

Sustained Lifetime Achievement

Taylor, Dr. Charles A. "Butch"

Dr. Charles A. "Butch" Taylor's work at the Texas A&M Sonora Research Station since 1983 has established him as a leading authority in Texas and the Southwest on rangeland resource management, especially in the areas of livestock grazing management and the use of prescribed fire and goats for managing juniper and prickly pear cactus. Through his leadership, the Sonora Research Station has become a premier location to see and learn about the latest rangeland management techniques.



Dr. Taylor discovered that terpenoids limit juniper consumption by goats. He found that there is genetic variation within goats and the use of a selective-breeding program can create a goat herd with greater genetic ability to tolerate terpenoids. This, along with top killing large junipers, has allowed ranchers to seriously address the juniper invasion threatening ranchers and rural communities of the Edwards Plateau.

Butch's innovative research on prescribed fire has shown that fires conducted under hot, dry conditions can effectively control juniper and prickly pear cactus while not permanently damaging the desirable grasses. His low-cost summer burning program is rapidly being adopted by ranchers. He also recognized that prescribed burning required more skill, manpower and equipment than individual ranchers possess. Thus, he has "neighbors helping neighbors" carry out prescribed burns on 40,000+ acres of the over 1 million acres represented by the Edwards Plateau Prescribed Burning Association 200 members.

His research on rangeland water budgets was completed long before the importance of rangelands as watersheds for expanding urban populations was recognized. Thus, he is partially responsible for the Texas Brush Control Program - targeting over one million acres of Texas rangelands for brush control to increase water yield.

Recognizing the changing landscape of land ownership, with the "new" owners knowing little to nothing about ranching and rangeland management, Dr. Taylor and two colleagues created the Academy for Ranch Management to teach these new landowners how to be good stewards of their range resource. Currently they have taught over 70 students with land holdings in excess of 500,000 acres.

For his continuing dedication to rangelands, it is an honor to present Dr. Charles A Taylor with the Sustained Lifetime Achievement Award.

