

Society for Range Management

Watershed/Riparian Committee Handbook (Revised January 24, 2012)

Background

The SRM Watershed/Riparian Committee (WRC) began as a Board designated Task Group initiated in 1988 by a group of dedicated members committed to addressing emerging issues relative to this critical resource area. It remained a Task Group until 1992 when it was converted to full committee status as the need to give long-term attention to the condition of rangeland watersheds and riparian-wetland areas was recognized as increasingly important. Through periodic reviews, changing membership and flexible governance, this committee remains active and relevant, serving the Society and others in support of the strategic plan, in a manner that is congruent with existing policy and position statements, resolutions and in accordance with the bylaws.

Committee Functions

The WRC serves SRM by focusing attention, knowledge and staff work on watershed and riparian issues as related to rangelands. The committee functions to:

- Provide opportunities to share information and ideas; develop networks of people and foster institutional relationships.
- Serve as a forum for discussing and addressing current events, issues and initiatives.
- Organize forums for bringing pertinent issues before SRM and other affiliates.
- Review and provide comments on legislative or policy proposals, research and other publications. Serve on task groups when requested.
- Provide recommendations to the Board concerning SRM policy and position statements and resolutions relative to watershed and riparian resource issues
- Coordinate with other SRM committees and other professional societies.

Leadership and Membership Structure

1. Chair and Chair-Elect – Leadership is provided by a Chair and a Chair-Elect, both selected by the WRC membership for a one-year term; however, the Chair may also volunteer to serve for two consecutive years. These positions are usually filled by individuals volunteering to serve and if no one steps forward, the Second Vice President will appoint a Chair-Elect one year prior to the beginning of their one-year term.

2. Membership – Membership of the WRC is open to anyone interested in service; there are no term limitations and those in attendance can vote. The committee is free to conduct their affairs as agreed upon by those present at the annual meeting, including the rules of membership and the terms and appointment of Chairs. At times the committee may choose to proactively recruit members depending on need.

3. Subcommittees – Committee tasks and activities are regularly accomplished by subcommittees due to time constraints and for efficiency. Subcommittee members will be volunteers or Chair appointees, whichever comes first, and one of them will serve as Subcommittee Chair. The Subcommittee Chair will report to the Committee Chair who will keep the main committee apprised of the current task or activity.

Leadership and Membership Duties

1. Committee Chair – The Chair arranges and leads the annual committee meeting. It is also the duty of the Chair to attend the pre-annual meeting gathering of committee chairs and the Board for the purpose of improving communication and facilitating information exchange. The Chair is responsible for updating and maintaining the membership list and website and for communication within the committee and to the Board. The Chair also appoints subcommittees and creates the committee plan of work based on member input. The Chair coordinates any committee action requested by the Board. Duties may be delegated.

2. Chair-Elect – The Chair-Elect serves in a Co-Chair capacity for their one-year term. The Chair-Elect is responsible for ensuring the meeting notes are taken and sent to the committee, and assisting the Chair with any other committee activities. It is also the duty of the Chair-Elect to ensure a room is reserved for the committee meeting at the annual meeting. The Chair-Elect shall serve as Chair in the event of the Chair's absence or shall become the Chair if, for any reason, the Chair is unable to serve. Duties may be delegated.

3. Members – Members are encouraged to attend the annual meeting and to volunteer for committee activities. All members are asked to help foster interest in the committee and invite participation.

Meetings, Communication, Information Management

The WRC meets for one-half day at the annual meeting; this is usually the only time members are all together for face to face communication. Throughout the year, most communication takes place via the committee e-mail list or occasionally by phone, fax or hard copy mail.

1. Committee Webpage - The WRC maintains a committee webpage on the SRM website. Webpage content is determined through discussion of the committee. Information categories include the following: Introduction; Members; Handbook; Activities (Past, Current, Future), Business (Notes and Correspondence, Past Membership), and Restoration Photos. The Business section can include, but is not limited to, originating documents, past membership lists, committee responses to Board requests, important correspondence, articles or other documents regarding committee activities, meeting agendas and notes, Board reports, etc. The Chair and Chair-Elect are jointly responsible for committee record keeping.

2. Committee Member List – The committee member list will be updated annually and posted to the committee webpage. A copy is also sent to the Board Representative and committee members. Each year, the committee is required to submit the names and contact information of the new Chair and Chair-Elect, to the SRM Headquarters Office to be included in the Mini-Directory posted on the SRM website. Prior year committee member lists are to be posted in the Past Membership area of the Business section.

3. Committee Meeting Agenda – The Chair is responsible for creating the annual meeting agenda with input from the committee and Board Representative if appropriate. The agenda is sent to the committee prior to the annual meeting and is available at the committee meeting. The final agenda is posted in the Notes and Correspondence area of the Business section of the webpage.

4. Committee Meeting Notes and Board Reports – The WRC meeting notes are to be sent to the entire committee and Board Representative within a month of the annual meeting and should include any agreed upon actions, assignments and timelines. A synopsis report is prepared and given to the Board Representative during the annual meeting. Both the committee meeting notes

and Board report are to be posted in the Notes and Correspondence area of the Business section of the webpage

5. Committee Activities – The record of WRC activities is to be updated annually and posted on the webpage. Past accomplishments as well as current and future planned activities are included.

6. Committee Meeting Arrangements – Each year, the Chair-Elect or delegate will submit a form requesting the meeting room for the next year’s committee meeting. A form is usually provided by the upcoming annual meeting planners, or is available on the SRM meeting webpage, asking for date, time, approximate number of people attending, room arrangement, and any special needs.

7. Committee Handbook – The committee handbook is intended to contribute to the effective involvement of each member and provide for continuity of operations within the committee. The handbook is to be updated as needed. Revisions are to be sent to each committee member and posted on the committee webpage.

8. Committee Communication - At a minimum, quarterly updates should be sent, either by or through the Chair, to the entire committee, Board Representative and other committee Chairs within the Science and Ecology Division. Notices, invitations and articles regarding activities and meetings should be published in the Member News and in Section newsletters. Any member can participate in the Action Alert calls held on the second Thursday of each month.

9. Committee Position Statements – All SRM position statements are to be reviewed every 5 years with comments given to the Board.

Committee Activities and the SRM Strategic Plan

The WRC is one of 5 committees within the Science and Ecology Division whose activities support key elements of the SRM strategic plan including the underlying Core Values, the Mission and Vision, Guiding Principles and a number of Strategic and Tactical Focus Areas. Committee activities are shaped by the following:

SRM Guiding Principles:

1. Provide opportunities for professional development and growth.
2. Promote rangeland ecosystem sustainability and stewardship.
3. Promote economically, socially, and environmentally acceptable uses of rangelands.
4. Promote resource management and policy based on sound scientific principles.
5. Provide forums for participation and exchange of diverse views.
6. Operate through involvement and participations of members with diverse backgrounds.
7. Enhance communication and liaison with other organizations.

SRM Strategic and Tactical Focus Areas:

1. Promote Professional Education and Development
 - Bring value to members by creating opportunities for professional development, continuing education, and communication networks.
 - Give timely professional leadership for issues pertaining to rangeland management, conservation and research.
2. Enhance External Communication
 - Provide information to individuals, groups and institutions outside or SRM.
3. Support Rangeland Science

- Expand support for rangeland research (including ecological function and health assessment) and management. Facilitate efforts to build awareness and understanding of policy makers, the public, and members of the function and value of rangeland ecosystems.

4. Influence Public Policy

- Expand the base of support for rangeland management, education and research.

Committee Activities and the SRM Communication and Outreach Plan

The Communication and Outreach Plan adopts marketing concepts to accomplish the Mission of SRM....to promote the professional development and continuing education of members and the public and the stewardship of rangeland resources. Committee activities are also shaped by the following marketing goals:

- Increase membership
- Disseminate information on SRM values
- Professional education
- Form affiliations and partnerships
- Increase visibility

Relationship to the Board of Directors

The WRC is one of the Board “directed” committees as opposed to the Board “appointed” committees that have specific, defined tasks and are expected to accomplish those in a timely manner with the full participation of all members. Even though the WRC functions in support of the business and policies of the Society, volunteer members are expected to be proactive throughout the year and provide advice to the Board, within the guidelines of the committee handbook, on issues that need to be addressed.

Reporting to the Board of Directors

The WRC is not required to seek Board permission for any activities unless they involve funding or policy, however, SRM committees are asked to submit a summary report to the Board. More specifically, during the week of the annual meeting, the Board Representative is to be provided a short synopsis of the committee meeting that includes any specific requests for the Board or other pertinent information the committee wants to convey. Items related to funding or policy will be acted upon during a subsequent Board meeting and the remainder will be addressed by the Board Representative. The report should indicate a contact person including e-mail address and phone number. This report is the responsibility of the committee Chair unless otherwise delegated.

Relationship to Other SRM Committees

The leadership and members of the WRC are expected to actively seek to communicate and coordinate with other SRM committees concerning areas of mutual interest and activity planning. Joint activities are encouraged and can maximize effectiveness. Periodic (quarterly) communication is recommended among the committees in the Science and Ecology Division. Quarterly updates would also be sent to the entire committee and Board Representative.

Relationship to Other Professional Societies

WRC membership promotes communication and coordination through initiating and participating in joint activities, including meetings, symposia and workshops as well as opportunities for publishing.