



Readily available: rangelands information and learning tools from the rangelands partnership

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Abstract

Actively collaborating with institutions and organizations in the U.S. and around the world, the Rangelands Partnership is committed to providing reliable science-based information resources through the Rangelands Gateway web portal (<https://rangelandsgateway.org/>). The Gateway brings together rangeland ecology content from the United States, Australia, Canada, Mexico, South Africa, and other countries in addition to organizations such as the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The Partnership's vision is to support the information needs of multiple audiences including range managers, natural resource professionals, Extension specialists, educators, decision-makers, and students as well as to contribute to improving the health and sustainability of rangelands and the communities of people who depend on them by providing credible and useful information.

Introduction

The Rangelands Partnership (RP) is a unique collaboration, spanning several decades between range scientists, information technicians, and librarians. This interdisciplinary team of experts has created the Rangelands Gateway (RG) website which provides a wide variety of freely available information resources and tools, including articles, technical reports, videos, global resources, and more. The website brings together information on key topics such as large landscape conservation, human and economic dimensions of rangelands and maintaining and improving rangelands. The poster that accompanies this paper focuses particularly on foundational educational tools and resources such as glossaries and videos for anyone including those new to the concepts of rangeland ecology and management. There are quality materials available on RG for students, researchers, public and private land managers, and educators.

Methods

The multi-disciplinary group of range scientists, librarians and IT specialists in the RP accomplishes the work through regularly scheduled Zoom meetings, a RP listserv (an email group), the RP Newsletter and

an annual RP conference that rotates between RP member states with both in-person and Zoom attendance options.

Individual members are encouraged to provide troubleshooting input on the RG website. For example, in August 2023 a librarian noticed the search interface wasn't providing consistent and complete results. That started a journey of working with the technological specialist team at the University of Arizona, followed by testing done by librarians and range scientists, further modifications by the technical specialists, resulting in an improved search experience on the RG.

A particularly valuable and impactful method for accomplishing our goal of providing reliable science-based information resources through the RG has been the establishment of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Society for Range Management (SRM), Elsevier, the University of Arizona (UA) Libraries, the UA College of Agriculture, Life & Environmental Sciences. The MOA allows the RP to provide open access to articles published in the Society of Range Management's (SRM) major publications, *Rangeland Ecology and Management* (REM) and *Rangelands* magazine. Full issues of REM and its predecessor *Journal of Range Management* are available from volume 1 (1948) up to five years from the present year. SRM's *Rangelands* issues are available from volume 1 (1979) up to two years from the present year. These two publications bring a wealth of peer-reviewed articles available through the RG.

In addition, throughout the existence of the Rangelands Partnership, RP members have actively pursued and received grant funding. This has allowed the Partnership to create and deliver much needed educational resources for multiple audiences through diverse platforms including videos, digital apps and decision-making tools, providing access to a complete reference website.

Results

The Rangelands Gateway (<https://rangelandsgateway.org/>) contains a Library of more than 23,612 records of articles, conference proceedings, reports, along with videos, maps and educational and decision support tools. It also includes backfiles (archived articles) of the Society for Range Management (SRM) journals, publications from the Australian Rangeland Society and the Grasslands Society of Southern Africa, and content from other organizations and about other countries.

More than 70 videos on various rangeland topics can be found on the YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/GlobalRangelands>) highlighted on the Tools page in addition to distance education courses, career information and other resources. Visit the Topics section to view content such as Rangelands in the World, Large Landscape Conservation and others.

The Global section on the Gateway highlights organizations and initiatives around the world that the Partnership is engaged with, including the 2026 International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) and regional IYRP groups share plans and resources for outreach and education in advance of 2026. Visit the Rangelands Gateway web portal to learn more about how the Rangelands Partnership is "working together for our global rangelands future" by increasing access to valuable information resources through technology, information systems and communication. These materials are open access and freely available to the world.

Conclusions

There are challenges faced by RP members. For example, finding time to do volunteer/service Partnership work such as taking leadership positions in the RP Executive Committee, keeping up with fixing errors in

RG records, keeping website pages refreshed and up-to-date and other important RP work when responsibilities of paying jobs take priority, is a significant and ongoing challenge.

In spite of these challenges, the RP remains committed to the vision statement: “A multi-disciplinary collaboration that creates and furnishes authoritative, reliable, and vetted rangeland ecology content for range managers, natural resource professionals, Extension educators, decision-makers, and students to support the health and sustainability of rangelands and the communities of people who depend on them.”

The ongoing success of the Rangelands Partnership can be attributed to the powerful synergy of the collaboration of range scientists, librarians, and technological specialists. The combination of these professionals diligently working together has resulted in continued efforts towards web-based sharing of quality and scientifically valid rangelands information and learning tools.

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