

PRESS RELEASE

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BRISKE RECEIVES FREDERIC G. RENNER AWARD FROM THE SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT (SRM)

Dr. David D. Briske, T.M. O'Connor and Regents Professor, and AgriLife Research Fellow, Department of Ecosystem Science and Management, Texas A&M University in College Station, TX, was presented the *Fredric G. Renner Award* at the Society for Range Management's (SRM) 73rd Annual Meeting, Technical Training and Tradeshow held in Denver, Colorado, February 16-20, 2020. The *Renner Award* is the most prestigious award bestowed by the Society. It was made possible by a generous contribution from Frederic G. Renner, a Charter and Life member and SRM's second President (1949). The award is presented with the belief that such recognition will foster better use of rangeland resources and a broader understanding of the contributions that these resources make to the welfare of all people.



Dr. David D. Briske's research career, spanning 5 decades, has continually engaged the profession of range management with transformational concepts and approaches. His early career focused on the ecology of bunchgrasses to delivered novel insights on: 1) inter-tiller resource sharing within plants, 2) plant population dynamics, 3) responses to defoliation by large herbivores, and 4) competitive interactions that provided valuable information regarding the ecology and management of this key growth form on rangelands.

His leadership role in resolving the rotational grazing debate produced the Rangeland Ecology and Management paper entitled, 'Rotational grazing on rangelands: Reconciliation of perception and experimental evidence' (Briske et al. 2008, 61:3-17). This paper remains the most cited paper for this journal a full decade after publication. A subsequent contribution on this topic emphasized the importance of including the decision-making environment of managers in the planning and assessment of grazed systems. This paper was entitled, 'Origin, persistence, and resolution of the rotational grazing debate: Integrating human dimensions into rangeland research' (Briske et al. 2011, 64:325-334). Dr. Briske's commitment and vision contributed to the success of the USDA-NRCS Rangeland Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP). He edited the volume entitled, "Conservation benefits of rangeland practices: Assessment, recommendations, and knowledge gaps" that provided foundational knowledge for the identification of critical knowledge gaps and development of key recommendations regarding the major rangeland conservation practices.

Dr. Briske, in collaboration with several colleagues, developed a resilience-based management framework for rangelands, which was published in 2008 and it was subsequently adopted by several major land management agencies in the U.S (Rangeland Interagency Site Manual, 2010). This work was paralleled by his role as project manager of a research team investigating rangeland resilience with empirical data from nine long-term (> 30 yrs.) vegetation records throughout western North America.

Dr. Briske's recent research addresses global change biology and climate change adaptation strategies. He contributed to a research team that developed a field research facility to simulate modified precipitation distribution and warming, both independently and in combination, to predict the responses of key plant growth forms in response to projected warmer, drier climates in the south-central US. This research was among the first experimental demonstrations of the importance of competitive plant interactions in mediating ecosystem responses to climate change. Dr. Briske was a key contributor to two synthesis papers (REM 2013)



R to L: SRM President (2019) Dr. Clayton Marlow with 2020 Fredric G. Renner Award recipient, Dr. David D. Briske, and nominators Drs. Justin Derner and John Hendrickson (USDA-ARS).



MISSION: Providing leadership for the Stewardship of Rangelands based on sound ecological principles.

VISION: A well-trained and highly motivated group of professionals and rangelands users working with productive, sustainable rangeland ecosystems.

commissioned by the Society for Range Management to assess the ecological consequences of climate change and guided development of mitigation and adaptation strategies on North American rangelands. His current work addresses the impact of increasing climate variability on the economic viability of rangeland beef cattle production in the Great Plains and the consequences that it may have for land cover, ownership and the continue existence of rangelands in the western Great Plains.

Dr. Briske's teaching program has made substantial contributions to rangelands and environmental stewardship. Throughout his tenure at Texas A&M University he has: 1) presented over 100 classes to approximately 7,000 undergraduate and graduate students, 2) successfully mentored 11 Ph.D. and 5 M.S. students and served on the committees of 65 Ph.D. and M.S. students, and 3) provided educational outreach to over 400 participants in 20 ecology short course for USDA-NRCS personnel.

Dr. Briske provided crucial leadership as Editor-in-Chief for SRM's technical journal, *Rangeland Ecology and Management* (2008-2015). As Editor, he fundamentally altered the trajectory of this journal by transferring publication to Elsevier Press which resulted in a greater international stature and financial revenue for the Society. His most recent, and perhaps most substantial, contribution to professional service was his role as editor of the volume entitled, "Rangeland Systems: Processes, Management and Challenges" published by Springer Publishers. This volume was developed to document the major advances that have occurred in the rangeland profession in the past 25 years. It will make an important contribution to the rangeland profession by informing students, academics, resource managers and the public of the function and significance of global rangelands. This volume has been downloaded 20,000 times since it was published in April 2017.

It is for this wealth of professional contributions to the Society and the rangelands profession, that Dr. D. David Briske is honored with the Society for Range Management's most esteemed *Frederic G. Renner Award* for 2020.