



**Message from the President**

Dear Young Professionals,

As a relative new-comer to a professional career, I often struggle with balancing the needs of family, career, professional involvement, and fun. Many times I have wondered if my participation in SRM should be a stable commitment or just to participate on an as-needed basis. To rationalize spending less time on SRM I often argued that, "When I was in school I used the SRM as a networking opportunity but now that I am in a stable career I don't need to network." However, when I really think about it, I realize just how much I have relied on the Society to help me succeed both in and out of school.

Nothing is certain in this day and age. Budget cutbacks, roller-coaster economies, and the demographics of our industry make change inevitable. Whether you work for a government agency or private industry, NO job is 100% secure. Just this year I was managing a ranch in Montana. It was a great job and I had no thoughts of leaving. But one day the owners decided to sell-out because of the failing economy. All at once I was in the job market and had no idea what to do next.

However, all it took was one call and I had a new career laid out in front of me. No interview, no resume, all I had to do was to say "Yes" and move. This opportunity was made possible because of my involvement with SRM. I had met my current boss once eight years ago and never spoke to him again. I was, however, highly recommended to him from another person with whom I had maintained contact through SRM activities. Career networking cannot be separated from personal networking and it is a continual process. Meeting someone once isn't good enough; continual contact, especially in a professional setting, is needed to gain meaningful relationships, and the Society provides the perfect venue.

Partaking in career development opportunities within your own organization is a good way to keep abreast of the inner working of your company and directly gain pertinent knowledge. However, this won't give you any advantage over your coworkers. If you want to excel in your career and open doors for advancement, then you need to have some sort of an advantage.

The Society is a community of like-minded individuals working in all parts

of the world. Having the ability to draw from the knowledge and experience of SRM members can provide the advantage you need by exposing you to new concepts and ideas. Posters, presentations, conversations in the hallways, and stories told around a table at the bar are all ways that you can gain that knowledge advantage - and it's all available at SRM meetings.

I was working with a rancher trying to implement a new grazing strategy. I was having a hard time coming up with evidence to support my ideas and he wanted real life examples not scientific studies. One night at an SRM meeting, I was telling a friend about my dilemma when a gal next to me interrupted and said she knew just the guy I needed to talk to. She introduced me to the researcher who had done most of the studies I was using as a basis for my plan. The researcher spent hours helping me clear up the concepts and then introduced me to three ranchers using similar management plans. By the end of that meeting I was able to build a strong plan that included on-the-ground examples, and I gained access to personal contacts that helped me to influence on-the-ground management.

These are only a couple of examples I have where my involvement in SRM has opened new doors. Being involved is a commitment and it takes time, but for me and others, it is worth the effort. So come to Albuquerque, go to your local section meetings, or give me a call. Whatever it takes please make SRM a part of your career.

And while you're at it, make sure that you visit with other young professionals who may have struggled with similar stresses in their careers. Learn how others have balanced their schedules and prioritized their time so they can remain involved and stay abreast of the industry as they progress with their careers.

I promise you that your involvement in SRM will help you to be the best dang (fill in your own blank) that you can be!

Sincerely,  
*Bob Wesley*

P.S my number is 406-696-7787. *Call me anytime!*



**YPC Mission**

*Develop a continuum which maintains/improves information exchange and experience sharing among generations within SRM to promote strength in leadership, education, research, and stewardship of rangelands and associated resources.*

**YPC Activities**

- **YPC Elections:**
- \* The positions of YPC **President-Elect, Treasurer, and Recorder** are now **Open for nominations**—Refer to the YPC Handbook on the SRM/YPC website for full position descriptions: <http://www.rangelands.org/ypc!!>
- \* Please hurry and **send your nominations** to Summer at [summer\\_schulz@blm.gov](mailto:summer_schulz@blm.gov) or [summerpoole@hotmail.com](mailto:summerpoole@hotmail.com)
- **YPC Handbook: It's Finalized—Thanks for everyone's hard work!!!!**
- **YPC Webpage:**
- \* Check out the YPC webpages for officer contact information, handbook, meeting minutes, newsletters, and more. Please let any or all of the officers know if you have any other great ideas for inclusion on the site!
- **2009 SRM Meeting @ Albuquerque, NM:**
- \* **YPC Mixer — Monday, Feb. 9, 2009 at 7:00 - 10:00 pm:** The mixer is tentatively scheduled to be held at Toscano's Grill.
- \* **YPC Business Mtg — Tuesday, Feb. 10, 2009 at 10:00 - 11:00 am:** This meeting is geared to give a brief description of what the YPC does and encourage general discussion about future activities. This event will offer a very informal setting for anyone to attend who is interested in YPC.
- \* **YPC Luncheon — Tuesday, Feb. 10, 2009 at 11:30 to 12:30pm:** The luncheon will offer a social time to meet other SRM members and hear brief addresses and updates by the YPC officers. This meal will be listed as an item to rsvp for on your registration packet.
- \* **YPC Panel Discussion — Tuesday, Feb. 10, 2009 at 12:30 to 1:30pm:** In order to include YPC members with other lunch plans, our main event will follow the luncheon. The panel discussion will focus on Mentoring & Relationships: What mentoring can mean to you, what to look for, and how to develop them. If there is a particular person you would really like to see on the panel, please send your suggestions to Jill Burkhardt at [jill.burkhardt@gov.ab.ca](mailto:jill.burkhardt@gov.ab.ca).

**Questions or Comments?**

Please e-mail us at:

[summer\\_schulz@blm.gov](mailto:summer_schulz@blm.gov)

or call 307-367-5346

**Technology for the Field, by Jake Powell, US Forest Service Rangeland Management Specialist**

Over the last few years I have seen more and more government range job announcements emphasizing preference for GPS/GIS or digital field sampling experience. During this time I have talked to many resource professionals who are concerned that the emphasis on these technologies will lead to personnel spending less time in the field. New field technologies are increasing our efficiency, with the adoption of emerging technologies I believe we will not only keep increasing efficiency but increase our ability to work in the field.

In my current job, I use a handheld GPS unit that has Windows Mobile programs. This light-weight, compact unit allows me to record sub-meter locations; and data transfer only takes a short time to download and process in the office. However, because the Windows Mobile programs do not have the full functionality of standard Windows programs, I still hand write my monitoring and field notes. I also carry a digital camera which allows for quick and easy photo downloads directly to my computer where I may digitally add comments and notes.

*GPS and horses - an integration of technologies.*



While many range specialists I talk to have apprehensions about this technology, they have all seen beneficial uses such as creating a GIS habitat model or a map exponentially faster than when we had to hand draw them. The major concern about this technology boom is the large amount of office time required to download, re-type, or consolidate the digital field data. This is a valid concern that is answered when we explore where some of this technology has come from and where it is going.

The first time I used, or ever saw, a GPS unit was twelve years ago. It was the size of a medium backpack and weighed 35 pounds. You had to stand on each point for several minutes to get an accurate reading. To download and process the information, you needed a week's worth of training and a Department of Defense clearance. Also, when you recorded observation or monitoring data in the field, it was hand written and then taken back to the office to be manually inputted into the computer. Field pictures had to be sent in to be developed and then they too had to be mounted on sheets and any notes then hand written or typed below.

The field technology we are using now is more applicable and user friendly than what we used to have, but it is still not what is needed to increase field time or work efficiency. I still spend the same amount of time in the office, but the reasons have changed. It used to be because it took a long time to process field data, but now it's because there is an increase planning responsibilities. This is why we need technology that allows us to do more applications while in the field, with more efficiency. Good News - there is technology available that would allow field personnel to do these things.

The emerging technology that has the greatest benefits in the field is the field computer. An example is Panasonic's Toughbook U1. It has a full keyboard, touch screen, fully functional Microsoft Windows, and is Bluetooth capable. These programs allow you to load any applications, documents, or pictures that you may need while in the field. This field computer is designed for the field person, with light weight, small size, rugged casing, and circuits made for rough handling. There are several other companies with field computers and data loggers that incorporate many of these attributes.

Using digital monitoring forms in the same format as what is archived in the office is possible when using a field computer with fully functional programs. Many monitoring protocols are available in digital form and others are being developed all the time. These can be designed with field friendly applications, such as a drop down menus of plants, etc. Then, these digital forms can be loaded onto field computers. This cuts out the need to re-write and process handwritten field notes.

The Bluetooth wireless protocol is also revolutionizing the way we could save time with technology. GPS can be wirelessly linked to your field computer. A GIS program could be loaded and the GPS data can be processed right in the field as it is collected. Another cool innovation is Bluetooth linked cameras. Pictures can be immediately downloaded and sorted on a field computer as they are taken.

It is also possible to satellite link your field computer to a network or the internet right from wherever you are in the field. This technology is only marginally affordable or adequately developed at this time. But its future application for communicating and working from the field, without returning to the office, is very promising. Another existing technology that could be adapted to the field is voice typing. A computer records your spoken words in type. Not having to type field notes could save a lot of time.

The available and emerging technology makes it possible to reduce data processing and increase the time in the field. All we need is some folks to integrate current technologies into our day to day activities. I, for one, am looking forward to being in the field more and the office less.

**Don't forget to send in your officer nominations: President-Elect, Treasurer, and Recorder!!!!**

**President-Elect:** Assists and supports the President as necessary; serves as the Planning Committee Chairperson and liaison for the organization of YPC events associated with SRM annual meetings; and fills-in for the President as needed (meetings, etc). The office is held for 1 year and turns into the President the following year.

**Treasurer:** Responsible for all financial aspects of YPC; includes working with the Planning Committee for annual meetings; serves as Financial Committee Chairperson; and is responsible for any fund-raising and grant writing needs of the YPC. There is no set term limit for Treasurer.

**Recorder:** Responsible for recording and publishing YPC meeting minutes, and maintaining good communication between the parent YPC and the section YPC's and the parent society; assists the different organizational committees within YPC in organizing volunteers when needed; all recorders of the individual section YPC's will submit reports to the parent YPC Recorder; serves as the YPC editor for information sent to the Member Resource News or any other publication as needed; and maintains a current roster of active members. There is no set term limit for Recorder.