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RNER** - *News from the SD Section of the Society for Range Management*
By: Pete Bauman

The SD Section of the Society for Range Management has had a very active year in 2019, and the level of dedication of individuals who are willing to cooperate on delivering the very best ranch and grassland education opportunities is remarkable. So many good people doing so many good things across the state provides hope that our ranch and grassland heritage will continue.

The South Dakota Section is focused on youth education. Our high school and university students represented us well at the International SRM meeting in Minneapolis, at the national range judging competition in Oklahoma, and at our annual SD Rangeland Days/Soils Days.

In addition to youth, we are committed to advancing education through our annual Excellence in Range Management Awards. We were honored to celebrate four incredible ranch operations including the Soelzer, Springer, Namken, and Connor Ranches. Further, our Section is committed to the annual Leopold Conservation Award program, having sponsored the Hamann's Blue Bell Ranch (2017 winner) and the Dan and Deb Heffner Ranch (2019 finalist).

Along with our annual ranch awards, our section is also committed to being flexible, innovative, and opportunistic. 2019 was no exception as we tailored our annual Range Camp to meet the needs of over 40 SD professional resource managers who were in need of improved range skills. Through a donation from Ag Lenders, we acquired a food trailer in an experimental effort to elevate the recognition of grasslands in SD. Look for our SRM food trailer at upcoming ranch events and tours!



South Dakota Section of the Society for Range Management food trailer donated by Ag Lenders (Photo by Matt Odden).

Finally, we wrapped up our year in September with our annual meeting and a tour of the Connor Ranch. In 2020, look for us to continue offering events like Range Camp and Rangeland Days. We'll also be partnering with the Grassland Coalition and others on another round of Excellence in Range Management tours that will include the Nix Ranch, 777 Bison Ranch, Grubl Alkali Ranch, Slim Buttes Buffalo Ranch, and the Dennis and Jean Fagerland Ranch.



South Dakota Section of the Society for Range Management food trailer donated by Ag Lenders (Photo by Matt Odden).

It's been a fun year as your President, and I'm happy to hand the gavel off to Matt Odden with NRCS and the group of dedicated officers, directors, and members of SD SRM!!!!