

**Optimization Grant:
Enhancing and Expanding Rangeland Stewardship and Health Community of Practice
On behalf of The Rangelands Partnership
Meeting Notes: March 9-10, 2015**

Attendees: Partners from University of Arizona and Utah State University

I. Project Strategies and Methods: underlined and italicized points need further discussion and decisions by full Partnership

- 1) Focus on users and establish regular and varied interactions with them to ensure their needs are being met; (COMPLETED)
 - a. Focus groups and surveys completed: feedback from clientele and a survey of the Rangelands Partnership informed redesign of rangelands websites
- 2) Capitalize on the resources at the disposal of the RSH CoP, including user contributions, to develop products and address emerging topics relevant to its users; (COMPLETED)
 - a. Feedback from the focus groups and surveys also informed new list of general and “highlighted” (formerly “hot”) topics that will include video introductions (from new NIFA-RREA grant), summaries, links, resources from database
- 3) Engages in sense-making of information through working in online social spaces and participating in webinars and other online events; (PARTIALLY COMPLETED)
 - a. Based on feedback from clientele and new directions in social media, new energy has been put into Rangelands Partnership social media (student at UA funded by George Ruyle). This includes Facebook, Twitter and YouTube primarily, but also news items gained from ScoopIt, plus a Rangelands Partnership Newsletter through the ScoopIt service, as well as LinkedIn and Pinterest.
 - b. To gain full advantage of these outlets, there is a need for more engagement throughout the Partnership; suggestions include:
 - Linking to peer-reviewed or authoritative documents
 - Announcements regarding events, seminars, and workshops
 - Alert system for critical, immediate information from national, regional, or local sources (i.e., disease outbreaks, drought or flooding alerts, food safety notices)
 - Exchange of classifieds types of information (i.e., hay for sale or needed, livestock sales)
 - Opportunities for sharing stories, personal experience, or knowledge and skills
 - Connecting with others (both like-minded and not) in a profession that is at times isolating
 - c. Rather than duplicating efforts the RSH CoP, RangelandsWest, and other partners are working collaboratively to provide timely, accurate, and user-defined information.
 - d. Announcements regarding events, seminars, webinars, tutorials, and workshops: *Ask RP members to let us know what webinars are being planned*

*that we could list on the eXtension Rangelands page (and RP state sites, etc.).
Discuss at RP mtg.*

- e. Classifieds: Suggest this should be at the state level / on the state sites and should point to existing services that provide classifieds for ranchers/farmers, etc. such as KSL in Utah or Nickel in Oregon, etc.*
 - f. Opportunities for sharing stories / Connecting with others (both like-minded and not), etc.: Use social media services, send out questions to prompt personal experiences, stories, etc. Other ideas? Don't limit to high tech solutions. Use print/paper "marketing" techniques (flyers, etc.). Use discussion boards/listservs administered through Rangelands West. Point to SRM tools / services such as their LinkedIn page.*
 - g. Webinars will be conducted using agency experts, land managers, ranchers, and others: One to two monthly is eXtension expectation! Should discuss at RP mtg.*
 - h. Training or help aids for using social media tools.../ Participants will be able to earn online badges...: No plan yet. Not a high priority; suggestions?*
- 4) Explore all options for potential funding while simultaneously remaining flexible, attentive, and responsive to its users; (IN DISCUSSION)
- a. RSH CoP members will investigate options for potential new funding streams such as institutional, industry, and/or non-profit sponsorships as well as increasing the number of submissions for competitive grants. A Task Force on Sustainability will be formed to assess these options and create a plan for implementation. The Task Force will solicit stakeholder advice on these options to ensure RSH CoP remains attentive to their values and needs in the presentation of unbiased information on rangelands issues.
 - Options for potential funding / optimize the CoP to be sustainable to eliminate requirement for eXtension funds: To be discussed at RP
- 5) Truly optimize the CoP to be sustainable to eliminate requirement for eXtension funds to function at an optimized state. (PARTIALLY COMPLETED)
- a) To raise the RSH CoP to a higher level of sustainability and eliminate the requirement for additional eXtension funds to function at an optimized state, efforts will continue to maintain and enhance the connection between the RSH CoP with The Rangelands Partnership and other appropriate organizations. This includes continuing to meet on an annual basis face-to-face and virtually as needed to ensure coordination of efforts and to identify innovations appropriate for enhancing user resources and services. In addition, through attendance and participation at such conferences as those held by SRM, new RSH CoP members will be identified and recruited. Presentations and poster sessions will provide opportunities to inform and promote the RSH CoP to the next generation of rangeland professionals.
 - Attended SRM annual meeting: booth, poster, and special RP session
 - Social media outlets now have both RP and eXtension logos
 - Beth & Jamie have full access to all outlets
 - eXtension Rangelands to include RP logo

- Have Craig redo YouTube header to include eXtension
- Add Careers and Education website to eXtension Rangelands
- Review placement and headings for educational resources on eXtension Rangelands (and from eXtension Rangelands to Rangelands West)
- Write overview summaries including key links for the new general “topics” list that will be included on the “new” RW and that also could link to eXtension Rangelands (Amber to develop bullet points for each topic to be used for creating video introductions – as per new NIFA RREA grant)
- Make sure there are DLIOs for all RSH CoP resources; add other DLIOs from Utah site and others
- Beth discussed her idea for a Rangeland Fact-Checker website (“Controversy on the Range”). Advocacy for science / fact-based “what we know today” response to controversial issues. Would like to have it on eXtension Rangelands. Would fit under RW topic (Grazing on Public Lands)