

Rangeland Health Team (Herrick, Pellant, Pyke & Shaver)

Since the National Research Council issued its report on Rangeland Health in 1994 and the Society for Range Management issued its report on Unity in Concepts and Terminology in 1995, Jeff Herrick, Agricultural Research Service; Mike Pellant, Bureau of Land Management; Dave Pyke, U. S. Geological Survey; and Pat Shaver, Natural Resource Conservation Service have worked to determine how the ideas included in these reports can be incorporated into rangeland management. This interagency team has conducted field work to better develop the ideas introduced in the original publications, authored peer reviewed and technical publications summarizing what they learned through these field studies, and conducted numerous workshops to demonstrate the utility of the rangeland health concept.

The rangeland health team has more fully developed the idea introduced in Rangeland Health of how multiple attributes could be used for assessment of the soil, watershed, and biotic conditions of a site. The team brought into the rangeland health assessment process important components of SRM's Unity in Concepts and Terminology report, particularly the importance of ecological site descriptions. The team has consistently emphasized that a rangeland health assessment is a point in time evaluation that can help a resource manager identify areas with problems that need to be addressed—in other words a way to prioritize work. The team emphasizes that one cannot determine from a rangeland health assessment what has caused a problem, nor can rangeland health be used to monitor trend.

In summary, the rangeland health team has taken basic concepts - developed by the National Research Council, the Society for Range Management, and many rangeland scientists and managers - and advanced these concepts to a new level, taken the ideas to the field for numerous tests, and has provided the rangeland management community with new tools to evaluate rangelands.

The Society for Range Management is pleased to recognize Jeff Herrick, Mike Pellant, Dave Pyke, and Pat Shaver for their important contributions to our profession with the Outstanding Achievement Award.

