

Rangeland Resources of North America



Rangelands affect us all. They comprise about 40% of the landmass of the United States and a significant portion of the grazing area of Western Canada and Mexico providing valuable grazing lands for livestock and wildlife. Rangelands, also found throughout the world, serve as a source of high quality water, clean air and open spaces and benefit people as a setting for recreation and economic means for agriculture, mining and communities.

What are rangelands?

Rangelands are a type of land on which the natural vegetation is dominated by grasses, forbs and shrubs and the land is managed as a natural ecosystem.

In North America, rangelands include the grasslands of the Great Plains stretching from the midwestern United States to Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta in Canada as well as wetlands throughout North America. Other examples of rangelands would include the savannas in Texas and Florida, shrublands throughout the western United States, the Alaska and northern Canada tundra, Mexico's deserts, and alpine meadows in mountain ranges throughout the continent.

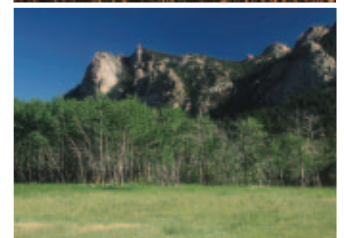
While rangelands occur in every region of the continent, they are the dominant type of land in the arid and semi-arid regions. For instance, nearly 80% of the lands of the West are classified as rangelands whereas only 7% of some areas near the East Coast are classified as rangelands.

What goods and services are derived from rangelands?

Rangelands serve multiple purposes as:

- a habitat for a wide array of game and non-game animal species;
- a habitat for a diverse and wide array of native plant species;
- a source of high quality water, clean air and open spaces;
- a setting for recreational hiking, camping, fishing, hunting and nature experiences;
- the foundation for low-input, fully renewable food and fiber production systems of grazing industries.

Because of the diversity of goods and services derived from rangelands, their management and health are linked closely to the economic well being of many communities.



Where do I get more information about North American rangeland resources?

The Society for Range Management (SRM) is a professional and scientific organization whose members are concerned with studying, conserving, managing and sustaining the varied resources of rangelands. The society offers a wide variety of research and educational materials on the topic of rangelands and the practice of rangeland management.



Society for Range Management - 10030 W 27th Ave - Wheat Ridge, CO 80215-6601
(303) 986-3309 - info@rangelands.org - www.rangelands.org

The Society for Range Management

The voice for science-based rangeland conservation

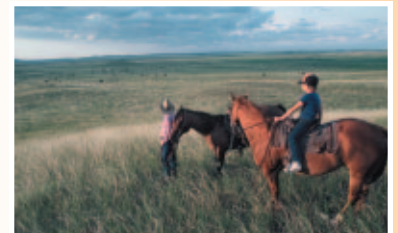
The Society for Range Management (SRM) is the professional society representing members involved in numerous aspects of rangeland management. This specialized community comprised of individuals with a mutual passion for rangelands offers a multitude of resources and education to advance the skills and value of its members and rangelands.

SRM and its members strive to protect and enhance the world's rangelands to ensure that the resources and benefits that this valuable land provides are sustained.

As an open society comprised of professionals with varied skills and interests, members include rangeland scientists, ranchers, public land managers, biologists, soil scientists, ecologists, educators, economists and others involved in rangeland conservation.

SRM members benefit from:

- Continuing Education and Networking – Numerous conferences and meetings
- Training – Learning opportunities for all levels and aspects of range management
- Timely Information – Industry, trend, research and management techniques through SRM's publications and resources
- Network of Professionals – Access to rangeland professionals in a variety of disciplines through chapters, meetings, society involvement and online
- Certification – Rangeland certification programs recognized by the industry and valuable to professional advancement
- Policy and Issue Representation – Extensive government relations and leadership on issues and policies important to rangelands based on science-based research



All photos courtesy
of USDA NRCS



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