links. Some seem to go nowhere, but others lead to great things. For example on the coordination center page, there is a very small map on the left. Click it and you get a map of the USA with it broken out into different regions. Clicking the regions gets you nowhere, but clicking the names of the regions on a list below the map worked well. You get great information on how dry it is and how this year compares to some historical averages and previous years.

The third site, [www.fs.fed.us/land/wfas](http://www.fs.fed.us/land/wfas), is the Wildland Fire Assessment System. It has much technical information and, for me, is interesting to peruse.

The fourth and last site, [www.firelab.org/](http://www.firelab.org/), is the Fire Sciences Lab in Missoula, MT. It is an interesting site that does not do anything on current fires, but it has much information about

the consequences of fire. The people there are conducting some interesting research and I hope one day they will return my call so I can offer my services as a cooperater. Perhaps I should call again.

You will notice that all the above sites are Forest Service sites except for the first interagency site. It seems that is all there is. There are plenty of news sites that pop-up on a search and there is lots of discussion about whether or not to fight fires, how to prevent them, and how to protect your home that you built in the middle of an old lodgepole pine forest. My favorite remedy involves cutting all the forests down (no trees = no forest fires). It is easy, it works, and it makes heaps of money (for a few), but it is dumber than dumb. Actually, fire is a natural part of most Idaho ecosystems. Certainly, in conversations with Forest Service personnel, it seems that more fire watching and less fire fighting will be the order of the day. And, from my perspective, they have the best information to make these decisions.



# Rangeland Research Workshop at Idaho State University

On August 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, Idaho State University's GIS Training and Research Center hosted a Rangeland Research Workshop sponsored by NASA with support from Senator Larry Craig. This two-day workshop focused on the emerging Geotechnologies available in Eastern Idaho to support rangeland management decisions. Topics presented included the use of satellite imagery to detect invasive weeds, geographic information system models for wildland fire risk, and the use of state-of-the-art global positioning systems to accurately map rangelands in the field. A highlight of the workshop was a Holistic Management presentation by Allan Savory.

Dr. Steven Seefeldt lead a field trip to the US Sheep Experiment Station on the second day of the workshop. Attendees learned how the experiment station is implementing the Geotechnologies in their research and got a chance to view the experiment station's rangelands.

Nearly 80 people attended the workshops with 58 percent of attendees from Federal or State agencies/institutions. A similar event will be hosted again next year. To learn more about ISU's rangeland research at the

GIS Center, please visit <http://giscenter.isu.edu> or call (208 282-3606) and ask to be placed on next year's mailing list.



*Attendees of ISU-GIS Center's 2003 Rangeland Research workshop view applications of the Geotechnologies during a field trip to the US Sheep Experiment Station. Dr. Steven Seefeldt (pictured center) lead the field trip.*

## Important Notice: E-mail Address and Member Resources News (formerly TBN)

Please remember that the transition to electronic format for the Member Resources News (formerly Trail Boss News) will be completed by February 2004. Why is it important that you be reminded? Because SRM still does not have email address for almost 1000 of its members! Without those email addresses, Member Resource News cannot be delivered to those folks. (You can still get a printed version mailed to you, but only if you do **not** have access to email.) The SRM Director of Membership, Lesley Radtke, asked that we publish a list in our chapter newsletter of the

people with missing email addresses. Unfortunately, that list for the Idaho Chapter included so many names that we could not possibly fit them all into the limited pages of this newsletter. So, if you are not certain that SRM has your email address (never received any email from SRM?), please provide that information to:

Lesley Radtke  
SRM Director of Membership  
[lrادتke@rangelands.org](mailto:lrادتke@rangelands.org)  
303-986-3309  
FAX 303-986-3892

## Education Certification Information Now On-Line



The registry of approved continuing education opportunities and related certification information are now available on-line from SRM. Check it out at:

[www.rangelands.org/education\\_certification.shtml](http://www.rangelands.org/education_certification.shtml)

# Idaho Section Award Nominations Requested

Each year the Idaho Section presents several awards. The Top Hand Award is the Section's top honor and is conferred upon an SRM member who has made a commendable contribution towards the advancement of range management in Idaho. The Outstanding Achievement Award is presented to an individual or group who has made a substantial contribution to range management in Idaho through a noteworthy achievement or career. The recipient does not need to

be an SRM member. The Excellence in Range Management Award is conferred upon an Idahoan who has displayed excellence in the practice of the art and science of range management.

Please send completed nominations to Patrick Clark, 4343 Daphne St., Meridian, ID 83642-5155 (email: [pclark@nwrc.ars.usda.gov](mailto:pclark@nwrc.ars.usda.gov))

The Excellence in Range Manage-

ment nomination must be forwarded to the National SRM by November 1, so please submit these nominations immediately. Other nominations are due November 10, 2003. Please contact Patrick Clark or Kim Ragotzkie for more information on the nomination process.

## In Memoriam, Jacob Neurauter, 1981-2003

Jacob Neurauter was a Range Management Student Trainee with the USDA-NRCS. He spent much of 2002 working in Teton County, Idaho, and he was a tremendous asset to many private lands and Idaho Fish and Game projects. He had just begun working in the Idaho County office in Grangeville when

he died in a drowning accident on the Salmon River June 15, 2003. Jacob was an avid outdoorsman and sportsman. He was a student at Texas A&M in Kingsville, where he was studying Range and Wildlife Management. He will be missed by many here in Idaho. Informa-

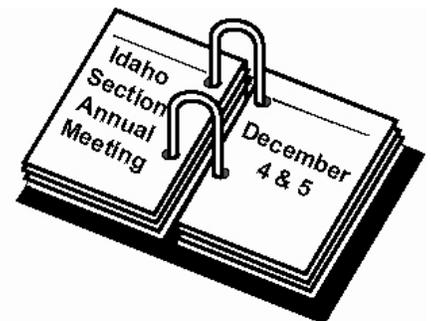
tion regarding a memorial fund at Texas A&M may be obtained from NRCS staff in Driggs or Grangeville.

## Idaho Section Annual Meeting December 4-5, 2003, Boise, Idaho

Mark your calendar for the upcoming annual meeting at a location yet to be determined in Boise. The general meeting will begin at noon on Thursday, December 4, and will run through early afternoon, Friday, December 5. The general topics will include *Rangeland Recreation for ½ day*, and *Sage Grouse/Sagebrush Habitats for ½ day*. There will be a business meeting early Friday afternoon, so most of you will be able to travel home Friday afternoon. Watch for registration and agenda details in a

separate mailing soon. Contact Bruce Hanson in Orofino (476-5313) for more information or to offer some assistance in organizing the meeting.

Idaho Section Officers and Directors: There will be a Board of Directors meeting Thursday morning, December 4, prior to the general meeting. Time and location will be sent to you via e-mail, but please plan to be in Boise by Thursday morning.



# Idaho Section Election Information and Candidates

## CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT-ELECT: *(one candidate)*

### Ken Crane

Education: B.S. Washington State University, 1990

M.S. Range Management, University of Idaho, 1994

Occupation: Range Program Manager, Idaho Department of Agriculture, 2003-present; Rangeland Management Specialist, ISDA, 1998-2003; Resource Manager, IDL, 1994-1998; Intermountain Range Consultants, 1989-1991.

SRM Activities: Western Chapter Director, 2000-2002; SRM 2000 Planning Committee; Palouse Student Chapter President.

## CANDIDATES FOR SOUTHERN CHAPTER: *(one candidate)*

**No Candidate.** Please write-in an SRM member residing in Camas, Blaine, Gooding, Lincoln, Jerome, Minidoka, Twin Falls or Cassia Counties.

## CANDIDATES FOR LYMAN RICHWINE CHAPTER: *(one candidate)*

### Shannon Williams

Education: B.S. Animal Science, Utah State University

M.S.S. Human Resources, Utah State University

Occupation: Lemhi County Extension Educator, 2000-present. Co-manages family ranch.

Statement: I would like to be a Director to gain first hand knowledge of how SRM functions and how producers can benefit from joining. I also believe it would provide a great opportunity to network with other people across the district and the stat on natural resource issues.



## Idaho Section Society for Range Management 2003 Election Ballot

Please select one person per office or write-in a candidate.

### President Elect 2004/President 2005

Ken Crane  \_\_\_\_\_

### 2004-2005 Southern Director

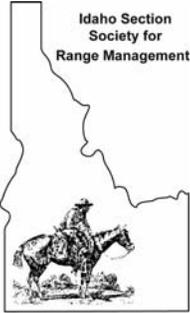
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### 2004-2005 Lyman Richwine Director

Shannon Williams  \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail your ballot to Brad Williams, 653 Hwy. 93 N, Carmen, ID 83462. Ballots will be counted November 30, 2003 by the Idaho Section Secretary.

**Next Newsletter Deadline is  
December 15, 2003**



**Send your articles and  
pictures to:  
Juley Hankins  
juley\_hankins@blm.gov  
or Roger Blew  
rblew@stoller.com**

**SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT**

**IDAHO SECTION OFFICERS**

Officers

President, Kim Ragotzkie 525-7290  
Pres. Elect, Bruce Hanson 476-5313  
Past President, Karen Launchbaugh 885-4394  
Secretary, Brad Williams 756-2749  
Treasurer, Neil Rimbey 459-6365

Chapter Officers

Northern Director, Wally Butler 289-5561  
Southern Director, Scott Sayer 677-6641  
Western Director, Meribeth Lomkin 634-7125  
Lyman-Richwine Dir., Robb Mickelsen 374-5422  
UI Range Club Pres. Georjanna Pokorney 885-6536

**We're on the Web  
www.stoller-eser.com  
/idaho\_srm.htm**

There are lots of opportunities for you to become involved in the section activities. Give Kim Ragotzkie, Karen Lanchbaugh, a Director, or a committee chair a call and find out how you can get involved.

**Idaho Section  
Society for Range Management  
P. O. Box 8101  
Boise, Idaho 83707**