

Cook, George S

George S Cook completed his BS in Range Management at Utah State University. He then began a long and distinguished career with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) where he worked as a soil conservationist, range conservationist, and district conservationist. George has received numerous awards in the past such as: the Utah Soil Conservation Commission "Graham S. Quate" Award; Utah Section SRM Range Manager of the Year Award-1995; SRM Fellow Award-2000; and USU Alumni Association Lifetime Achievement Award-2002. He has been very active in Society for Range Management at the national and section levels, including service as Utah Section President in 1991 and SRM I&E committee member in 1995-1996. He is a person who faithfully attends all the section and national SRM meetings, even now that he is retired.

George's most distinguished services to the Utah Section have been to host Dutch oven and steak cookouts around the state to make money for the section's scholarship fund. This has earned the section approximately \$50,000 which has been invested into the scholarship fund to promote the range management profession to students. Also, for 23 years, George has annually given of his time freely to teach and help USU Extension at the Utah Natural Resources Field School (UNRFS), which hosts 8-25 high school students to learn about range and natural resource management. George's humble, patient and gentle teaching style has positively impacted approximately 300 students.

While at NRCS, George wrote many of the Range Site Descriptions that are now or have been developed into Ecological Site Descriptions. He brings a passion to the job not only for the science but also for the information that flows out of that science. His close work with the western states Plant Materials Centers has provided experimental and new plant varieties for rehabilitation and planting trials on many harsh and inhospitable sites such as coal mine tailings or other disturbed sites. George has helped many of the new NRCS personnel become familiar with ecological sites and their relationship with the land they are responsible for managing. He is an authority in conservation on the land, plant identification, and is a champion for conservation transfer to those who follow in the profession of range management.

George and his wife Sarah have two children and six grandchildren.

