Arizona Rangelands Team Report – 2014-15

Excerpt from RREA Report: The purpose of the Global Rangelands Knowledge System, developed and managed by The Rangelands Partnership, is to provide open access to research and education resources, practical tools, and multimedia programming on all aspects of sustainable rangeland management through its portal and database [http://globalrangelands.org]. This includes the integration of the Rangelands West portal with its customized sections on trending topics specific to the Western U.S. [http://rangelandswest.org], as well as 19 linked state-affiliated Rangelands sites, see http://globalrangelands.org/Arizona for example. Ten of these state sites are hosted by the Arizona Rangelands technical team. Also incorporated are topical fact sheets and frequently asked questions linked from the partnering eXtension Rangelands website [http://www.extension.org/rangelands].

The Global Rangelands suite of web sites provide the foundation for information storage and retrieval, and open access, to extensive topics informing rangeland management. The database currently numbers 13,728 unique records. During 2014, 469 new records were added and 451 records were edited and updated with revised URLs. Two new collections were also added (Altar Valley and one year of SRM annual meeting presentation and poster abstracts – others to be included in 2015); all editorial work has been completed on digitizing and quality control for incorporating another 493 resources to the Australia Collection of conference proceedings and meeting reports. In addition, a new collection for Southern Africa is in development and direct database harvesting for relevant resources is being tested with the international *Land Portal*.   New files of documents from FAO have also been received and are ready to upload.

A new Social Media strategy is currently being implemented to expand visibility of the Global Rangelands and to engage more participation by users. The Rangelands West Facebook page currently has 203 likes, the Rangelands West Twitter page has 92 followers, and 103 videos are featured on the Rangelands West YouTube channel. The test for using Scoop.It as a news service generated 351 views. In addition, in 2014, 27,120 users accessed Global Rangelands (this number does not include state site usage numbers) and there were 82,475 pageviews in 33,688 sessions.

The focus for 2015 is to implement a redesign of both Global Rangelands and Rangelands West based on feedback from users, partners and focus group sessions conducted in 2014. The launch of the redesign, including migration from Drupal 6 to Drupal 7 and the availability of a mobile version, will be the focus of a coordinated marketing campaign to bring these resources to the attention of a much wider range of audiences.

The Arizona Team and Sustainability Issues

Overarching Issue: Barb is semi-retired and her position was eliminated; and George will be retiring in a few years and he has been responsible for much of the funding that sustains Arizona's current level of support for the Partnership. To address this situation, the Arizona team is pursuing options for succession and funding, i.e. created a Development Plan, have met with Development Officers in both CALS and the UA Libraries, are engaging more faculty and staff to participate in the Partnership, and are seeking to collaborate with the new Vet School, but a Partnership-wide sustainability plan will be important to develop during the next year.

Arizona's Team and Budget– Global Rangelands, Rangelands West, and Arizona Rangelands

Barb: (now part-time and currently paid through grants and funds from George)
- directs/co-directs and participates in technical, content development, and social media teams at Arizona; creates agendas for two general meetings per month; one social media meeting, and 1-2 working sessions (adding metadata records, fixing broken links)
- provides project management oversight for two active Partnership USDA grants;
- started ScoopIt Rangelands Partnership Newsletter; helps supervise student social media coordinator
- prepares reports, as well as conference and meeting presentations;
- initiated marketing and development plans (pursuing an endowment for basic staffing and operational support);
- negotiates collaborative agreements and projects for new content with relevant organizations and publishers throughout the world (FAO, GSSA, ARS, SRM, Mexico, Land Portal, CABI, CGIAR institutes);
- assists with new grant applications;
- assists with plans for The Rangelands Partnership annual meeting
- facilitates cooperation with SRM through the Outreach, Communications, and Website Committee.

Jeanne: (UA Libraries agriculture librarian; so far has been able to be involved as part of her regular work; however, it helps when we can provide a small amount of funds to the Library through grants)
- participates in all meetings and provides input into all aspects of portal development
- arranges for working sessions; edits broken links and adds metadata records
- supervises student data entry support
- actively engages in social media postings and outlets for the Partnership
- conducted with Sheila all focus group sessions for the Optimization grant

Sheila: (Cooperative Extension Social Media Coordinator; so far has been able to be involved as part of her regular work – has to be focused on social media, although she has been able to provide other support when she has time and when grant funds covers some of her time)
- participates in all meetings and provides input into all aspects of portal development
- supervises student managing social media outlets
- created and maintains GR YouTube Channel
- actively engages in social media postings and outlets for the Partnership
- conducted with Jeanne all focus group sessions for the Optimization grant

Kelly: (Cooperative Extension Web Development; paid 1/8th salary by George through RREA funds = approximately $9,000 per year
- creates new Features for all the home pages (as per those identified by the rest of the team) and updates and edits original content sections
- maintains contact with state-hosted sites group and provides training in adding metadata to the GR database and assistance in maintaining state-hosted sites
- manages broken link fixes
- creates metadata records for a variety of new content

Amber and Sarah (George's Technicians he has assigned to participate on Arizona Rangelands team as part of their regular work): original content development for general and highlighted topics; participate in regular meetings, provide suggestions and help make decisions; prepare and give presentations.

Trevor Chilcote (undergraduate student – social media coordinator focusing on daily Facebook and Twitter posts, but also starting Pinterest and working with Sheila on LinkedIn; paid by George at $11/hr at about 15 hours per week).

Web Development Team (Matt, Toby, Craig, Cody): Most of the redesign was paid for through the Optimization grant as well as the HEC grant (for specific pages and sections) and others. The launch date for the redesigned and updated technical infrastructure, including a mobile version, will be launched at the end of May. The Web Development Team is "cost recovery" unit so all of their time must be paid from an outside account. General website maintenance, revisions, and updates = approximately $10,000 per year. Videos have been funded through grants.

Operations: Travel to annual meetings, in particular, was largely originally paid through Barb's indirect cost funds (now used up); some through grants; and some through RREA funds. Approximately $4,000

Notes from Meeting with Jim Dobrowolski on RP Sustainability
SRM Meeting, Sacramento, February 1, 2015

Options for long-term funding or grants for initiatives are minimal within USDA structure.
1) Suggests The Rangelands Partnership consider converting from a WERA to a research W committee when we reapply. This could mean $150,000-$250,000 per year.
   - Discuss with Mike Harrington at main HQ in Ft Collins
   - Could start getting ready for this now as our WERA is up in 2 years
2) Coordinated Ag Projects (CAP) - focus on water; climate change; bio energy; natural resources - $5 million for five years and can re-apply
3) AFRI competitive conference grants (around AFRI areas of interest; need to match up with something close to our interests) - $50,000; 2 years (idea of e-conferences/e-dialogs would be a possibility)
4) They have a new MOU with BARD for cooperative US-Israel projects (water for ag); US is primary with sub-contracts to foreign collaborators.
   - Should consider partnering with IALC (International Arid Lands Consortium focusing on water and range)
   - Put together short overview of international relationships
   - May be extended to India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan
   - Follow-up with Mike McGirr who is heading up FAS; Julia is his support staff
5) Emphasize data management; decision support systems; gaming
6) They are very interested in new apps development – targeted apps that do great things
7) Include 1994s, HSIs will always help in achieving successful grants (a certain amount of AFRI funding has to go to these institutions).
8) Need to document impacts (they are audited by GAO and need impact data)
   - Suggests following a small group of stakeholders
     - Track some of the people who participated in last year's focus groups
     - Read about what Australians are doing with behavior change; how they changed behavior about water