

In late August, the first of three regional ESD training workshops was held at the Central Plains Experimental Range near Nunn, Colorado and the High Plains Grassland Research Station at Cheyenne, Wyoming. The workshops came about as a result of a pilot Interagency ESD training in November 2010.

57 individuals from 9 states and Washington D.C. participated (including SRM workshop organizers/instructors). More ESD workshops are planned for the future including at the 2012 Annual Meeting. I would strongly recommend that you check them out on the SRM website. At a time when travel budgets are limited, the ESD workshops offer a tremendous bang for the buck.

Here are some of the highlights of the 1st Regional ESD Workshop and what you may expect if you are fortunate enough to attend one in the future:

- An agenda that thoroughly covers every aspect of the development of ESD's to date and their application.
- The workshop and sessions are organized and lead by the leading experts in the ESD's and in Rangeland Ecosystems. In addition to their expertise, they offer a contagious enthusiasm and dedication for the continued development of the ESDs and their application.
- The broad base of expertise among the registrants and their participation contributed tremendously to the learning experience .
- A good balance of indoor sessions and field work with an emphasis on being in the field.
- The SRM organizers and instructors reviewed feedback and evaluations from the participants daily and implemented changes / additions to the following day's agenda to accommodate the needs of attendees. I have never seen or experienced that anywhere.
- The Central Plains Experimental Range and High Plains Grasslands Research Stations locations provided "as good as you can get" rangeland sites for the field work. The facilities for the classroom sessions and accommodations were excellent.
- Of course, as with most SRM related functions, part of the agenda involved social activities and food. The opportunities to see old colleagues and friends and to meet new ones always adds to the learning experience.

Overall, the combination of the above factors came together to provided for a synergy that resulted in one of the most valuable range-related trainings that I have ever attended. The continued development and application of ESDs is a powerful tool that truly melds science and management of rangeland ecosystems in a way that makes sense. Don't miss an opportunity to attend one of these workshops.