

Sustainable Rangelands Roundtable

Mission

The Sustainable Rangelands Roundtable (SRR) will promote social, ecological and economic sustainability of rangelands through the development and widespread use of the criteria and indicators for rangeland assessments and by providing a forum for dialogue on sustainability of rangelands.

Vision

SRR envisions a future in which rangelands in the United States provide a desired mix of economic, ecological and social benefits to current and future generations; and criteria and indicators for monitoring and assessing the economic, social and ecological sustainability of rangelands are widely accepted and used.

Background and Selected Products (2001-Present)

- The Sustainable Rangelands Roundtable <http://Sustainable.Rangelands.org> (SRR) includes over 50 organizations collaborating to develop and promote a framework for rangeland sustainability monitoring and assessment.
- Participants have identified five criteria and 64 indicators, including 27 core indicators to form a framework for standardized, periodic rangeland inventory and monitoring.
- SRR's First Approximation Report (2003) on Criteria & Indicators for Sustainable Rangelands represents a milestone in collaborative development of rangeland metrics.
- SRR's 2005 Progress Report evaluates data status and needs for core social, economic, and ecological indicators.
- A peer-reviewed paper, published during August 2009 in the Journal of Society & Natural Resources, overviews a conceptual model to show socio-economic and ecological intersections.
- Two SRR publications, one peer-reviewed and one for popular audiences, describe rangeland ecosystem services, including a framework to assist rancher's with evaluation of goods and services provided by their operations.

- An SRR framework for incorporation of an indicator-based ranch sustainability assessment to inform rancher's business plans and conservation plans is currently in a pilot phase.
- At SRR's request, federal agencies including the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Forest Service, and Bureau of Land Management partnered on implementation of indicator-based monitoring through the Multi-Agency Oregon Pilot Project (MAPP). SRR organized and conducted a scientific peer review of the inter-agency report produced to describe this project.
- Agencies cooperating on the Multi-Agency Oregon Pilot Project (MAPP) need substantial support from SRR partner organizations to perform tasks for which agencies are not explicitly responsible, including sharing information with policy makers about the utility of expansion of the MAPP to a west-wide and/or national rangelands survey.

Guiding Principles

1. Collectively, indicators should guide monitoring efforts to measure rangeland sustainability in the U.S. at the national scale. Where possible, indicators should guide monitoring efforts to measure rangeland sustainability at multiple scales.
2. Ensure that the indicators employ the appropriate temporal and spatial scales for assessing the criteria.
3. Collectively, criteria and indicators will address social, ecological, and economic aspects of sustainability.
4. Use a criteria and indicator framework as a common language and operational framework for defining and assessing sustainability. Begin by considering the criteria and indicator framework of the RSF.
5. Review and consider, as appropriate, other indicator initiatives.
6. There are numerous policy questions related to rangelands. We will focus on the vision and mission agreed to by the SRR.
7. The Roundtable process will feature outreach to stakeholders, open dialogue, and respect for differing opinions.
8. The SRR will be supportive of and compatible with improved on-the-ground management of rangelands.