



# The Australian Rangeland Society

Council meeting No. 232

## MINUTES

6pm Queensland Time via Teleconference – Thursday 25 July 2013

1. **Present:** John Taylor (Chair), Graeme Tupper, Peter Marin, Annabel Walsh, Ben Forsyth, David Phelps, Kate Masters. **Apologies:** Carolyn Ireland. Noelene Duckett was present to take the minutes in Carolyn's absence.

John welcomed David Phelps to Council

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting:** The Minutes of Council Meeting 230 on 27 March 2013 by teleconference were approved. **Moved:** Graeme, **Seconded:** Annabel, **Carried**

3. **Business arising from the minutes:**

A. Resignation of Ken Hodgkinson as Chair of the Publications Committee. Ron Hacker was confirmed as the new PC Chair in an out of session meeting in late May and he commenced on 1 July 2013. The Directors approved (out of session) expenditure for a meeting between Ron, Ken and Chris Anderson from CSIRO Publishing in Canberra to ensure a smooth transition.

B. Member Survey

- a. Indigenous involvement – Peter will provide a paper on this at the next Council meeting in September
- b. Future Farmers – Ben has made initial contact and will follow up and report at the next meeting. David asked for some background – Ben explained that Council was hoping to understand the ways in which FF interact with their members as a model for the ARS. May also encourage linkages between the two groups.
- c. Council and Director Development –
  - i. Skills base – Annabel suggested that identification of current skills gaps is needed to ensure that all obligations of Council are met (eg broad governance, financial etc). John suggested Council look at how Not for Profit Boards achieve this. Peter is also attending a seminar on social media conference pitfalls/traps on August 22 and will report back to Council. There was general consensus that Council needs to ensure that replacements are available for Director and Ordinary member positions to meet duty of care requirements. **Action:** John will organize a brief internal survey of Council members to what discover what governance skills are presently held by Council members and what skills may be lacking.
  - ii. Leadership - Annabel also suggested that Council needs to develop strategies for keeping on top of current and emerging issues in the rangelands. **Action:** How to develop these strategies should be a major agenda item for the next meeting. In the interim, Council members should consider possible strategies and also whether the Society wishes to get involved in advocacy/public comment on rangeland issues.

C. Proposal from NT for the 2014 Conference

- a. Consider and make decision on 2014 conference - John reported that the organizing group in the NT is seeking guidance from Council about whether the ARS conference

should run back-to-back with the ESA conference (with some overlap if possible) or deferred until 2015. John has circulated to Council a brief survey of NT locals about how the timing of the ESA conference would influence participation in the ARS conference – general consensus (77%) said they preferred the conferences to run back to back. Council noted that our conferences are important to our Society for member recruitment, sourcing of articles and special issues of *The Rangeland Journal*, and a small but significant boost to finances. Council was concerned that members do not expect a 3 year gap between conferences and may not be prepared for it; this may also contribute to our declining membership.

- b. Council representative on Conference Organising Committee – Council endorsed both John Taylor and Ben Forsyth as Council representatives on the Organising Committee. They will bring different perspectives to the Organising Committee and will maintain Council representation during John's upcoming absences.

**Action:** John will write to the organizing committee before their next meeting (tomorrow morning, July 26) indicating that Council is supportive of the 2014 ARS Conference taking place back-to-back (ideally with some overlap) with the ESA conference. He will also indicate that several council members have offered to assist with Conference planning if needed and that Council is prepared to meet 'out of session' to consider a conference proposal and approve the transfer of 'seed money' to progress planning and reservations. He will indicate that Council has endorsed both Ben and himself as Council representatives on the Organising Committee.

- D. New Guidelines for Travel Grants – These were approved at the 2013 AGM and the matter is now closed.
- E. Motion re Rangeland Australia – Subcommittee has held 3 meetings so far but progress is slow. Council encouraged something to be drawn together in the near future to align with federal Government budget cycles. **Action:** Ben and Annabel will have a draft report with recommendations for Council by the next meeting in September.
- F. Kununurra Conference – John has written to Paul Novelly congratulating him for a successful 2012 Conference and also thanking him for his comprehensive and insightful Conference report. This report will be of great use in the future; John noted that it has already been used by the potential conference organisers in Alice Springs.
- G. ARS Archive at Middleback Station – Annabel reported that the ARS Archives will be packed up in the next month and delivered to Adelaide where they will be sorted by Annabel and Carolyn. **Action:** Graeme will hold all items for the archives for the next few months until advised that they have been re-established.
- H. Rangeland Initiative Meeting – Peter has circulated a report to Council on the National Rangeland NRM Alliance Australia Stakeholders Workshop held on 5 October 2012 which Peter attended to represent the ARS. The purpose of the workshop was to gain support from rangeland stakeholders for an Alliance and to move ahead a draft planning document. A five year project plan was taken to Canberra in February 2013 to seek support from Government. One of the initiatives supported by the Government was a National Spatial NRM Hub where information can be kept and stored and the Alliance has made application to the Sustainable Innovation Round Funding to establish some demonstration sites. Meetings have also taken place with Shadow Minister Greg Hunt - his feedback was positive and he wanted further advice on how the strategies proposed by the Alliance could link into the direct action on carbon which is now being drafted. **Action:** Peter Marin to advise the Secretariat of the Rangeland NRM Alliance that Council would like to stay involved in the Rangeland Alliance so would like to be kept informed about future meetings etc. Council members will attend these meetings if and when it is possible.
- I. Succession Planning – This is a very important consideration and should be a major item for the next meeting. **Action:** Prior to the next meeting Council members should think about possible

candidates for future Council appointments bearing in mind the skills needed, regional representation and possible future directions of the Society. **Action:** Graeme will circulate a list of current members and also those yet to renew for 2013 to help with this task.

4. **General business:**

A. **Membership – Graeme Tupper**

ARS now has 218 active members. 49 have not yet renewed for 2013. An email to "due for renewal" members was sent out near the end of June, reminding those members that it may be an advantage if they paid before 30 June if they could receive a tax deduction as a result. There were a few renewals plus a couple of members who indicated that they did not wish to renew because of a change in occupation or retirement. Most members have now received up to 4 email notices asking them to renew. Graeme noted that while a few members may have not received these messages (changed email) it appears membership numbers continue to slowly decline!

B. **Finance – Peter Marin**

Peter indicated that the current financial position of the Society remained steady. There is \$206,019.69 across all accounts with \$3,133 in the Everyday account, \$404 in the conference account and \$202,481 in the online saver account.

C. **Publications Committee**

A copy of Ron Hacker's Publication Report has been circulated to all Council members. Ron spent 2 days in Canberra in early July with Ken Hodgkinson and Chris Anderson assist with the handover. The Publications Committee are currently developing a contract for a Special Issue of The Rangeland Journal entitled "Social and ecological aspects of grassland use in northern China: Implications for climate change adaptation". There are also plans for a new series of Rangeland Lectures to be delivered in Europe and Australia. Council discussed Ron's query as to whether they require a regular report from the Publications Committee and they decided that they were happy as things were. **Action:** John will respond to Ron to let him know that Council is happy with the current process. The Publications Committee will continue to keep Council informed on appointments (editors etc) and will report on other issues as appropriate.

5. **General business:**

- A. Email received from the National Library of Australia asking for permission to archive the online publication of the ARS Conference papers. Council was in agreement with Ken Hodgkinson that there is no problem with this request – Open Access can only encourage the awareness of these ARS publications. **Action:** John will write to the National Library granting them permission.

## 6. Correspondence:

As at 14 June 2013; correspondence after this date will be reported at the next meeting.

### INCOMING

6-Feb-13	Letter	Andrew Ash	Application for the position of Publications Com Chair
9-Mar-13	Letter	Ron Hacker	Application for the position of Publications Com Chair
4-Apr-13	Email	Marg Friedel	Email exchange re NT bid for 2015 Conference
7-Apr-13	Email	Peter Marin	John Gavin interest in a position on Council
10-Apr-13	Form	David Phelps	Nomination for vacant position on Council
10-Apr-13	Form	Carolyn Ireland	Nomination for position on Council
10-Apr-13	Form	Kate Masters	Nomination for position on Council
6-May-13	Email	National Library of Australia	Requesting permission to Archive ARS Biennial Conference Papers
8-May-13	Email	Dionne Walsh	Submitting Minutes of the Rangeland Australia Subcommittee
15-May-13	Email	Ken Hodgkinson	Requesting a vote from Council re Chair of Pubs Comm and three Associate Editors
23-May-13	Email	IGC	With information about 22nd IGC
4-Jun-13	Email	Digby Race	Accepting Invitation to become an Associate Editor
9-Jun-13	Email	Glenda Wardle	Accepting Invitation to become an Associate Editor
11-Jun-13	Email	Ron Hacker	Accepting the position of Chair, Publications Comm

### OUTGOING

5-Apr-13	Email	Marg Friedel	Email exchange re NT bid for 2015 Conference
10-Apr-13	Email	David Phelps	Email exchange re nomination to Council
16-May-13	Email	Ken Hodgkinson	Reporting approval of new Chair of Pubs Comm and three Associate Editors
29-May-13	Email	John Taylor	To Carolyn and Peter re travel expenses for Ron Hacker
30-May-13	Email	John Taylor	To Rangeland Australia Subcommittee with advice
3-Jun-13	Email	Ron Hacker	Offering the position of Chair, Publications Comm
3-Jun-13	Email	Ashley Sparrow	Invitation to become an Associate Editor
3-Jun-13	Email	Dr Abraham	Invitation to become an Associate Editor
3-Jun-13	Email	Digby Race	Invitation to become an Associate Editor
3-Jun-13	Email	Glenda Wardle	Invitation to become an Associate Editor

## 7. Next meeting:

The next meeting of Council will be held by teleconference on Wednesday 4 September 2013 at 6 pm Queensland time. Council members should note that there may need to be an 'out of session' meeting called to approve the Alice Springs Conference Proposal and interim funding.

Meeting closed at 8.05pm Queensland time.