

# *Outstanding Young Range Professional*

*Coombs, Duane K.*

Duane Coombs is an unusual and remarkable young man. As a Utah State University graduate by education, and a “cowboy” by a life time of experience, he has brought professionalism, intelligence, and insight to the Smith Creek Ranch grazing operation in central Nevada.



One of Duane’s first responsibilities when he started work at the Smith Creek Ranch was to work with Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the ranch’s consultants to develop and implement an allotment management plan. He was instrumental in developing the grazing management system for the plan by incorporating innovative ideas on training cattle to graze uplands and use off-riparian watering areas and implementing selective culling of the cattle herd based on trainability of the cattle to the herding system.

Duane is a strong advocate of the adage that you cannot manage what you do not measure. He participates in the ranch’s third-party monitoring and in agency monitoring and he has implemented a monitoring program of his own.

Duane is constantly striving to learn more about resource management and he is always willing to share his ideas and experience with local land managers, interest groups and livestock growers. Duane also has the ability to be adaptable, he learns from mistakes, and devises solutions to meet resource and economic goals. Duane has been active in Nevada’s sage grouse planning effort and is implementing sage grouse management practices on the ranch. He is also working on pinyon juniper control and aspen regeneration projects on the Smith Creek Ranch.

Duane has a strong land and resource management ethic and believes in sharing this with youth and is an avid supporter of Nevada Range Camp. Ask Duane about some of his accomplishments and he will start naming off the young men and women that have worked from over the years. He will tell you that he most proud of his cowboys. Without good, well trained and enthusiastic employees, much of what has been accomplished on the Smith Creek Ranch would of never have occurred. Duane is proud to say that he has been influence to at least two of his employees who are now attending college in rangeland management programs.

Duane Coombs is most deserving of the Outstanding Young Range Professional Award.

