



Volume 2 **International Mountain Section Newsletter** June 2005

*To Foster Advancement in the Science and Art of Rangeland Management*

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**President's Message**  
**Donna Lawrence**

I hope this newsletter finds you all energized by the arrival of spring and summer. I imagine you are all busy with range management activities – moving cattle to pasture, starting field work, discovering range plants and teaching grazing schools. Before I move on I should add one more award recipient from the Fort Worth Meeting that was missed in the last newsletter. Tammy DeCock received an Outstanding Achievement Award from the Parent Society for her work with the NRCS and her dedicated service to the Society for Range Management. Congratulations Tammy!

In this newsletter you'll find the details about the IMS summer tour organized and hosted by Maynard Smith, Katie Bump, Robert Garcia and Brett Olson. For me the summer tour is a must attend event. There is nothing more rejuvenating than visiting unfamiliar rangelands with like-minded people and learning about the art and science of range management. This year's tour will provide beautiful vistas and interesting history as well. The arrangements sound fantastic! I hope you can all make some time in your busy schedules to join us for the weekend and support Maynard and his crew who have put so much time, energy and thought into planning this year's tour.

Of course we will also conduct our IMS business meeting to update everyone on SRM issues and upcoming events. If there is anything happening in your area that you would like IMS to know about and support, please let me know so I can give you some time on the agenda. You can reach me by email at [donna.Lawrence@gov.ab.ca](mailto:donna.Lawrence@gov.ab.ca) or by phone at 780-349-6299 in the evenings.

See you at Birch Creek!



Society for Range Management  
International Mountain Section

Summer Field Tour and Meeting

## Cruisin' the Wisdom River

*(otherwise known as the Big Hole)*

July 21-23, 2005

Birch Creek Outdoor Education Center - near Dillon, Montana



### July 21, 2005

6 pm – 8 pm Registration at Birch Creek, BYO snacks and beverages, catch up with friends around the campfire.

### July 22, 2005 – Tentative Tour Schedule

7 am Hot buffet breakfast at Birch Creek  
8 am Bus tour departs Birch Creek for The Hog's Back  
10 am Divide Bridge  
12:30 pm Steel Creek  
2:30 pm Hamilton Ranch  
5:00 pm Bus tour returns to Birch Creek  
6:00 pm Dinner at Birch Creek  
7:30 pm Evening Program (Lewis and Clark as Ecologists) by Jack Taylor, PhD

### July 23, 2005

8 am Hot buffet breakfast at Birch Creek  
9 am Section business meeting  
11 am Meeting closes; depart Birch Creek

#### **About the Bus tour:**

Our bus tour will explore the Big Hole River (formerly known as Wisdom River) from near its outlet to its headwaters, a journey of about 200 miles (322 km), almost 200 years to the day after Lewis & Clark. traveled through this area.

- Visit ranches, National Forests and other public lands, and discuss range management practices along the Big Hole, from the near-desert of the Hogs Back to the lush meadows of the upper valley. If we are lucky, you'll see a beaverslide hay operation in the land of 10,000 haystacks!
- Discuss current issues with people dealing with them on a daily basis, such as wolves, riparian management, forest health, and habitat conservation for arctic grayling.
- Enjoy a sack lunch prepared by the friendly folks at The Big Hole Crossing restaurant in Wisdom, Montana. Snacks and beverages will also be provided during the tour.

#### **About the Birch Creek Outdoor Education Center**

Operated by the University of Montana, Western under a permit from the USDA Forest Service, the Center is in the heart of the eastern Pioneer Mountains at 6,480 ft (1,975 m) elevation. Douglas-fir forest and sagebrush-grassland surround it. Many of the original 1930s Civilian Conservation Corps camp buildings are still in use, with the added convenience of a modern lodge and dining area. The Center is about 20 miles (32 km) northwest from Dillon. Take the Apex Exit off of Interstate 15. Head west into the mountains until you see the sign for the Birch Creek Outdoor Education Center.



**For more info:**  
Robert Garcia  
(406) 832-3178 (office)  
(406) 683-4367 (home)  
[rmgarcia@fs.fed.us](mailto:rmgarcia@fs.fed.us)  
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(406) 835-3441  
[smith6s@3rivers.net](mailto:smith6s@3rivers.net)

**Meeting Registration Form**  
 Society for Range Management International Mountain Section  
 Summer Field Tour July 21-23, 2005

Registrant Name	Mailing Address	Telephone/email

Arrival date: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration Fees**

Fee Item	No. of People	Price (U.S. \$)	Total
<b>General registration before July 1</b>		<b>20.00/person (10.00/student)</b>	
<b>General registration after July 1</b>		<b>30.00/person (20.00/student)</b>	
<b>July 22 Bus tour with lunch</b>		<b>25.00/person</b>	
<b>Lodging July 21</b>			
Camping (no hookups)		9.00/camp unit	
Bunkhouse (no linens)		19.75/adult; 9.75/child under 10 years old with adult	
Bunkhouse (w/linens)		27.75/adult 17.75/child under 10 years old with adult	
<b>Lodging July 22</b>			
Camping (no hookups)		9.00/camp unit	
Bunkhouse (no linens)		19.75/adult; 9.75/child under 10 years old with adult	
Bunkhouse (w/linens)		27.75/adult 17.75/child under 10 years old with adult	
<b>Meals at Birch Creek July 22</b>			
Hot buffet breakfast		5.50/adult 4.50/child under 10	
Dinner Choices:			
NY strip steak		8.75/adult 6.00/child under 10	
BBQ Roast chicken		8.75/adult 6.00/child under 10	
<b>Meals at Birch Creek July 23</b>			
Hot buffet breakfast		5.50/adult 4.50/child under 10	
<b>TOTAL</b>			

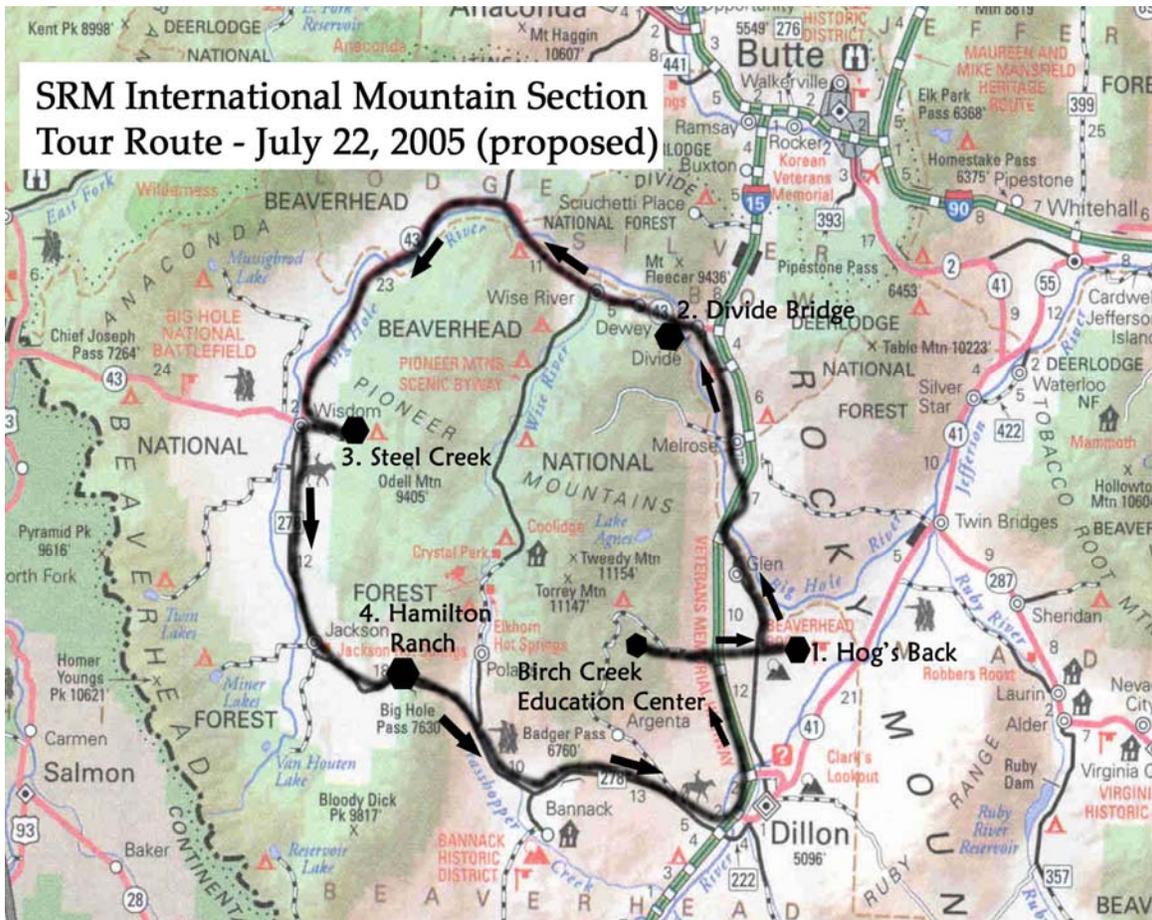
Check below to indicate:

I have special dietary needs (please attach information).

Please send Travel Montana information to help me plan a vacation around this tour.

Make checks payable to International Mountain Section SRM (IMS). Canadians multiply by 1.25 for exchange rate.

Mail form and payment by July 1 to:	Robert's contact info:
Robert Garcia, USDA Forest Service P.O. Box 86 Wise River, MT 59762	(406) 832-3178 (office) (406) 683-4367 (home) rmgarcia@fs.fed.us



**2005 Executive**

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Angela Berkinshaw

**Secretary-Treasurer**

Barry Adams

**2005 Executive, Directors**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Year**

Montana  
 Stephanie Seaver

**2<sup>nd</sup> Year**

Alberta  
 Christoph Weder

**1<sup>st</sup> Year**

Montana  
 Matt Ricketts

**1<sup>st</sup> Year**

Alberta  
 Edward Bork

## **Section Meeting Minutes**

Breakfast meeting International Mountain Section SRM

Wednesday February 9, 2005 Fort Worth Plaza Hotel - Fort Worth Texas

The meeting was called to order by President Donna Lawrence at 7:10 AM with approximately 15 members attending.

The minutes of the meeting in October, 2004 were reviewed however no action was taken to approve the minutes.

Donna discussed the possibility of the Section serving as the bank account for some demonstration and quasi-research projects as was discussed by Barry Adams at the Fall meeting. Effectively there are administrative costs of doing this that are not practical for the Section to assume.

Brett Olson discussed student activities

There is discussion about awarding a "runner up" award to a student that could be a paid trip for 5-7 days in Canada government circles as apposed to the Washington DC trip.

Motion made by Barry Irving and seconded by Ed Bork that the section contribute \$200 US to help sponsor such an award. Motion carried.

Matt Ricketts discussed membership activities

Retention of members is a major focus at this time. A lapsed membership does have a 30 day grace period. It is generally recognized that if a membership lapses, if they are not contacted within 4 months they are likely to be lost. Also personal contacts are more effective than are notices sent by the home office. There maybe a packet developed to send to new members to invite them to participate in local and other activities of the section. There is some brainstorming in progress to find some tools to give some recognition to new members. There is a questionnaire being developed to focus on member services.

There is some consideration of an apprentice membership that could be at a reduced rate for up to 5 years.

Our section had 42 members that had their membership lapse in the past year, however many of these might be just a matter of not having paid by the due date and are actually current now.

Directors will follow-up. Matt asked that everyone be sure they are distributing the 2005 membership application forms.

There is continuing discussion about agency staffs that are not supported by their supervisors and are therefore discouraged from participating and being a member of SRM. It was brought up that there has been some arrogance in committees and from leadership that is turning some new members away.

Stephanie Severs discussed some leadership development activities and would like to see some carry through at the section level.

Donna Lawrence discussed activities of the advisory council

The southern Section put a resolution forward to expand the definition of Rangelands to include more seeded pastures. After much discussion the resolution was not passed believing that to do so would weaken/dilute the focus of SRM.

There was some discussion about how directors were elected and serve. No action was passed. The advisory council recommended the name change be put to a membership vote.

Dennis Phillip (elected 2<sup>nd</sup> vice president) discussed several items that are before the Board of Directors

Hiring of an Executive Vice President – The SRM needs someone with strong management, leadership and fiscal management skills and would like to have someone that has a strong background in Rangeland management. The job is currently being advertised and will remain open until they find a suitable applicant.

Location of the home office was discussed the ramifications of moving to a new community. SRM currently rents office space and that lease will expire this summer.

There is on going discussion about what SRM should be in national capitols whether in DC, Ottawa, or provincial capitols.

There is discussion about “virtual” office options and how much that might influence how SRM operates.

As always the Board of Directors is concerned about the financial health of the organization.

Lou Hagener discussed activities of the Government Policy and Programs committee

With the open committee format there was some dropped balls in some committee functioning.

There needs to be some participation from Canada in this committee and Harvey Buckley offered much to this committee in the past.

Lou Hagener and Dennis Phillip discussed strategic planning workshop

There has been a strategic plan in place for several years now but it is not being regularly updated and probably should be.

There is concern about the up coming new members and inclusion of these folks in SRM. There is a proposal to create a new professional conclave.

John Tanaka (Vice President) is following up with activities of the Strategy Planning workshop

Ed Nelson asked everyone to keep in mind that SRM is continuing to build the endowment fund and needs folks to contribute to and buy items from the silent auction.

Ed and Otlie are presenting Angela Williams (President) a special buckle in recognition of being the first woman president of SRM and in the memory of Pete Jackson and Ed McKinnon. . He will make the presentation at the membership forum meeting.

Duane McCartney discussed awards.

The SRM would like to see more nominations for awards for producer awards. The section is the most effective route of nomination for awards. With producer awards a poster can be developed and displayed at the annual meeting. Award nominations need to be in by April each year. Awards for Extension and Public Land outstanding achievement need to be emphasized.

Harvey Buckley discussed the 2<sup>nd</sup> century project he is participating in. This is a multi-industry organization that is examining government policy development.

Donna mentioned the poster project to raise visibility of Rangelands and the SRM. There has been a short fall in covering the cost of this project. Grant Godbolt made motion that the section contribute \$100 US to assist in this project, Steph Sever second. Motion passed.

Our summer tour will be July 21 – 23, 2005 in the Birch Creek/Big Hole area. (Southwest Montana north and west of Dillon, Montana) Katie Bump is working with Maynard to make arrangements.

Our next fall meeting will likely be in cooperation with Pacific Northwest Section and will probably be in the Southwestern Alberta. PNW section is hosting the Vancouver meeting and would appreciate our section making arrangements for the fall meeting. The meeting dates are tentatively scheduled for October 14-15, 2005.

## Researcher cares for the land – one bite at a time

By **Bev Betkowski**, ExpressNews Staff



Maria Didkowsky consults with an elk on its dietary preferences.

May 6, 2005 - A University of Alberta researcher is looking for the best ways to graze livestock on Alberta's sprawling ranchland - one bite at a time. Master of science student Maria Didkowsky spends a lot of time painstakingly counting the bites and steps of grazing elk, bison and mule deer at the university's research station in Kinsella, as part of a "precision ranching" initiative that will help show how to most efficiently graze cattle and other cloven-hoofed critters on Alberta's lush aspen parkland.

"The Precision Ranching project's goal is to study how different mixtures of animals create varying impacts on the landscape and how this will affect animal production," said Didkowsky. "This project could give ranchers an idea of how to use a diversity of livestock for efficient animal production, while maintaining the well-being of the range". Plopping herself down in the grass beside a munching animal, she studies and records their selection preferences - what they walk over and what they eat, whether their muzzles reach for grass or shrubs. She counts the animals' steps and bites to see how they move through the landscape, stay alert and manage to find the food they really want. "It's a really interesting process," she added.

The preferences shown by different species give valuable clues as to the impact they'll have on the land. In her preliminary research, Didkowsky is finding that no matter where they are, cattle select grass, while deer and elk adapt to their habitat and will happily nibble at either shrubs or grass. "They have different mechanisms that drive them. "It's about grazing the right animal at the right place at the right time. If you can put out an animal that is best suited for that area, you'd get the best production out of your field and out of the animal," Didkowsky said. In that way, problems such as over grazing can be eased.

The native of West Gore, Nova Scotia, is a long way from home. But growing up on a small farm, she can appreciate the practice of agriculture. After graduating high school, she attended Nova Scotia Agricultural College on a scholarship and while there, studied the grazing behaviour of sheep and cattle. Her interests led her to the U of A, where she is pursuing a master's degree in environmental ecology and biology. She joined the university's Precision Ranching initiative in the winter of 2004, and since then, has been monitoring the eating habits of cattle, bison, deer and elk brought to Kinsella from area farmers. Didkowsky heads back to Kinsella this month for a second year of research at the ranch, and is excited about spending the summer there. "I'm looking forward to being outdoors and continuing my research. Kinsella is beautiful, wide open rangeland. It's exciting to be working with these species in such a productive landscape."

The Precision Ranching Initiative is supported by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada. For further information on the Precision Ranching Initiative visit: <http://www.deer.rr.ualberta.ca/precision/>

## Message from the Editor

Tried and True and Old and New. As I look for information on breaking topics I have come to the conclusion that there are some things that are Tried and True and my traditional information sources are the best sources. However, there are some things that are changing so rapidly that current information is outdated in a matter of a day, and sometimes even an hour. The SRM-IMS newsletter is about information sharing, and the June edition typically has some white space to fill. I have attempted to fill this edition with a popular article, some internet links to both some traditional and rapidly changing information, and a grazing school announcement. I need your help to fill future white space with information sources that are pertinent to you, and if it is pertinent to you it will be of interest to the rest of the IMS membership. So, please send me your meeting announcements, your favourite internet sites, or a short paragraph on the latest and best book you have read. Keep in mind we have 3 newsletters per year: March, June, and September so meeting announcements need to be sent well in advance.

*Barry Irving*

### Information Sources:

Can't find that article on riparian management strategies? Chances are you can find it on the Montana State University, Department of Animal and Range Sciences website. Here is a sample of what is easily available:  
<http://animalrange.montana.edu/topics.htm> Information site for Montana Rangeland Managers  
<http://nris.state.mt.us/Drought/> Montana Drought Affected Areas  
<http://www.animalrangeextension.montana.edu/LoL/home.htm> Information for small acreage managers

Can't keep track of your newsletters? Bookmark this site and you will never lose them again.  
[www.srm-ims.org](http://www.srm-ims.org) International Mountain Section, SRM

Interested in the international trade in meat products produced from rangeland? Check out these sites for up to date information.

<a href="http://www.cattle.ca/cca%20home.htm">http://www.cattle.ca/cca%20home.htm</a>	Canadian Cattlemen's Association
<a href="http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdahome">http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdahome</a>	United States Department of Agriculture
<a href="http://www.beefusa.org/">http://www.beefusa.org/</a>	National Cattlemen's Beef Association
<a href="http://www.meatami.com/">http://www.meatami.com/</a>	American Meat Institute

And if you desire a little more face to face type of information exchange why not attend The Manitoba Grazing School 2005 which will be held on Wednesday, December 7th and Thursday, December 8th at the Keystone Centre in Brandon, Manitoba. This year's theme will be "Rejuvenating your Pasture Profitability"...

### ***Register Early - Space is Limited***

**COST:** EARLY BIRD \$100.00 After Oct. 21 - \$125.00. Registration includes all conference meals and a Manitoba Forage Council associate membership. Additional meal tickets available at \$25.00 each. Registration is non-refundable. Pre-payment by cheque only.

**Please make cheque payable to  
"Manitoba Forage Council".**

#### **SEND TO:**

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