

Certified Professional in Rangeland Management (CPRM) Committee Handbook

The CPRM program was initiated in February 2000 and is different from the Certified Range Management Consultant (CRMC) program. The CPRM is an individual who plans and implements sound management of public and private rangelands and are generally a person working for a local, state, or federal agency. The CRMC is an individual who generally serves as a paid consultant or who serves with private or nonprofit contractors.

Background: For a profession which is increasingly in the public eye, certification provides an answer to questions concerning education, experience, and professionalism. Certification represents the continuing professional development that characterizes so many of our members. Certification is also a practical way to sift through potential candidates for rangeland planning and management, as the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has done by recognizing the CPRM and CRMC certification programs and by considering the Society for Range Management a “recommending organization” in the context of Technical Service Providers (TSPs). Because it is more than simply a “certificate on the wall”, applicants must expect to provide all necessary records of experience, education, and references, along with a modest fee.

The Professional Affairs committee of SRM began to seriously investigate national certification in light of the adoption of certification by the California Section (now California-Pacific section) of SRM in 1992-1993. The California Certified Rangeland Manager (CRM) program was initiated in response to activities by the Registered Professional Forestry program in that state limiting rangeland planning to landscapes with less than 10% canopy cover. The CRM program was adopted into the Public Resource Code in California, and is administered by both the California Section of SRM and by the State Board of Forestry.

Program Goals: The primary goal of this program is to provide the means to improve the standards of professional expertise used in managing public and private rangelands. In addition, this program is intended to maintain the rigor, reputation, and utility of the CPRM program as an important part of SRM’s outreach.

Program Objectives: The specific objectives of the program are:

1. To provide rangeland professionals, government agencies, and the public with minimum education and experience standards beyond the basic requirements for government employment
2. To insure that practicing, certified, rangeland professionals meet such standards to improve public confidence that our rangeland resources are well managed by professionals who pledge to uphold the Society for Range Management Code of Ethics and the Standards of Conduct who act in the best interest of the rangeland resources and the public
3. To evaluate professionals through a critical peer review process based upon minimum educational, experience, and ethical requirements.

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Committee Responsibilities: The CPRM committee is responsible for:
Providing direction to the CPRM program
Coordinating with the CRMC committee
Coordinating with other professional society certification programs as appropriate

Committee Membership: The CPRM committee consists of nine members, including a chairperson, appointed by the incoming President and approved by the Board of Directors of the SRM. All committee members will be a CPRM. Committee membership shall consist of representatives from each of the following agencies/groups:

- Agricultural Research Service,
- Bureau of Land Management,
- Forest Service,
- Natural Resources Conservation Service,
- Cooperative Extension,
- Ranchers,
- Academia,
- International members,
- At large CPRM members

The Executive Vice-President of SRM shall be an ex officio member, lacking voting privileges. The Board of Directors of SRM shall appoint a Director representative in a non-voting capacity. Other ex-officio members without voting privileges may be appointed by the President or Board of Directors (e.g. uncertified SRM members capable of providing missing perspectives to the committee).

The committee shall meet in conjunction with the SRM Annual Meeting. Additional meetings may be called by the Chairperson. Closed sessions may be announced and implemented for discussion and action regarding an applicant for certification or recertification, or for decertification proceedings.

Ethics: Certified Professionals in Rangeland Management will be required to adhere to the Standards of Conduct for SRM Members Providing Public Service and the SRM Code of Ethics.

Fees: Certification fees from this program will be used for administration of the certification program, and may be adjusted as the program matures.

Executive Vice President: The Executive Vice President shall issue certificates to those approved by the committee; shall issue wallet cards after payment of renewal fees; shall maintain a Register of Certified Professionals in Rangeland Management; such register shall be published annually, omitting the names of those Certified Professionals in Rangeland Management who have indicated a desire not to have their names published; shall publish annually the Procedures for Certified Professionals in Rangeland Management; and, shall reimburse committee members for expenses incurred for certification activities, when requested by the committee. These Procedures may be

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revised by recommendation of the Executive Vice President and/or the CPRM committee and approval by the Board of Directors.

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Appendix A

**CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL in RANGELAND MANAGEMENT
CERTIFICATION PROCESS**

Purpose: To certify individuals who have the professional credentials required to plan and implement sound management of rangelands as a means of improving the standards of professional expertise used in managing public and private rangelands. Granting of the status of “Certified Professional in Rangeland Management” by SRM signifies only that the individual so designated has met the basic qualifications to do professional work in this field and has not been found to engage in unprofessional conduct.

Term: Certification is for a period of two years from the date the applicant is informed of successful initial certification or re-certification. Application for renewal of certification must be prior to the second anniversary date of such notification.

Education: These education requirements must be met prior to initial certification.

1. Completion of a bachelor’s degree, preferably in range science/management or closely related field.
2. Completion of at least one course with a grade of “C” or better in at least eight of the following eleven subjects:
 - a. Rangeland plant identification
 - b. Rangeland vegetation management
 - c. Rangeland animal management
 - d. Rangeland ecology
 - e. Plant physiology
 - f. Rangeland or natural resource policy and planning
 - g. Rangeland vegetation measurement
 - h. Basic soil science (at least one course that includes some taxonomy)
 - i. Range economics or microeconomics plus natural resource/environmental economics
 - j. Interpersonal communications and discussions
 - k. Other (any other courses which you consider having special value in qualifying you as a range professional)

Experience: At least five years of full-time experience is required. Only work directly related to rangeland management or administrative duties directly related to rangeland management will be counted toward the experience requirement. Qualifying experience may consist of employment in ranching, land management agencies, consulting, teaching, research, extension or technical assistance, or other types of rangeland resource management/use. Qualifying experience is defined as activity demonstrating professional competence in the science, art and practice of effectively managing and using, for human

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benefit, the natural resources that occur on and in association with rangelands. Education towards a M.S. or PhD degree in a field closely related to rangeland management may be substituted for up to 2 years of experience as determined by the Certification Committee.

Evaluation of Education and Experience: The Committee may, at its discretion, accept other combinations of experience, education and grades as meeting these requirements.

Examination: Applicants must obtain a passing score of at least 75% on the comprehensive written exam covering the basic subject matter outlined in the educational requirements above. Exams may be retaken more than once and the applicant may retake the exam at the next available opportunity. Applicants may take the exam prior to completing the experience requirement providing the initiation fee has been paid. Once the exam is passed, the applicant will have up to 6 years to complete the experience requirement. After 6 years, the applicant must retake the exam.

The CPRM examination requirement will be waived for those individuals who have passed the SRM Undergraduate Range Management Exam (URME) in the top 10% of exam takers. Those students who qualify will have 5 ½ years to make application to the CPRM program before such waiver becomes void.

References: Applicants must furnish 3 letters of reference, at least one of which must be from a SRM Certified Professional in Rangeland Management, a SRM Certified Range Consultant, or a California Certified Range Manager. Applicants must also furnish a list of range professionals or rangeland users and contact information with/for whom the applicant has worked during the 5 or more years of qualifying experience.

Fees: Fees include a non-refundable, one-time initiation fee that must be paid when the application is submitted, and a renewal fee paid each biennial renewal period. The **initiation fee is \$100** for SRM members and **\$200 for non-members**. Only members in good standing qualify for the member rate. If it is necessary to retake the exam there will be a \$50 fee.

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Appendix B

**CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL in RANGELAND MANAGEMENT
RECERTIFICATION PROCEDURE**

Continuing Education Units (CEUs): Certified Professionals in Rangeland Management will be required to meet the minimum continuing education requirements of 32 CEUs during the 2-year certification period. Generally, at least half the credits should be directly related to the subject matter described under the educational requirement. The remainder should be in subject matter related to professional practice of rangeland management. Individuals must submit proof of satisfactory completion of all CEUs when making application for renewal of certification. Certified individuals who fail to obtain the required 32 CEUs during a 2-year period will be given a provisional re-certification period of 6 months to complete the requirement, and charged a penalty fee (see fees).

It is recognized that continuing education and training can take place in a number of fields closely allied to rangeland management and science. Any training/workshop/symposium/field tour presented by agencies, professional societies or SRM section usually qualifies as long as the subject matter relates to rangelands or natural resources.

Certain topics and events do not qualify for consideration toward meeting the CEU requirement. Topics that do not qualify include agency administrative procedure/protocol and topics that have no applicability (i.e. photography & computer training unrelated to the rangeland subject, general business, function planning). Other events that do not qualify include committee or general business meetings.

To properly evaluate course/training/conference/etc., adequate information must be submitted to support how the subject matter relates to range/rangeland related subjects. Agendas should include items such as beginning and ending times, titles of presentations, subject matter presented or discussed, classroom versus field tour, etc. Courses/training/conferences which aren't readily apparent range related, should be supported by a short narrative describing how the course/training/conference is related to the field of rangeland management

Calculation of CEUs: The following guidelines should be followed when evaluating events for applicable CEUs.

CEUs are calculated in half hours only; use standard rule for rounding up/down.

Agendas or function descriptions must list the topics and time interval for each topic.

Attendees will also only be awarded credit once for their participation in duplicate program/sessions.

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For short courses/workshops/conferences/trainings/meetings, clinics, symposia, college courses, correspondence courses, webinars, online courses and distance education CEUs are calculated as 1 CEU for every hour of applicable subject matter (no more than 8 per day and not to exceed 16 for entire course/training/conference, etc.).

For Field days/trips/tours CEUs are calculated as 1 CEU for every 3 hours of applicable subject matter. Additional credit *may* be given if these are highly concentrated; based on the amount of time spent on applicable subjects, and minimal travel is involved.

Development of a science or management based presentation on rangeland topics should be evaluated at a rate of **3 CEUs per hour of presentation**. The developer/presenter can only obtain credit once for any series of related presentations.

Authoring educational materials (i.e. agency technical notes, extension publications), popular articles or journal articles will be evaluated based upon amount of time and number of words with a 10 CEU maximum per publication. CEUs for co-authored articles will be weighted to reflect contribution.

Self-directed study: (20 CEU maximum) scientific journals (reported by article, 1 CEU = about 2,500 word article), books, videos (2X run time = CEUs).

References: Applications for renewal of certification must contain a list of at least 3 range professionals and/or rangeland users and contact information with whom the applicant has worked since their last certification.

Examination: No examination will be required for re-certification if the application for re-certification is timely, or where certification has lapsed for less than 1 year before applying for re-certification. After a lapse of one year, the applicant will be required to take the examination and pay the initiation fee again.

Fees (re-certification): A fee of \$60 for members, and \$135 for non-members, will be submitted at the time application for re-certification is made. A penalty fee of \$25 may be assessed if all required continuing education units are not complete at the time of application.

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Appendix C

**CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL in RANGELAND MANAGEMENT
DENIAL/REVOCAION OF CERTIFICATION**

The right to deny or revoke certification is vested in the Committee. Certification may be denied or revoked for any of the following reasons:

Failure to supply all documents requested

Failure to endorse and comply with the Standards of Conduct for SRM Members Providing Public Service, and the Code of Ethics for Range Management

Failure to meet academic and experience requirements

Misrepresentation on an application, or transmittal of incorrect information regarding academic training, professional experience, employment, or publications, and,

Substantial evidence of professional incompetence

Documented evidence of unprofessional or illegal conduct

Denial or Revocation Process: Complaints or charges of unethical conduct or incompetence against a Certified Professional in Rangeland Management must be submitted in writing to the Executive Vice President for transmittal to the Committee.

Action to deny or revoke certification requires that the Committee transmit a statement of specific charges through the Executive Vice President to the applicant and designate a time and place at which the individual can appear and/or be represented before the Committee. The individual must be informed that a request for hearing by the Committee must be made within 60 days after receipt of the letter of denial, and the hearing of the Committee must be held at the next SRM Annual Meeting. Sustained denial or revocation by the Committee at such hearing may be appealed to the SRM Board of Directors by filing a formal request with the Executive Vice President and the President of SRM.

Appeal Process: When the applicant is informed that the Committee has re-affirmed its denial of certification after a proper hearing before the Committee, the applicant will also be informed of the right to appeal the decision.

An appeal request must be filed with the Executive Vice President within 60 days after the receipt of the letter re-affirming denial. In the appeal request the applicant must submit evidence of additional pertinent experience, education, or publications that have

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occurred since the original date of filing of the request for certification. No additional written material may be submitted.

Upon receipt of an appeal request, the President shall promptly notify the Board of Directors of the request and an appeal hearing will be conducted at the next Board of Directors Meeting. An appeal to the Board of Directors will be scheduled only after a hearing before the Committee has been held and the Committee has re-affirmed denial of certification.

Upon receipt of an appeal request, the Executive Vice President will notify the Chairperson of the Certification Committee. The Chairperson will then prepare a brief of the original application proceedings and of the hearing. This brief will outline the reasons for the original denial and for the re-affirmation of the denial. Attached to the brief will be copies of:

1. the original application material,
2. an in-depth reviewers report,
3. the original denial letter,
4. the letter requesting a hearing,
5. the letter re-affirming denial, and,
6. any other needed supporting material.

The Executive Vice President will send copies of the complete brief and the appeal request to the Board of Directors, at least 4 weeks before the scheduled appeal review date. Publications or other supporting reports or documents originally submitted to the Committee will not be sent to each Board Member unless one or more of these documents is involved in the reason for denial.

The appeal review by the Board of Directors will be made within 8 months following the receipt of the appeal request from the applicant. Appeals normally will be held in conjunction with one of the regularly scheduled meetings of the Board of Directors. An appeal to the Board of Directors is a review of the original application, the hearing by the Committee, plus any additional supporting material from the Committee. It is not a complete re-hearing of the entire case by the Board of Directors.

In the appeal, the applicant will be given 20 minutes in which to present oral arguments for their case before the Board of Directors. This time limit will be rigid and can be extended only by a majority vote of the members of the Board of Directors present.

The final discussion and vote by the Board of Directors will be held in Executive Session. The motion to act on the matter will be to grant certification. Passage will require an affirmative vote of 2/3 of the Board Members present. Failure of the motion to pass will constitute re-affirmation of the denial of certification.

If the applicant is available after the vote is taken, they will be orally notified, but no public notice of the outcome will be made. The applicant will not be allowed any further

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time before the Board. Written notice will be sent to the applicant within 30 days of the date of the appeal stating that the Board of Directors either granted certification or re-affirmed the denial. No further explanation will be given.