

# ***Outstanding Young Range Professional Award Recipients***

## **Dr. Thomas Aaron Monaco**

Dr. Thomas A. Monaco has made major advancements in our understanding of the physiological functions of rangeland plants in his position as range ecologist at the USDA-ARS Forage and Range Research Lab at Logan, UT. He used this knowledge to develop conceptual and quantitative models that linked impacts of physiological trait variation with ecosystem processes and properties. These approaches are useful for understanding how rangeland ecosystems can be managed to sustain ecosystem function, and how function can be restored in degraded, weed-infested systems. This framework is beneficial for improving community stability, invasion resistance, and soil protection on rangelands in the Intermountain West.



He is frequently sought after for his expert advice and collaboration, and has given numerous invited presentations during the last five years. He currently collaborates on two comprehensive research and demonstration programs (USDA-IFAFS and USDA-ARS Area Wide Program) across a four-state area. This work examines methods and plant materials to repair degraded rangelands dominated by invasive plants.

Dr. Monaco served as President of the SRM Utah Section and was on the Editorial Board of *Rangelands*. He organized symposia, made presentations, and judged graduate student competitions at SRM annual meetings. He is currently Chair of the SRM Rangeland Invasive Species Committee and Chair of the 2010 Wildland Shrub Symposium, which will be held in Logan, UT. His comprehensive research activities and active outreach efforts are clear reflections of his widely recognized contributions in the field of range ecology. Dr. Monaco is truly one of SRM's outstanding Young Range Professionals.