**North American Support Group for the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists, February 4, 2021.**

*Participants*

Barry Irving: SRM IYRP Task Force

Jurgen Hoth: Sustainability Advisor

Layne Coppock: Utah State University

Barb Hutchinson: University of Arizona (Rangelands Partnership); ISG

Maryam Niamir-Fuller: IYRP Support Group

Anne Gondor: University of Arizona (Rangelands Partnership)

Jeanne Pfander: University of Arizona Libraries (Rangelands Partnership)

Lauren Svejcar: USDA-ARS (post-doc)

Serkan Ates: Oregon State University (ICARDA/Jordan)

David Borre: Pronatura Noreste, Mexico

Ray Smith: International Grasslands Conference

Arvind Panjabi: Bird Conservancy of the Rockies

Adrian Quero: Grasslands, Mexico

Kelly Hopping: Faculty at Boise State University

Mark Thorne: Range Management Specialist at University of Hawaii

David Toledo: USDA, ARS

Lia Biondo: SRM Director of Policy and Federal Relations

*Agenda – Actions highlighted in yellow*

1. Introductions, Additions, deletions, modifications to Agenda

2. Approval of Minutes from January 7th meeting:

* moved by Jurgen
* seconded by Jeanne
* unanimously approved (following update to include Layne as a participant).

3. Old Business
 Terms of Reference for Regional Support Groups
 Co-Chairs of NASG
 Communications Director(s) for NASG

* Three names put forward as co-chairs: Jurgen Hoth, Layne Coppock, and Barry Irving: moved by Maryam and seconded by Mark. Approved unanimously.
* Communications Group volunteers: Mark Thorne, Elena Dosamantes, David Borre, Lauren Svejcar, Lia Biondo, Barb Hutchinson (also on ISG Communications Group). Will manage the website, communicate with regional groups, additional videos, photos, posters, social media, public relations in general.

Promotional Materials
 2 pager description of IYRP
 1 pager for use in current campaign (Thanks to Kelly Hopping)

 IYRP promotional documents Discussion:

* Suggestions to highlight urbanization, grassland depletion and protected areas
* Opportunity to incorporate regional activities for coordinating the effort
* Maryam suggested contacting Bill Payne to check on political talking points
* Need for 8 ½ x 11 format to keep to one page
* Action: Kelly and Barry to revise the one pager and will send out for review
* Action: Translate into Spanish

NA RISG List Serve for ISG to contact individual NASG members. Discussion:

* The IYRP General Listserv is used for general updates and includes “friends” of the IYRP, not necessarily those who are able to be active in the effort. If you wish to be added to this listserv, please let Barb Hutchinson know.
* Should there be a North American IYRP listserv? Lia has an excel spreadsheet with NA IYRP members to date. Decision to be made after further input.
* Barry to send calendar invite to that list for the next meeting; unsubscribe as needed.
* Layne requested to be added to ISG listserv – Barb to make this change.

Paper on US, Canada, and Mexico for Joint International Grassland Congress/International Rangeland Congress (Oct 2021).  Submitted. Thanks to Maria Fernandez-Gimenez, Anne Gondor, and Elana Dosamantes for constructive edits (acknowledged in paper). Jurgen Hoth added as 3rd author. Action: Barry will send final paper out to group.

4. Focus of immediate activities (all)

Status Report.
 Official letter of support from Canada (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada) submitted

Discussion:

* Jurgen: David has not talked with Elizabeth yet about a letter from Mexico. He wondered if Mongolia would be contacting foreign affairs department.
* Maryam: FAO says not to expect any objections at July FAO Committee meeting nor a specific debate. However, Gregorio wants to have visibility kept high with a focus on foreign affairs offices.
* Jurgen: clarified that letters can be submitted in Spanish (and any UN language). Question – is China an elephant in the room? Vetoes are not allowed, but objections can be made. It would be very bad for objections to come from the US, EU, or China.
* Maryam: China is active and there is hope for their support. Still need to reach out to gain as many country and agency letters of support as possible.
* Jurgen: could countries co-sponsor the Mongolian proposal?
* Maryam: YES, absolutely! There is a protocol for this.

Actions – Continue to solicit letters of support from agencies and organizations as appropriate to each country; due by July 1st. Specifically, NA RISG members can and should advocate within their own countries to solicit letters to support the IYRP campaign.  Advocating to federal governments will likely be most effective if confidentiality and trust is maintained between NGO’s and their national government representatives. Usually letters should be sent to government representatives requesting IYRP support at UNGA from citizens and NGO’s (advocating within country). In some cases, letters may be directed to the representatives of the Government of Mongolia with co-copies as may be appropriate (addresses provided below), but this may not be the case most of the time.

 Letters of support for the Mongolian proposal can be addressed to:

His Excellency Jambaldorj Tserendorj, Ambassador and Permanent Representative, Embassy of Mongolia (rome@mfa.gov.mn)

With copies to:

* Dr Batmunkh Damdindorj, Director of Livestock Department, MoFALI, Mongolia, & Chair of National Support Group of IYRP (batmunkhdamdindorj@yahoo.com)
* Ganbayar Ganbold, Permanent Representation to FAO, Mongolian Embassy in Rome (ganbayar\_2005@yahoo.com)
* Gregorio VelascoGil, AGAG, FAO (gregorio.velascogil@fao.org)
* Maryam Niamir-Fuller, Vice-Chair ISG for the IYRP (mniafull2@gmail.com)

Contact Barb or Maryam for example letters if needed. An excel list of letters of support received to date is also available on the IYRP.info website - <https://iyrp.info/file/646>

Further Discussion for Gaining Letters of Support:

* Layne: need to check with Bill Payne to see status of outreach to USDA
* Lia: SRM will be reaching out to USDA and State Dept. biodiversity section; suggests another meting with them; perhaps also with FWS
* Maryam: suggested also following up with USAID
* Layne: Need to identify stakeholder notes and key portals; i.e. APLU, Farm Bureau, etc. He will send out key questions to the group
* Maryam: will contact State Dept. and work with Lia on setting up a meeting
* Kelly asked about contacting corporations; this might be done at state or regional levels
* Layne suggested identifying key contacts in all the relevant US agencies: State, Interior, EPA, FWS etc.
* David, Adrian, and Jurgen to meet to discuss contacts in Mexico

5. UN Food Systems Summit (see attachment). This is a public for a with background papers posted inviting comments. Europe has taken exception to some of the points in the papers. Barry to forward.

6. Next meeting, Thursday March 4, 1-2:30 Mountain Time