W R Chapline Research Award

The **W.R. Chapline Research Award** gives special recognition to members of the Society for **exceptional and sustained research accomplishments in range science and associated disciplines**, including biology, morphology, physiology, and the ecology of specific range species, ecosystems, relating plant environments, wildlife and domestic livestock on such lands.

Dr. David D. Briske

The recipient of the 2008 W. R. Chapline Research Award is Dr. David D. Briske, Professor, Department of Ecosystem Sciences and Management, Texas A&M University. Dr. Briske's research contributions have significantly contributed to important advances in both rangeland ecology and rangeland management for approximately 30 years. Dr. Briske has organized his research program to serve as a bridge between plant ecology and rangeland management. Attainment of this challenging goal required an in-depth understanding of contemporary science and its relevance to rangeland issues. His work has contributed to several rangeland principles that support effective rangeland conservation and management such as; grass and grassland responses to herbivory, population ecology of bunchgrasses, and most currently, contributions to state-and-transition models and thresholds. As an example, the book chapter co-authored with Jim Richards addressing plant responses to defoliation that was published in the Society for Range Management publication, "Wildland Plants: Physiological Ecology and Developmental Morphology", remains one of the most definitive syntheses of perennial grass responses to grazing. Dr. Briske has utilized this research insight to develop a well-funded research program with great relevance to the rangeland profession. The recognition and impact of his research is evidenced by the frequency with which his publications have been cited and the number of high profile speaking invitations that he has received.

Dr. Briske continues a high level of research activity by evaluating the ecological foundations for state-and-transition models and thresholds. He was senior author on two invited synthesis papers addressing state-and-transition models, ecological thresholds and rangeland health in the January 2005 and May 2006 issue of Rangeland Ecology and Management. This work provides a means for rangeland professionals to begin to integrate existing ecological information with the new assessment procedures that are currently being developed and implemented. Dr. Briske and two TAMU colleagues have established a large-scale field facility on the Texas A & M campus to explore the effects of global change on oak savannas. This project investigates the effects of precipitation redistribution (summer to fall and spring) and simulated global warming on several widely distributed rangeland plant species including eastern red cedar and little bluestem.

Dr. Briske has contributed to numerous outreach activities that demonstrate his commitment to translate ecological information into practices and policies that promote effective rangeland stewardship. He brings cutting-edge science into the classroom as well as the research arena. His students develop a clear understanding for how science relates to practical rangeland issues. This approach has placed him among the highest rated educators in both undergraduate and graduate classes in the Department of Ecosystem Sciences and Management at Texas A&M University.

It is with great honor that the Society for Range Management hereby presents Dr. David D. Briske with the 2008 W R Chapline Research Award.

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