

# AUSTRALIAN RANGELAND SOCIETY

## Publications Committee

### Minutes of a Meeting held at Alice Springs, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2004

Meeting opened 4:05 pm. Members were welcomed and thanked for their attendance.

#### **Present**

Andrew Ash (Associate Editor), David Eldridge, Leigh Hunt (Chair), Peter Johnston, Ben Norton (Associate Editor), Wal Whalley, David Wilcox (ARS President)

#### **Apologies**

Ockie Bosch, Don Burnside, Noelene Duckett, Ken Hodgkinson, Malcolm Howes, Neil MacLeod

#### **Minutes of Last Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held in Kalgoorlie in September 2002 were read and accepted as a true record of the meeting. *Moved*: Wal Whalley, *Seconded*: David Eldridge.

#### **Business Arising from the Minutes**

##### **1. Rangeland book proposal**

Wal reported that he had talked with John Taylor from Rangelands Australia and he is interested in collaborating in the development of a new book on Australia's rangelands. There has also been a separate proposal within CSIRO (Neil MacLeod) for the publication of a book to update 'Management of Australia's Rangelands'. *Action*: Leigh to discuss with Neil MacLeod and John Taylor and approach Council on the matter. (Leigh subsequently spoke with both. Neil said there had been no progress. John suggested the need for two books, one focussing on biophysical aspects of management and the other on socio-economic issues. Leigh was to provide John with a list of possible topics/chapter titles for one or both books but this has not been done).

#### **Correspondence**

All correspondence was internal (between Hunt, Hodgkinson, Whalley and Wilcox) and concerned the proposal to have the Journal produced by CSIRO Publishing. There were a large number of items, which will not be listed here.

*Moved* Ben Norton, *seconded* Peter Johnston that correspondence be accepted. *Carried*.

#### **Business arising from the Correspondence**

Nil. (Discussions relating to the CSIRO Publishing proposal are ongoing – see below).

#### **Journal Editor's Report**

Wal presented his report (attached).

The main points:

- There has been a decline in manuscript submissions recently, possibly due to a number of factors.

- The proposal for production of the Journal by CSIRO Publishing, if successful, should improve readership and the number of manuscripts submitted.
- A topic for the next special issue was proposed (see general business).

Wal proposed in his report that the page charge for non-members for publishing in the Journal be removed, as the charge might discourage authors from considering the Journal as an outlet for their papers.

**Moved** Wal Whalley, **seconded** Ben Norton that the page charge for non-members be abolished. *Carried.* - **Action:** Wal to inform Malcolm Howes (Production Manager) to have the Notice to Contributors altered.

**Moved** David Eldridge, **seconded** Andrew Ash that the Editor's report be accepted.

### **Production Manager's Report**

Malcolm's report was presented (attached).

The main points:

- Savings of about \$2000 per issue have been achieved in the production of the last two journal issues.
- Production of the next issue is well advanced.
- Production of the Newsletter has continued without problems.

The Committee agreed that a letter be sent to the Society President recommending that Malcolm Howes be awarded an Honorary Fellowship of the Society in appreciation of his many (20) years of tireless work as Journal Production Manager and, in more recent years, also the printing and mailing of the Range Management Newsletter. **Action: Leigh.** (Done)

**Moved** Wal Whalley, **seconded** Ben Norton that the Production Manager's report be accepted.

### **Newsletter Editor's Report**

No report as the Editor was away. A report was received after the meeting (attached).

The main points:

- There has been a reasonable supply of articles in the last year or so, about half of which have been volunteered. Assistance from the committee and Council has also helped to identify article ideas and authors.
- Printing quality has been excellent following the move to production in WA and the process has worked smoothly, much of this due to the efforts of Malcolm Howes.
- The Newsletter is in need of a facelift but this should await a decision on proposed changes to the ARS logo.

## General Business

### 1. *Next Special Issue of Journal*

Wal proposed a special issue on low-input native grasses, based on a recent [southern Australia-wide research project](#). The committee supported this idea. Wal will prepare a context-setting paper to introduce the special issue.

Deleted: workshop

Deleted: .

### 2. *Electronic Publishing*

A general discussion was held to bring the committee up-to-date with the proposal to have CSIRO Publishing produce the Journal on behalf of the Society. At this stage Ken Hodgkinson has had several discussions with representatives from CSIRO Publishing and the publisher has prepared a draft agreement for us to consider. The editor, PC Chairman, Ken Hodgkinson and ARS President have reviewed this and a number of questions were returned to the publisher for clarification. One point that is still not clear is the cost to the Society. David Wilcox advised that we should enter negotiations with CSIRO Publishing in order to develop a proposal (including costing and other financial arrangements) for consideration by the PC Committee and ARS Council. **Action:** Ken Hodgkinson, Leigh Hunt, Wal Whalley.

### 3. *PC Chairman*

Leigh Hunt indicated his desire to resign from the Publications Committee due to having inadequate time to dedicate to publications matters. Leigh will have discussions with the ARS President concerning a replacement and agreeing on a date for the resignation to take effect.

Meeting closed approximately 5.30 pm.

## JOURNAL EDITOR'S REPORT

June, 2004

### Overview

There has been a marked reduction in the flow of papers in the first half of 2004 and I will suggest several reasons why this might have happened later in this report. For a number of reasons, the Special Issue edited by Leigh Hunt on the Drivers of Change in Rangelands from the papers presented during the first day of the Kalgoorlie Conference Vol. **25**(2), did not appear until January, 2003 for which I ask the Publications Committee to accept my apologies. We are now back on track and as of writing, Vol. **26**(1) has just been posted out. The most important development in the last year has been the negotiations with CSIRO to take over the printing and electronic publication of the Rangeland Journal in the future.

### Current status

Publication since May, 2003 included Vol. **25**(1) in June, 2003 with seven papers (104 pages) and the Special Issue in January, 2003, Drivers of Change in Rangelands, Vol. **25**(2) which contained a Guest Editorial, seven papers and one book review (91 pages). The June, 2004 issue, Vol. **26**(1), has just been posted and will contain eight submitted papers and one book review and about 120 pages. I must apologise for omitting the referees used in the Special Issue from the list of referees. It is my fault entirely and we will publish these as an addendum in Vol. **26**(2). The flow of papers has been reduced but I do not anticipate having any difficulty in filling the second issue in 2004 (Table 1) from the backlog of papers. I include a proposal for a Special Issue in 2005 (**27**(1)).

**Table 1.** Record of papers and the results for 2002 to 2004 to date.

Year	Received	Accepted	Rejected	Pending
2002	26	16	6 (Inc. 1 withdrawn)	4
2003	20	7	5	8
2004 (to date)	6	1	1	4

### Downturn in papers

The downturn in the number of papers submitted is worrying. I can think of several possible reasons which I submit for your consideration. The first is that maybe our page charges for non-members of the ARS has had some effect. Certainly, it has had little effect in getting us new members (possibly a couple) and we have yet to apply the page charges. All senior or corresponding authors of accepted papers submitted since January 2003 are members of ARS. I recommend that the page charges for non-members of ARS be dropped and that the Notice to Contributors be altered accordingly for Vol. **26**(2).

Another possible reason for the downturn in numbers of submitted papers was the publication in the February, 2004 of a Thematic Issue of Austral Ecology "Biodiversity Monitoring in Australia's Rangelands". If you look at the author list of this issue, it includes many of our regular contributors and so if they are writing for Austral Ecology, we would expect a reduced rate of submission to the Rangeland Journal.

If the Rangeland Journal can be added to the CSIRO stable as per the proposal negotiated by Ken Hodgkinson, then I would hope that the trend in paper flow would reverse.

### **CSIRO Publishing proposal**

I believe that this proposal will be put to the ARS membership at the meeting of the Society at Alice Springs. I do not believe that the increased subscription will materially affect our present membership (it's still pretty cheap) but the increased library and other exposure should keep the Journal strong and hopefully build ARS membership. I would ask all members of the Publications Committee to attend the meeting and see if we can get this proposal approved.

### **Special Issue proposal**

I wish to propose that the next Special Issue be in June, 2005 and report a series of multi-site evaluations of native and low input grasses. These, by definition, are grasses adapted to rangelands, however you like to define the latter. This was a series of uniform comparison trials funded by Meat and Livestock Australia of native and low input grasses with three sites in NSW, and one each in Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia. I will arrange for the refereeing of most of the papers and pass on those in which I am an author to one of our Associate Editors as is my usual practice. We have yet to finalise the details of the individual papers but this should be complete within the next month or so. I will then pass on the details to the members of the Publications Committee. I seek the approval of the Publications Committee to proceed with this proposal.

R D B Whalley  
Editor  
16<sup>th</sup> June, 2004

## **The Rangeland Journal**

### **Production Manager's Report 2003/04**

Two issues were published in 2003, one of them being the special issue 'Drivers of change in the rangelands.' Each comprised roughly one hundred pages and print costs amounted to about \$5000 per issue, a saving of \$2000 per issue compared with the cost when I was having it printed in Perth. In addition to the printing cost there is also my honorarium (\$1600 per issue) and postage (\$750 to \$900 depending on weight). So in round figures each issue costs \$7440.

Volume 25(1) appeared on time but 25(2) was about three weeks late due to circumstances beyond my control. Volume 26(1) is well advanced at the time of compiling this report. It will comprise about 120 pages. Page proofs are all out with the authors and I have asked that they respond within two weeks of receipt. I must admit to being a little sad that this may well be my last Journal after 15 years of acting as Production Manager. However, I recognise the benefits that will spin off to the Society and Journal and I fully support the move to CSIRO Publishing.

Reprints from the Journal have been a problem with Vol 25. First we did not sell many and secondly we made very little profit on them. After 26(1) it will probably not be my problem and I do not suggest that we raise the price or we won't sell any at all!!!

I would once again like to thank Wal Whalley for his efficiency in getting the papers to me early and preparing them for me under a rigid quality control standard. It makes life so much easier!

With Noelene being away I have been organising printing and distribution of the Newsletter. Printing costs are about \$1400 per issue and postage \$450 average per issue. All issues have met their deadline. My thanks to Noelene for her punctuality in getting clean copy to me.

Malcolm Howes  
21 April 2004

## **Range Management Newsletter 2004 Editors Report**

*Noelene Duckett, 7 Belcarra Place, The Woodlands Texas 77382 USA  
Email: aduckett7@msn.com; nduckett@ozemail.com.au*

Three issues of the newsletter continue to be published each year in March, July and November. The next issue, July 2004 (04/2) will be sent out directly after the Alice Springs conference and will hopefully include conference reports from a variety of attendees.

Over the last two years there has once again been a reasonable supply of major articles. It was pleasing that more than half of these articles were volunteered; others were obtained following contact from the Editor. Ian Watson and Leigh Hunt have helped me with numerous ideas for major articles – this support is very much appreciated.

A number of Council members have also been of assistance. Lachlan Pegler has done a great job with his regular communication reports on Council business – I am sure these reports give members a better idea of what Council has been up to. I would also like to thank Tim Ferraro for providing the financial reports for 2000-2002 for inclusion in the March 2004 issue and Ian Watson for providing the new members lists and up to date membership forms in timely manner.

Malcolm Howes has continued doing a great job with the printing and posting of the newsletter. The printing quality of the last few issues has been excellent particularly the photographs. I would like to personally thank Malcolm for his continued assistance and congratulate him on the excellent job he has done.

In my last report I made comment that I was interested in changing the look of the newsletter but that I thought it was best to wait until the Society's new logo (and possible slogan) had been finalised. I still think this would be a good idea if and when the logo is developed.

Noelene Duckett  
3 July 2004