

STEVE NELLE-RECIPIENT OF OCRM AWARD



The Texas Section, Society for Range Management presented its most prestigious award to Steve Nelle at its annual meeting in Lubbock on October 11, 2007. Each year the section awards the Outstanding Contribution to Rangeland Management to the member(s) that it feels has made the most significant and noteworthy contributions to the rangeland profession.

Steve is presently serving as Zone Biologist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in San Angelo. His career spans some 28 years as a range conservationist, district conservationist and wildlife biologist. Steve has served five major land resource areas including the Rio Grande Plains, Edwards Plateau, Central Basin, Texas Claypan and the Trans-Pecos.

As a range conservationist and wildlife biologist, Steve has been adamant that range and wildlife management begins with proper stocking rates of both domestic animals and wild populations. Using his exemplary skills as a communicator, Steve has been instrumental in getting stocking rates reduced on many ranches by as much as 50%. In

addition, several thousand acres of planned grazing systems have been implemented to improve rangeland mineral, energy, and water cycles through Steve's work with individual ranchers.

Steve is a life member of the Society for Range Management and has served as a director of the Texas Section in 1990-91, and 1998-2000. He also served as co-editor of *Grassroots* for three years during which time the newsletter received two national awards for Best Newsletter and for which he was awarded the Section's Fellow Award in 1995. Steve has been responsible for numerous range and wildlife tours and field days; he has presented keynote papers at Section annual meetings, SRM national meetings and Range and Wildlife Symposiums. Steve has also served as chair person and member of many Texas Section committees including Activities, ORM, I&E, Photo Contest, OCRM, Public Affairs, Publication Award, and Youth Activities. Steve is also active as a member of the Texas Chapter The Wildlife Society, Native Plant Society, West Texas Deer Study Group, Texas Wildlife Association, and Buckskin and Bobwhite Brigades.

Steve was the sole author of the NRCS publication The Use and Management of Browse in the Edwards Plateau of Texas. This booklet with excellent color photographs discusses all aspects of browse management, preferences, desirability and the implications of good and poor management. The publication is widely used by ranchers, wildlife biologists, and university professors as an instructional tool. For the last several years, Steve has written and distributed *Riparian Notes* on a bi-monthly basis. This fact sheet has state-wide distribution to environmental groups, river authorities, state and federal agencies, and private individuals.

Steve and his wife Marnie live in San Angelo where they are actively involved in church activities and where Marnie volunteers as a tutor to third grade students. They have three children and two grand-children.

Steve Nelle is widely recognized by the ranching community, academia, and professionals in the range and wildlife community as a consummate professional and outstanding conservationist. In the final analysis, Steve's heart is for the land, his tracks are on the land, and the impact of his work will be reflected in the land for many, many years. The Texas Section, Society for Range Management is proud to recognize Steve Nelle for his Outstanding Contribution to Range Management.