Needlegrass Notes

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Society for Range Management
California-Pacific Section

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President's Message

Two important events are coming soon that should be on your calendar. First, save the date for the CalPac fall meeting. The meeting date is Novembers 3-4 in San Luis Obispo. Mindy Nicoletti has lined up a tour of the Cal Poly Bull Test Center. Also plan on the banquet November 3rd, the silent auction, and all member business meeting. The agenda and registration can be found on the CalPac website.

Second, be ready for the National SRM annual meeting in Wichita, Kansas. The theme is "Our Enduring Grasslands." The meeting starts on February 14th, 2027. Mark your calendar to reserve a room right away as the special meeting rate will no longer apply after January 22nd. Orchid Events is being used to help book a room. Clicking the following link is your one-stop-shop for getting a hotel room.

Your 2026 Committee Chairs & Members

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President's Message - Continued

Thank you all for your membership and input into the section. I look forward to seeing you on November 3rd and 4th in San Luis Obispo.

Josh Davy

2027 Officer Candidates

President-Elect

Theresa Becchetti

I would be honored to serve the Cal-Pac membership as president-elect. I have been active on the Board for over twenty years, as a Board member, committee chair and secretary. At the parent society level, I have presented at annual meetings over the years, member of the GLC Committee, co-Chair of the High School Youth Forum Task Force, member of the 0454 Task Force, participated in planning the 2015 and the 2026 Annual Meetings and am Chair-Elect for the Policy and Public Affairs Committee. Now that my kids are older, I am ready to step up as President Elect.

I have worked for the University of California Cooperative Extension for 27 years; first at UC Davis, under Dr. Ken Tate and Dr. Mel George where I obtained my Master's degree, and for the past 24 years, as the Livestock and Natural Resource Advisor in Stanislaus and San Joaquin Counties. I am a Certified Rangeland Manager and graduate of Class 35 of Ag Leadership. Growing up on a farm in Missouri, the term "rangelands" wasn't used, it was pasture. Now I enjoy learning from ranchers and helping them reach their goals. I am passionate about teaching our youth about rangelands (and encouraging careers on rangelands!).

Cal-Pac brings a diverse group of people together who share a love of rangelands. If elected, I would strive to maintain the

2027 Officer Candidates

Theresa Becchetti - Continued

rich history while continuing to shepherd Cal-Pac into the future. I am committed to ensuring that Cal-Pac continues to be a welcoming, active, and relevant organization that serves its members and promotes the stewardship of rangelands throughout California.

Board of Directors

Jill Fick-Beaton

It would be an honor to receive your vote to serve as a Board Member of the California-Pacific Section of the Society of Range Management. Over the years, I have worn many hats for Cal-Pac but never a Board Member! Not having a current active role in the section or national organization is not something I am accustomed to, and I am looking for a place that I can be helpful.

I have experience at both the national and sectional levels and am passionate about education, outreach, and expanding the awareness of the importance of range management and range managers. I love to host meetings and show people the Hawaiian rangelands as well as attend meetings that expand my knowledge and awareness of rangeland challenges. My educational history includes a BS in Agriculture from the University of Hawaii, a Master's in Natural Resources with emphasis on Range Ecology with a certificate in Water Resource Management from Colorado State University. I've worked with USDA NRCS since 2011 and am currently serving as Pacific Islands Area State Range Specialist. We own and operate a small family seedstock Red Angus operation on the Big Island of Hawaii. I raise quarter horses, sheep, and fragrant orchids on the side. Love my dogs and fishing time, you'll find me on the river in July!

Billy Freeman

It would be an honor to serve on the Cal-Pac SRM Board of Directors to continue supporting my profession and the stewardship of rangelands. I deeply value SRM's commitment to furthering awareness of rangelands and their benefits to society.

I have served as Rangeland Program Manager for Sierra Foothill Conservancy (SFC) since 2011, which involves implementing grazing and monitoring plans on SFC's conservation preserves. I oversee grazing leases on SFC properties and selected conservation easements, draft management plans and conduct rangeland outreach as part of my role as well. Lastly, I manage the SFC cattle enterprise which is a custom grazing operation that operates on SFC preserved land in Fresno, Madera, and Mariposa counties.

2027 Officer Candidates - Continued

Board of Directors

Billy Freeman - Continued

I formerly worked in the cattle business in California, Montana and Oregon before coming to SFC. Since then, my career has focused on rangeland management, conservation and stewardship. I am a Certified Rangeland Manager as well as a Certified Professional in Rangeland Management through SRM. I also believe that promotion of rangeland health, conservation and scientific research are essential parts of SRM's mission. I'm excited for the opportunity to serve the membership.

Roxanne Hulme Foss

Thank you for considering voting for me as a board member for the Cal-Pac Section of the Society for Range Management. I have a deep appreciation for all the hard work the Cal-Pac Section members have put into our local and national meetings and outreach activities. My initial Section involvement began after completing my Masters in Range Management at UC Berkeley when I served a term as a board member in 2018. Since my board tenure, I have gained my CRM license, presented on my recent applied fire research at multiple range-related meetings, and have participated in the Section awards committee.

I come to range management with the perspective of a land manager and biologist, bringing over 15 years of experience as a consultant (2009-2014; 2018-present), a research technician in the UC Berkeley Range Ecology Lab (2014-2016); a Range Management Specialist at Point Reyes National Seashore (2016-2018), an intern with the Wildland Vegetation department of East Bay Regional Park District (2014, 2015), and a biological technician reviewing stock use at Yosemite National Park (2011, 2012). All of my work occurs at the intersection of biological resources, range management, and public and/or private interests. I have a deep respect for all the parties involved in managing our working landscapes and seek to capture the concerns and goals of each group in creating adaptive management plans and other documents that are realistic and useful.

As a board member for Cal-Pac, I would look forward to collaborating with board members and members at large in creating topical meetings, advancing participation in the CRM program, and enhancing partnerships with related organizations.

2027 Officer Candidates - Continued

Board of Directors

Tracy Schohr

Tracy Schohr has been actively involved with the California-Pacific Section of the Society for Range Management (Cal-Pac SRM) for 20 years, beginning with her work at the California Cattlemen's Association and the California Rangeland Conservation Coalition. She has hosted field tours, coordinated meetings and educational programs with Cal-Pac. Tracy currently chairs the Cal-Pac Audit Committee, is a Certified Professional in Rangeland Management (#126), member of the SRM Policy and Public Affairs Committee, and coordinated a full-day symposium at the 2026 Society for Range Management Annual Meeting hosted by Cal-Pac in Monterey, California.

Professionally, Tracy Schohr is the University of California Cooperative Extension Livestock and Natural Resources Advisor serving Plumas, Sierra, and Butte Counties. She provides technical assistance to ranchers, land managers, and agencies on livestock production and natural resource management. Her research and extension program focuses on grazing management, irrigated pasture, invasive species, wildfire preparedness and recovery, agricultural business management, and ranching with predators.

In addition to her extension role, Tracy is a managing partner of her family's multi-generational ranch, which produces rice, walnuts, and commercial cattle. Tracy holds a Master of Science degree in Horticulture and Agronomy from the University of California, Davis, and a Bachelor of Science degree from California State University, Chico. She is also a graduate of Class 39 of the California Agricultural Leadership Program.

Certified Range Manager Renewals

Hi Fellow CRMs! This is a reminder to pay the renewal fee for your CRM license when you receive your renewal letter in the mail. Licenses renew every two years. Also, if you have moved or changed jobs, please update your contact information with Deniele Casarubbia (deniele.casarubbia@bof.ca.gov or 916-653-8031) at the Board of Forestry. You can also reach out to Dan Stapleton at dan.stapleton@bof.ca.gov to update your contact information. We recently had 12 CRMs who were in danger of having their licenses revoked because they did not pay their renewal fees.

Please feel free to reach out to me (deviirao@ucanr.edu or 707-583-9706) if you have any questions. Thank you!
Devii Rao, Chair, CRM Panel

Cal-Pac Fall Meeting and Tour - Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

November 3 and 4, 2026 at the Escuela Ranch, Bull Test and Conference Facility

Tuesday, November 3rd, 12:30 - 7:00 pm

·Moderator - Josh Davy UC Extension, Cal-Pac President

- 10:00 – 12:00 Cal Pac Board Meeting
- 12:30 – 1:30 pm Lunch & Social Hour: Catch up over Sandwiches

Business Meeting

- 1:30 – 2:00 pm Opening pathways into rangelands for students and young professionals
- 2:00 – 2:30 pm Grazing Camp SLO – Eric Czaja
- 2:30 – 2:40 pm Break
- 2:40 – 3:00 pm Coastal San Luis RCD Regional Rangeland Conservation Program
- 3:00 – 3:30 pm CRCC – California Grazing Network
- 3:30 – 4:00 pm Perspectives from Professional Women in Rangeland Management Panel
- 4:00 – 5:00 pm Social mixer, bull test facility tour, poster session, silent auction (bring items to support students from 3 range programs)

BBQ Dinner Provided by Cal Poly Young Cattlemen's Association

- 5:30 pm Silent Auction closes – cash out at the end of the meeting
- 5:30 – 5:50 pm Welcome
- 5:50 – 6:25 pm Cal Poly's Rangeland Ecology & Management Program
- 6:25 – 6:30 Auction of the Bone (Supports students of 3 schools to compete at SRM)
- 6:30 – 7:00 pm: Cal Poly Grazing Livestock and Range Management
- 7:00 pm – Pay for auction items and enjoy the evening

Wednesday, November 4th, 8:30 am - 12:30 pm

·Moderator - Marc Horney, Cal Poly

- 8:30 am Welcome Back! Coffee and light continental breakfast
- 8:45 – 9:30 am Demonstration: Landscape Digitization Demonstration
- 9:30 – 10:30 am Tour #1: Peak Production project
- 11am – 12:00 Tour #2: Ranch road and culvert upgrades, Serrano Ranch
- 12:00 – 12:30 pm Event wrap-up

REGISTER HERE!

Awards - Excellence in Range Management (ERM)

Ponoholo Ranch Ltd

Ponoholo Ranch Ltd encompasses 11,000 acres on the northwestern side of the island of Hawaii. Under the management of Pono Von Holt, the intensive grazing operation demonstrates excellent range management, relying on management principles to effectively carry their operation through the ups and downs of grass-based livestock production.

The mission of the Ponoholo Ranch perpetuates the Paniolo values of responsible environmental stewardship and agriculturally productive lands for the present and future use by its families and communities. The success of the Ponoholo Ranch is supported by creating a unified work environment and enhancing natural resources through stewardship and management.

Ponoholo Ranch and fourth-generation rancher Pono Von Holt do not limit their service to their community and neighbors; they also contribute broadly to Hawaii's cattle industry and land stewardship. Pono has been a driving force in the local industry organizations, serving numerous positions and committees for Hawaii Cattlemen's Association, Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Hawaii Grazing Land Coalition, as well as serving as chair of the Cow/Calf Council for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and directorship of CattleFax. Pono serves as the chair of Mauna Kea Soil and Water Conservation District and has served on the Board of the North Hawaii Community Hospital, Hawaii Preparatory Academy as well as participates in the Country Natural Beef program. He has been a founding member of the Hawaii Cattle Producers Cooperative Association as well as the Hawaii Rangeland Stewardship Foundation, whose mission is to perpetuate sound stewardship of Hawaii's rangelands through advocacy and education. Ponoholo Ranch has led the push for land stewardship by successfully demonstrating intensive systems and their effectiveness. Pono Von Holt has committed himself to sharing his knowledge and support through his involvement with the various organizations that are part of the cattle and land management industries.

Awards - Excellence in Range Management (ERM) - Continued

Ponoholo Ranch Ltd

Pono Von Holt's commitment to long-term stewardship is succinctly expressed through his own words: "There is tremendous outside pressure to do something else with this land, like developing it..." "This ranch has been in my family for 97 years. I'm the second generation. The generation is now in charge. We don't want to do anything else with it."

We congratulate Pono Von Holt and the Ponoholo Ranch for receiving the well deserved 2026 Excellence in Rangeland Management Award.

Call for Nominations for 2027 Awards!

In the range world, our impacts are rarely seen outside our community let alone celebrated. Let's change that! Nominate a colleague, rancher, land steward, extension educator, someone who is working to make our rangelands better today and for tomorrow.

Excellence in Range Management - ERM: Considers a nominee's stewardship of rangeland as demonstrated by sustainable productivity of natural forage, livestock, timber, wildlife habitat, water quality, protection of riparian habitats, production of other commodities, and aesthetic values

Range Manager of the Year - RMOY: Recognition as Range Manager of the Year is generally intended for Section members who have been active in Society affairs at local, state, or national levels, but anyone who has made a substantial contribution to range management, regardless of affiliation, is eligible.

NOMINATIONS DEADLINE SEPTEMBER 1st!

Contact your Awards Chair from your SRM section for applications and more information.

CalPac Members Contact: Mikie McDonnell for information, applications and submissions.
Email: ontherangemm@gmail.com

Range & Mustang Camp Update

Thank you to all who participated in the 2026 California Range and Mustang Camp August 6-8, held at Blue Lake Camp in Lassen County. We had 25 youth, ages 9-16, attend camp from six counties in California along with youth from Nevada and Utah. Mustang Camp teaches youth different aspects of rangeland management; how wild horses and burros fit into public land multiple use management; natural resources career opportunities; along with outdoor fun and friendships.

The camp began with learning about wild horses and wildlife on western rangelands using the Mustang Camp curriculum. There was a career rotation led by Regional Extension Advisors teaching hands-on sessions about soil science, forestry, entomology, orienteering, thank you note writing and water quality. One youth commented that after learning about how cool managing trees is, they are thinking about becoming a forester. Youth connected with the diverse extension leaders teaching the sessions and many saw themselves in those careers for the first time.

The night finished off with youth getting “Stop the Bleed” certified and watching a movie under the stars. One of the youth commented that they thought they might throw up thinking about all the blood but they left with confidence knowing what to do in an emergency.

On day two, campers traveled to the Bureau of Land Management Litchfield Wild Horse Corrals. Wild Horse Managers from the BLM talked about how they gather horses off the range and prepare them for private placement. We also talked about job opportunities in the BLM working with horses. Next we went out on the Twin Peaks Herd Management Area to learn more about range management, toured a recent fire, and looked for horses. We finished off the day with swimming, s’mores, and astronomy. As the group laid on the deck looking at the stars, a shooting star streamed through the sky. The eruption of excitement was priceless.

Day three took the youth out to Parsnip Springs where they were welcomed by a band of sheep utilizing rangelands. Youth learned how to pack fish to high alpine lakes with the Back Country Horsemen and practiced scenarios on wild horse management and how to conduct population surveys.

Range & Mustang Camp Update - Continued

Youth participated in a before and after survey on range management and wild horse knowledge. We also completed an informal debrief about their favorite parts of camp and what we should do differently next year. By and large, youth wished they could stay at camp 2-3 days longer and can't wait to come back next year. They learned new things while also making new friends.

Range & Mustang Camp is tentatively planned for Aug 5-7, 2027. Please spread the word with your local students!

To learn more about Mustang Camp curriculum and future camps visit our website and follow us on Facebook at Devils Garden Research and Education.

2027 Annual Meeting & Training

Our Enduring Grasslands

Wichita, Kansas; February 14-18, 2027

Grasslands have been here longer than human history and withstood the test of time throughout generations of change and the stewards who cared for them. Even through the exponential changes of today, Grasslands endure.

Join us in Wichita, Kansas, as the Society for Range Management rallies around Our Enduring Grasslands—a theme rooted in the full weight of "endure." Our grasslands have outlasted human history, generations of stewards, and enjoy a deep Western heritage of living and working on the land, yet they also endure conversion, woody encroachment, invasive species, and relentless land-use change. This Annual Meeting & Training puts that story front and center, showcasing the people and practices that are keeping rangelands productive, resilient, and ready for the next generation.

Visit the Annual Meeting webpage for registration, hotel, and travel recommendations.

Needlegrass Notes Content Requests & Submittals

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Newsletter Articles

All contributions to Needlegrass Notes are welcome! Please submit your articles and news items to: Katie Brown at katie@holisticenergysolutions.llc

Keep in Touch

Moved? Changed jobs? Or have a new email address? Don't forget to update your membership information on the National SRM website and the California-Pacific Section by sending an email to Genoa Starrs genoastarrs@gmail.com. We will correct your email address on our email listserv so that you stay up to date on the latest news and happenings in the Section.

Remember to VOTE in the Cal-Pac Officer Elections!

Electronic ballots were sent out on October 5th .