

Fall GLCI Steering Committee Meeting Minutes  
September 5th, 2009  
John Ascuaga's Nugget Hotel  
Sparks, Nevada

Attendees: Kristie Maczko, Rooter Brite, John Spain, Aggie Helle, Chuck Pritchard, Pat Pfeil, Howard Straub, Dave Forgey, Gerald Jaeger, Duane Hertzler, Dick McElhaney, Keith Bartholomay, Tacy Currey, Hezekiah Gibson, Jon Gustafson, Gene Fults, Don Gohmert, Chuck Stanley, Ken Johnson, Jeff Repp, Bob Bolton, Kevin Ogles, Dennis Thompson, Niles Glasgow, Tom Sommer, Rod Baumberger, Tim Munns, Evert Byington, Bob Lee, John Peterson, Bob Drake and Monti Golla.

Bob Drake welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending. He then turned the floor over to John Peterson to give the committee a report on the progress of the 4th National Conference on Grazing Lands (4NCGL).

***4NCGL Report and Hotel Tour:***

John said that the all the committees have been busy and that the Marketing committee, with the help of Sharon Small, came up with our logo, post card mailers, trifold brochures, Trade Show/Sponsorship brochures and finally our Conference Registration brochures. Sharon Small has since moved to North Dakota with the Forest Service, but has been instrumental in producing these marketing pieces. Also, John expressed thanks to Ernie Morris, the artist who was the inspiration behind our 4NCGL logo. Sharon took much of his artwork and molded it into a workable logo for our use. The marketing committee has also worked getting information out to the National Ag Broadcasters, so they can distribute the conference information. In addition, our GLCI member organizations have all been contacted and encouraged to support the conference in numerous capacities. The next focus for the marketing committee will be the media room at the conference and the daily conference newsletters.

John said that Bob Stobaugh, along with Patti Novack, will be developing a video that will be played at the beginning of our opening session.

The program committee has also been hard at work. They have sorted through and ranked all the abstracts received for the 4NCGL. Kim Stine is working on getting all the sessions organized and should have this done soon. Currently 65-68 presenters need assistance; some will be picked up by their states or other organizations. We will only be able to fund 40 presenters.

It was requested that as soon as the conference program is finalized that it be put up on the GLCI's website so people can go and see what talks are being offered and when they will take place. This may help speakers and potential attendees decided which days they should plan to attend.

The Trade Show/Sponsorship committees have also been hard at work. The 5000 copies of the conference registration brochure have been mailed out by SRM (this

includes potential attendees and potential exhibitors/sponsors). Bob Lee has been working with Dow and NCBA to exhibit. Currently we have 7 registered exhibitors and 5 paid exhibitors. Freeman Decorating is our expo company. Pat Pfeil said that our goal was to be able to pay for 40 speakers and it looks like we have enough to support those speakers. Currently we have \$130 thousand in sponsorship.

Tacy Currey, chair of the social committee, said that Dave Stamey will be the Monday night banquet entertainment. This is an additional ticketed event that will cost \$35 to attend. Our actual cost will be closer to \$50 per attendee. She has also worked with the Nugget hotel and we will be doing a Tuesday night slots tournament. This will be for 200 to 300 people. We need to confirm this soon with the hotel. The cost to us will be minimal.

Jack Artz, retired professor with University of Nevada, will help us out getting moderators and facilitators for the conference. Also, the University of Nevada Range Club will be willing to work a few hours as facilitators if we will agree to allow them to attend the concurrent sessions for free. Tacy suggested that it would be a great idea, but that we need to make sure that they have different name badges so that we know that they aren't supposed to attend any of the meal events. Pat suggested that we invite other university Range Clubs to participate. She will be working to make this happen.

John said that our opening session is scheduled to open with Secretary Vilsack (invited). He warned that the high profile political types cannot commit this far in advance so we need to have back ups. Dean Heller, congressman from Nevada has been invited, the Mayor of Sparks and several others have been invited. We will not hold an agency head panel as we have at past conferences. The main reason is that we simply do not have the time for one, but also in the past there have been some comments that suggest that they are not very well received by attendees. The Tuesday noon luncheon currently does not have a speaker, so we could place one or two agency heads there if we needed to. Pat Pfeil suggested that we might use a GLCI video and Tacy's California video for the luncheon. John said that Ken Salazar, Secretary of the Interior would be another possibility for us.

The Committee then took a tour of the hotel and conference facilities and saw where the exhibitors and poster exhibits will be held, the opening and closing plenary session room, the luncheon and banquet room and where all the concurrent sessions will be held.

### ***Society for Range Management (SRM) - Ken Johnson***

Ken said that the biggest challenge they are facing is declining memberships. At one time their memberships consisted of 60% producers. Now only 11% of their current membership are producers. They are working to get their numbers back up. Ken said that Mary Murphy and Vickie Truillo will be in attendance at the 4NCGL.

### ***State Conservationist Advisory Committee Updates - Don Gohmert***

Don said that on September 9th, the EPA's website will have an open comment period on the new regulations (9909) on CAFO discharges in the Chesapeake Bay. Don said that this new regulation allows for zero discharges into water or air. If this regulation is accepted in the Chesapeake Bay then it may be pushed for in the rest of the country. Don warned the group that you can see what is coming for private lands by observing public lands issues.

Don said that many Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) lands will be coming out of the program soon. The EPA may come down on this to protect air quality "if wind blown soils are broken out of their permanent vegetative cover."

Regarding the Farm Bill, the first billion dollars of cost share funds weren't released until July, meaning that the agency had 3 months to do one year's worth of work. 60% of Farm Bill money will go to livestock production (aka. animal agriculture).

Don said that the new Chief of NRCS, Dave White, is probably the best, most focused on conservation Chief he has seen in the last 30 years. He is very pro-technical assistance, and has been working to increase technical assistance staff at the field level across the country. Chief White has reworked the way money is budgeted. He is starting at the field office level first and working his way up to ultimately the national office. He is funding people on the ground first.

### ***Niles Glasgow Report***

Niles said that the Conservation Security Program sign ups are going on now. Cost share dollars are for good conservation practices that you have done in the past and that you will continue to do. The sign ups are running through September 30th, 2009. They will finalize the contracts after October 1st.

### ***Agriculture Research Service Report - Ev Byington***

Ev reported that the ARS budget is pretty stable, but with inflation factored in they are actually losing funding each year. 200 or so have retired within ARS and they have no plans to refill those positions. Ev also said that 70% of the USDA's budget goes to programs like food stamps and WIC. Currently the population in the USA is around 300 million but by 2045 they expect the population to be around 400 million. In 1950 30% of a family's income was spent on food. Currently, only 8-9% of income is spent on food. Ev said that new money received by ARS would most likely have to come in one of the following categories:

1. Children's Health - child obesity
2. Food Safety - e coli for example
3. International Food security
4. Bio-fuels
5. Climate change

Regarding climate change they have two approaches: 1) mitigation - slowing it down (carbon sequestration, Cap & Trade etc...) and 2) Inevitable - how do we deal with it or adapt to it.

### ***Bureau of Land Management - Bob Bolton***

Bob said that BLM has a new director, Bob Abby and that the new Interior Secretary (Ken Salazar) has a good land ethic. Currently BLM is working on a blue print to address BLM issues. Bob passed out a video called "Hope on the Range." This is a teaser video to introduce a 28 minute documentary that is due out in February 2010 that will talk about the benefits of grazing on public and private lands. Bob asked if anyone had suggestions after viewing the "Hope on the Range" video to get them to Monti Golla and she will gladly pass them along to Bob Bolton.

Bob said that issues at the National level include:

6. Permit Issuance - permits are issued on public lands for 10 year periods. Each time they are up for renewal they must do a environmental assessment. It has really become a huge workload on them.
7. Monitoring - they have a joint cooperative monitoring program that provides invaluable data, but there aren't many permittees that participate. BLM has been taken to court on various issues and have lost because they don't have the data to back up their positions. They are trying to encourage permittees to assist them more with data collection.
8. Energy - Renewable Energy - Solar, wind, geothermal. Of all these solar has the largest impact on the grazing operator.
9. Climate Change - there are lots of models out there and they are trying to get more local information that they can compare with global information. This is impacting what they will reseed. They have observed that some invasive species are moving northward because of climate change.
10. Ecological Site descriptions (ESD's) - the manual is complete and they are waiting on signatures from agency heads before posting to the website.

### ***Executive Session - Bob Drake***

Bob Drake then took the committee into executive session. The first item of business was officer elections. Bob Lee made a motion to re-elect the current slate of officers (Bob Drake, Chair; Howard Straub, vice-chair; and Rooter Brite, Secretary). Dave Forgey seconded the motion. Dick McElhaney made a motion to close the nominations. The motion was seconded. Bob Drake called for a vote. The motion passed. All officers were re-elected by acclimation.

The committee continued to discuss other issues (Monti was dismissed at this time).

The Fall meeting next year will take place September 9th-12th, 2010 in Montana.

### ***Partnership Reports:***

Tim Munns said that the current President is Gary Steinhardt. Unfortunately, Tim nor Rod Baumberger, the other GLCI representative from SWCS has had little response from their national headquarters. They will make more of an effort to rebuilding that relationship.

John Spain reported that AFGC's new president is Miles Kuhn. AFGC is currently working on a forage based TV production that will be aired on RFD TV soon.

Aggie reported that ASI is working on a Resource Management project.

Duane Hertzler and Howard Straub reported on the current status of the Dairy Industry. Howard said that increases in imports have really caused the price of milk to drop. They are estimating that dairy farmers are losing approximately \$100 per month per cow. The Federal system that prices milk is broken.

Rooter Brite reported that NACD has a new executive director: Doug Loudenslager. John Peterson has met Doug and talked to him about the 4NCGL. He also reported that Gretchen Sammis will be having surgery soon.

Bob Lee said that NCBA is also struggling with membership and money.

Gerald Jaeger reported that NFU has a new President, Roger Johnson.

Tacy Currey reported on the CA GLCI. They have produced a folder that has their new rangeland resolution on the back side. It is being used to help educate the general public about the benefits of grazinglands, particularly private grazinglands. Monti will be sure and place a link to the [www.carangeland.org](http://www.carangeland.org) on the GLCI's website.

Hezekiah Gibson reported that United Farmers USA has received funds from Chief Dave White to bring in some undeserved farmers to the 4NCGL, so that is good news. He also talked about how United Farmers USA is heavy into Silvopasture.

### ***GLCI National Report & National NRCS Report - Tom Sommer & Dennis Thompson***

Tom Sommer said that currently the GLCI's budget (as proposed by congress) is a \$9.9 million. He is not sure where the \$9.9 million recommendation has come from, but in the past the GLCI has been funded at \$25 million. His recommendation to the Chief of NRCS will be to fund GLCI at the previous level of \$25 million.

Dennis Thompson said that two positions have been advertised recently, including Dan Caudle's old position. The Ecological Site Description (ESD's) manual is about finished and has been an agency top priority. This will be finalized this year.

### **Sustainable Rangelands Roundtable - Kristie Maczko**

Kristie said that the Ranch Assessment project will be presented at the 4th National Conference on Grazing Lands.

Meeting Adjourned.

Action Items:

1. Monti will post to the GLCI's website the conference program as soon as it becomes available.
2. Tacy or John needs to confirm the Slots Tournament with the Nugget hotel.
3. Ken Johnson will send Monti Golla the remaining 4NCGL registration brochures and any returned brochures that had bad mailing addresses.
4. Bob Lee and Aggie Helle will follow up with Monti Golla to nail down hotel arrangements and work with local contact in Billings, Montana, to make preparations for the Fall GLCI meeting in 2010.
5. Anyone with suggestions for Bob Bolton's video "Hope on the Range" should pass it along to Monti Golla and she will see that Bob receives them.
6. Monti will place a link to [www.carangelands.org](http://www.carangelands.org) on the GLCI's website.
7. Pat Pfeil will follow up with Range Clubs and see about getting student facilitators for the 4NCGL.