

2023-2024 SRM Rangeland Cup Information

Itinerary for Rangeland Cup Competition @ 2024 Society for Range Management Annual Meeting (Sparks, NV)

Date	Item
October 15, 2023	Guidelines and Rangeland cup topic posted on website
January 5, 2024	Deadline for teams registered for contest via email (alex.lopez@ag.tamu.edu)
January 29, 2024 (3-6pm)	In-person judging during poster session at SRM. At least one team member must be present at poster to answer questions.
January 31, 2024	Results presented at Awards Ceremony

The Rangeland Cup team problem solving competition is an activity to promote critical thinking and cooperative, collaborative work on current topics and/or topics of historical importance to rangeland ecology and management. As we progress in our careers, much of our work is performed as part of a team. This competition is intended to build skills in interpersonal communication and team-problem solving, both of which are highly desired qualities in the workplace. All colleges and universities are invited to submit teams for this year's competition.

Eligibility:

Each college or university may enter one or more teams for the event by emailing Alex Orozco at alex.lopez@ag.tamu.edu. Teams shall be made up of no more than four students and one professional mentor (i.e., ag producer, agency personnel, faculty, etc.). Teams are limited to one graduate student (with three undergraduate students), but can be made up entirely of undergraduate students if desired.

Topic:

Each year's competition will be centered on an issue or problem of interest to rangeland management. New topics will be assigned each year. The competition may address real case studies submitted by agencies or individuals searching for alternative management possibilities. Teams will design an approach (accounting for ecological, economic, social, and political aspects) to solve or manage the issue. Issues and topics may include, but are not limited to: rangeland ecology, hydrology, rangeland wildlife, socio-political, endangered species, grazing management, inventory and analysis, human dimensions of range management, and rangeland

hydrology. Creative and innovative approaches are highly encouraged, but approaches must be realistic and achievable.

The topic will be announced November 15th, giving all teams equal time to work on the project. The topic will be posted in SRM member resource news and will be distributed electronically among SRM sections and the student conclave.

Format:

Each team will present their approach/solution in **poster** format during the assigned poster session on January 29th from 3-6pm during the SRM Annual Meeting. The poster session will be open to meeting attendees and judges will be circulating during the session. Posters will be limited to 36 by 48 inches, preferably landscape orientation.

Rules and Regulations:

1. At least one student must be present at the Range Cup poster session on January 29th from 3-6pm to present their project and address questions; all team members are encouraged to be present if space permits. The mentor is encouraged to be present at the poster session as well, but the team will not be penalized if the mentor is unable to attend the poster session.
2. Each institution may enter two teams.
3. There will be 5 judges with different affiliations (i.e. government agencies, private industry, university faculty, agricultural producers) to reduce bias in the judging.
4. Scores will be based on the Judging and Scoring criteria as agreed upon by competition officials. Criteria will be distributed to the teams prior to the competition.
5. In the event of a tie, rankings of tied teams will be decided by judges' consensus.

Judging Sheet:

Student posters displaying their problem-solving approach will be judged on content, organization, and presentation. Points will be assigned based on the criteria listed below. Judges scores and comments will remain anonymous and will be provided as typed summaries for each team.

JUDGING CRITERIA

Content refers to the employment of a creative, logic-based approach to the problem. The approach should be bolstered by scientific evidence, in a similar manner to a grant proposal. The poster should display a clear rationale behind the approach, but should attempt to expand on existing knowledge pertaining to the topic. 60 maximum points.

Content Sub-Categories:

- Abstract: should provide a concise summary of the proposed solutions. 5 maximum points.
- Introduction: should introduce the importance of the topic and provide pertinent background information about the theory behind the team's approach. 10 maximum points.
- Narrative: should clearly describe the team's approach for addressing the topic. This is where the team will "sell" their ideas. Should demonstrate the team's knowledge of the subject matter and their logical approach to the task. Each part of the topic should be addressed. Suggested research methods, long-term management plans, expected results, potential pitfalls, budgetary concerns, conclusions, etc. are all acceptable information for the narrative. 45 maximum points.
- Organization describes the design and flow of the poster. The poster should be easy to read and understand without interpretation by the author. Tables, figures, and photographs should be well designed, clear, and with informative legends. All visual aids should be referenced in the poster. 20 maximum points.
- Presentation deals with the students' ability to discuss their approach and field questions concerning the background and potential outcomes of that approach. Additionally, the students' professionalism, in manner and personal presentation, will be evaluated during the competition. 40 maximum points.

Presentation Sub-Categories:

Professional manner: Do the students exhibit confidence and enthusiasm? Do the students effectively communicate their ideas verbally? 15 maximum points.

Knowledge:

The students' ability to address questions and provide comments on their approach should clearly demonstrate their individual involvement in the creative process of problem solving. Do the students' display insight into how their ideas fit into the larger context of range management? 25 maximum points.

Prize:

There will be a traveling trophy that will be housed at the winning institution until the following year's competition. Each year, the date and name of winning institution will be inscribed onto the trophy.

Rangeland Cup Topic-Theme: Change On the Range

2024 Rangeland Cup – Sparks, NV

North American rangelands continue to experience accelerated climatic uncertainty. As a result of this instability, new innovative technologies and differing systemic approaches to management are being developed to assist rangeland managers, producers, educators and others to plan, respond, and implement a coordinated management approach to changes on the range.

Prompt: Select innovative technologies, of recent relevance (within the last decade), that could assist rangeland managers in their charge to manage North American rangelands in response to climate instability.

One technology alone will not be enough to answer the questions of “how” to manage the range in response to climate instability. A holistic approach, utilizing multiple technologies to respond to changes on the range is what we are looking for in your posters and presentations.

Poster and Presentation: Present a realistic and feasible plan, using sound reasoning and science, to describe how your selected technologies are practical, realistic and implementable for range managers and stakeholders on the range. Questions you may consider while developing your poster are: How will these new technologies respond to climate instability? What questions do they seek to answer? How will these new technologies impact water, emissions, wildlife, people, livestock, and vegetation? How would the use of these new technologies be implemented on North American Rangelands? How would these new technologies be integrated into current and future rangeland ecology as a science?

Journal article for consideration:

Holechek, J. L., Geli, H. M. E., Cibils, A. F., & Sawalhah, M. N. (2020). Climate Change, Rangelands, and Sustainability of Ranching in the Western United States. *Sustainability*, 12(12), 4942. MDPI AG. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/su12124942>

- **Link to journal article:** <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/12/12/4942>

Please choose a team captain when submitting your intention to participate in the 2024 Rangeland Cup Contest so that we can communicate with regarding any rangecup information.

Contest Organizers:

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