

Handbook

- I. **Purpose** To coordinate SRM's efforts to provide professional leadership related to the development and implementation of rangeland assessment and monitoring by government agencies, other organizations, and private individuals and to assist the Board of Directors in implementing SRM rangeland assessment policies. SRM's aim is to insure that such methods are objective, scientifically sound, and consistent with professional experience.
- II. **Responsibilities** The Rangeland Assessment and Monitoring Committee will seek to achieve its purpose by the following general means:
 - A. The Committee will maintain contact with the major agencies, non-governmental organizations, and professional groups that are involved in research, development, and implementation of rangeland assessment and monitoring systems, and promote coordination of such efforts to strive for unified and comparative results.
 - B. The Committee will review ongoing efforts to develop and implement rangeland assessment and monitoring and offer constructive comment to improve the scientific basis for such procedures.
 - C. The Committee will conduct and encourage others to conduct educational and training programs related to rangeland assessment and monitoring for the continuing education of SRM members and other groups.
 - D. The Committee will assist the SRM in further developing policy and position statements regarding rangeland assessment and monitoring issues, and provide other required assistance to SRM's officers in this area of expertise.
- III. **Authority** [^] The Rangeland Assessment and Monitoring Select Committee was established in 1995 for a 5 year period by the SRM President with approval of the Board of Directors. It was re-authorized, with a Handbook revision, in February 2000 until February 2005. The committee has authority to (1) develop programs relating to the evaluation, coordination, and implementation of rangeland assessment and monitoring methodology, and (2) recommend official policy statements on rangeland assessment and monitoring to the President and Board of Directors.
- IV. **Committee Structure** [^]
 - A. **Membership**

Several main considerations relate to the desired membership on this committee. (1) Most of the formal rangeland assessment and monitoring programs are developed and implemented by government agencies for use on both public and private rangelands. (2) Development of sound assessment and monitoring systems and interpretation of results requires both proper application of ecological sciences and understanding of the practical implications of obtaining information and using it for management or policy decisions. (3) Because the development and testing of methods

often extends over a period of years, continuity of effort is vital to this committee. Based on these considerations, the following membership structure is appropriate:

1. Organizational Members

Each of the major governmental agencies involved in development and/or implementation of rangeland assessment and monitoring systems will be asked by the President of SRM to name a representative to the RAM Committee. Agencies should include, as a minimum, the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Agricultural Research Service. Other agencies and groups that should be encouraged to nominate members include, but are not limited to, the following: Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of Defense, National Park Service, The Nature Conservancy, appropriate land management agencies in Canada and Mexico. Organizational members of the RAM committee will serve indefinitely at the pleasure of their employing agency. These members will be the official representative of their agency or employer on the Committee, responsible for bringing issues from their agency to the Committee and carrying the results of Committee actions back to their agency. Organizations will be encouraged to name alternate representatives to help insure attendance at meetings. If, for any reason, the President of SRM determines that an organizational member is not adequately representing the views of his/her agency or group, the President shall request a replacement from the appropriate agency. Organizational members shall not be eligible to serve as Chair of the committee while representing their agency.

2. Regular Members

There shall be 9 regular members of the RAM Committee appointed for staggered 3-year terms by the 1st Vice President. Term of the members will begin when the 1st Vice President takes office as President at the Annual SRM Meeting, and continue until the change of SRM officers at the 3rd Annual Meeting after taking office. Committee members shall be eligible for re-appointment without limit. The 1st Vice-President should carefully consider the special requirements for educational and/or experiential background for service on this committee as well as the interest of potential members in a long-term, active commitment to the goals of the committee and ability to travel to meetings. He/she should also consider maintaining an appropriate balance of academic/research, agency personnel, consultants, ranchers or other interests on the committee. Committee members employed by one of the agencies represented by organizational membership should recognize their responsibility to represent the profession, not

an agency position. Consultation with the Chair and members of the committee regarding potential candidates is encouraged. To achieve continuity of effort, the 1st Vice-President is encouraged to re-appoint members who are willing to serve and who have been effective contributor to the committee.

3. Chair

The Vice-Chair is appointed by the 2nd Vice-President of SRM about 15 months prior to taking office as Chair of the Committee. The Vice-Chair may be one of the 9 regular members of the committee, a prior member of the committee, or someone with appropriate expertise lacking previous experience on the committee. Because of the importance of continuity of leadership on this committee, the 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents of SRM should consult with the Chair, Vice-Chair, and members of the committee prior to appointing the Vice Chair to consider the desirability of re-appointing both the Chair and Vice Chair for another term, or of appointing the current Chair to become Vice Chair in the next year, i.e. rotating responsibility between Chair and Vice-Chair.

4. Voting

The Committee shall seek to establish positions and recommendations by discussion and consensus. However, in the event that issues cannot be resolved without an official vote, the following rules will apply: (1) A quorum will be established if the Chair or Vice-Chair plus 5 of the 9 regular members of the committee are present or have given a written proxy to those present. (2) The Chair and Vice-Chair are voting members of the committee. (3) Organizational members may express opinions and participate fully in all discussions regarding a vote, but may not vote. (4) When the issue at hand directly involves one of the committee members in their employment or other professional activity, the members should abstain from voting on the issue.

V. **Activities and Meetings** [^](#)

A. Responsibilities of the Chair

1. Schedule and chair committee meetings. The date, place and agenda for the meeting shall be sent to members with ample time for making travel arrangements.
2. Prepare minutes or meeting notes on each meeting and distribute to the committee members, President, and Executive Vice-President of SRM in a timely manner.
3. Develop and implement an annual plan of work with the committee members. This should be done prior to the end of the annual meeting when the Chair takes office.
4. Act as the contact between the committee, the Officers and Board of Directors of SRM, and other SRM committees.
5. Maintain close liaison with the Vice Chair.

6. Take the initiative to consult with the 1st and 2nd Vice-Presidents of SRM regarding the appointment and/or reappointment of committee members and Vice Chair.
- B. Responsibilities of the Vice-Chair
1. Act in place of the Chair when necessary.
 2. Maintain close liaison with the Chair and activities of the committee.
 3. Take the initiative to consult with the 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents of SRM regarding the appointment and/or reappointment of committee members and Vice-Chair.
- C. Subcommittees
- Subcommittees may be appointed by the Chair as necessary to accomplish committee plans of work, establish contact with other groups, or for any other relevant purpose. Subcommittees can be formed including people with special knowledge or skills who are not regular or organizational members of the RAM committee.
- D. Meetings
- The RAM committee will meet at least once each year at the SRM Annual Meeting. At this meeting the report of the current year's activities shall be completed, and a plan for the next year approved. It is important that newly appointed members attend this meeting. Other meetings will be scheduled by the Chair at such time, place and frequency as needed. The Committee will normally meet at the summer meeting of the Board of Directors and Advisory Council. Mail and electronic communication will be used extensively to accomplish the committee's activities between meetings.