



## Why Attend the National SRM Annual Meeting?



Why should you attend a national SRM annual meeting? The SRM leadership team has been doing a bit of soul searching regarding the format of the annual meeting and who have been attending over the years. A survey conducted in 2017 revealed people want a change (for survey results visit <http://www.srm2020.org/about>). People who attend the annual meeting want to network, develop professionally, and present and absorb new research. Does this resonate with you? If you are like me, you become a creature of habit and align with what makes you comfortable. Doing the same thing, year in and year out, is easy and meets certain people's needs but tends to miss opportunities as culture changes. The leadership team realized SRM was missing a huge opportunity to dialogue with each other and include outside viewpoints on important issues facing rangeland management. This year the, 73rd Annual SRM meeting will be held in Denver, February 16-20. The theme for the meeting is "A New Look: Transformation & Translation".

The structure of the meeting will feel strange to folks who have attended meetings for a long time, me included. The program will focus on transformation, student success, and translation as themes. Attendees will have access to technical information in a variety of formats; daily themed plenary speakers, interactive audience discussions, and e-posters and ignite style talks. The fourth day will include training and professional development, demonstrations, and outreach activities.

### *Transformation and Translation*

If you find the science a bit overwhelming in the way it is presented, you are not alone. We were taught a very rigid, comprehensive way to do science and communicate our experimental findings to each other. This rigid, disciplined method is a good way to learn how to do science, but it is not the best way to communicate its central message. The average meeting attendee is only able to absorb one or two key new insights from hundreds of presentations because the way we structure our conferences. The new format will force presenters to transform how we communicate and translate the complex into simple, understandable bits of information. For a provoking video in scientific communication I encourage you to watch this Youtube video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1RwJbhkCA58>. The campfire sessions, e-posters, and ignite style talks give greater opportunity to contribute and have voice than traditional discussions where one or two may dominate the discussion.

### *Student Success*

Students will take center stage on the second day of the conference with the plenary session focused on student career development and afternoon technical sessions highlighting research by undergraduate, graduate students, and the High School Youth Forum. The evening wraps up with Bridging the Gap, a social opportunity to network and ask questions with established range professionals.

Reconnect with old friends and make new ones. Engage in discussing meaningful issues and take away new insights regarding rangeland management. I challenge you to attend this year's meeting if you haven't been to an annual SRM meeting in a while. If you go every year, I hope to see you again soon!