



**Transition through Collaboration:  
Internal and External Partnering to  
Build a  
Regional Rangeland Ecology and  
Management Web Resource**

**USAIN 11<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference**

**April 30, 2008**

**Wooster, Ohio**

**By Jeanne Pfander and Barbara Hutchinson  
University of Arizona**



# Presentation Outline

- 1) Introduction to collaboration (description)
- 2) AgNIC
- 3) Arizona Rangelands
- 4) Rangelands West
- 5) Rangelands West survey results
- 6) Lessons learned/Conclusions





# Collaboration



- Definition : “to work together...to cooperate.”  
(American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language 2008)
- Synonyms: teamwork, partnership, alliance, relationship, etc.
- A process...





# A Continuum



- Philanthropic” to “transactional” to “integrative”

(Austin, J.E. 2000. The Collaboration Challenge...)

- Varying levels of
  - “collaboration mind-set,”
  - strategic alignment,
  - collaboration value, and
  - relationship management





# Philanthropic



- Mind-set: gratefulness but also separateness
- Alignment: minimal
- Collaboration value: unequal exchange of resources
- Relationship management: Grants given with limited interaction; Minimum performance expectations





# Transactional



- Mind-set: increased understanding and trust
- Alignment: shared vision
- Collaboration value: exchange of resources
- Relationship management: emerging organizational infrastructure increases communication and personal connections





# Integrative



- Mind-set: “We” instead of “I”
- Alignment: strategic tool for operation
- Collaboration value: exchange of ideas
- Relationship management: deep personal relationships exist across organization





# Cooperation, Coordination, Collaboration

(De Farber, B. 2006. Collaboration Basics.)

- Increasing levels of risk and formality and depth or pervasiveness of relationships
- True collaboration:
  - full commitment to a common mission
  - organizational structure is in place
  - comprehensive planning defines roles and procedures
  - Participating organizations essentially change the way they do business





# Partnership Purpose & Strategic Fit

(Austin. The Collaboration Challenge)

1. What are you trying to accomplish through the collaboration?
2. Where does your mission overlap with potential partner's mission?
3. Do you and your potential partner share an interest in a common group of people?
4. Do your needs match up with your partner's capabilities, and vice versa?
5. Would the collaboration contribute significantly to your overall strategy?
6. Are your values compatible with your prospective partner's?

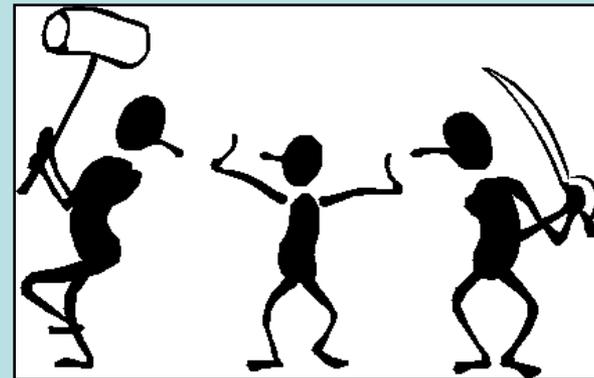




# Pitfalls

(De Farber and Austin)

- Turf concerns
- Differing resource bases or lack of resources in general
- Changes in leadership
- Lack of sufficient, consistent, and/or quality communication
- Lack of accountability

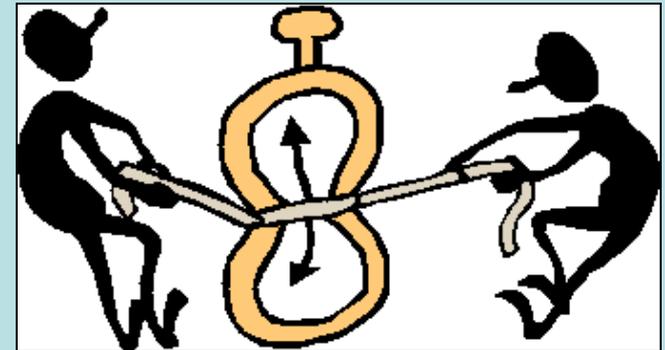




# Why Try?

(Linden, R.M. 2002. Working Across Boundaries)

- Budget constraints
- “Service first” interest or philosophy
- Complexity of the challenges facing our institutions
- Blurring of boundaries
- Demand from constituencies for accountability, agility, and responsiveness
- Advances in information technologies





# Benefits

(Linden. Working Across Boundaries)

- Better use of scarce resources (cost savings)
- Potential for organizational and individual learning and growth
- Ability to create or achieve something you wouldn't be able to do on your own
- Higher quality, more integrated product or service for the end user





## Agriculture Network Information Center

*AgNIC facilitates and participates in partnerships and cooperation among institutions and organizations world-wide that are committed to the identification, delivery and preservation of reliable, freely-available, evaluated, digital content and quality services for agriculture, food, and natural resources information.*

(revised mission statement - 2008)





# Arizona Rangelands

*an AgNIC Initiative*

- 1995: GSA funding to ASU for five projects including an AgNIC prototype
  - NAL Cooperative Agreement funding to UA
    - Reference pilot project
    - Directory of ag-related resources
    - Digitizing *Journal of Range Management* archives
- 1996: Arizona Rangelands web site goes live

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA**  
DIGITAL COMMONS

Search This Journal | Advanced Search

**The Journal of Range Management Archives**

**Publisher:** The Society For Range Management  
**Type:** Journal  
**ISSN:** Issn 0022-409X  
**Issues/Year:** 4  
**Format:** PDF  
**Index:** 1948 – 2003  
**Full-text:** 1948 – 2003  
**Description:** *The Journal of Range Management* (now titled *Rangeland Ecology and Management*, effective vol. 58, 2005) is a publication of the *Society for Range Management* (SRM). It serves as a forum for the presentation and discussion of facts, ideas, and philosophies pertaining to the study, management, ecology and use of rangelands and their resources. The journal is peer-reviewed and provides international exchange of scholarly research and information among persons interested in rangelands.

The Journal of Range Management/Rangeland Ecology & Management Archives, hosted at the University of Arizona Digital Commons, is an open-access site providing online access to the backfiles of the journal starting with volume 1 (1948).

**Contents**

- [About this Site](#)
- [Introduction to Arizona Rangelands](#)
- [Rangeland Science and Management](#)
- [Policy Issues](#)
- [Economics, Business Management and Marketing](#)
- [Education, Teaching, Careers](#)
- [General Resources](#)
- [Site Map](#)

**Search**

**Highlights**

- [NRCS Ecological Site Descriptions](#)
- [Journal of Range Management](#)
- [National Environmental Policy Act \(NEPA\)](#)
- [Clean Water Act - Chino Winds Demonstration Project](#)
- [For Kids and Teachers](#)
- [Practical Tools](#)
- [Geospatial Applications](#)
- [Climate and Weather](#)
- [Society for Range Management](#)

**ARIZONA RANGELANDS**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA**  
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences  
Arizona Cooperative Extension  
University of Arizona Library

**AgNIC**  
AGRICULTURE NETWORK INFORMATION CENTER

**Arizona's Contribution to:**  
Rangelands of the Western U.S.

[The University of Arizona](#) | [College of Agriculture and Life Sciences](#)  
[Arizona Cooperative Extension](#) | [University of Arizona Library](#)





# Early Interdisciplinary Collaboration

*an AgNIC Initiative*

- Librarians as the primary organizers
- Rangeland scientists & extension personnel contributing authoritative content and a user focus
- Internet technicians providing the technical foundation for the system





# External Collaborations

*an AgNIC Initiative*

- Arizona Common Ground Roundtable
  - Toolkit for Profitable Conservation Ranching
- Arizona Office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
  - Ecological Site Guides
- Arizona Remote Sensing Center (ARSC)
  - Geospatial Applications for Rangeland Management

University of Arizona AgNIC - Rangelands **Managing Rangelands**

Ecological Site Guides Map Search - Arizona

Layers	Tools	Map Layer Values
<input type="checkbox"/> Redraw <input type="button" value="Reset"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Counties <input type="checkbox"/> Towns <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Highways <input type="checkbox"/> Roads <input type="checkbox"/> Railroads <input type="checkbox"/> Rivers <input type="checkbox"/> Watersheds <input type="checkbox"/> Township/Range <input type="checkbox"/> Topo quads <input type="checkbox"/> Game Mgmt Units <input type="checkbox"/> Landowners	<input type="button" value="Zoom In"/> <input type="button" value="Zoom Out"/> <input type="button" value="Pan"/> <input type="button" value="Identify"/> <input type="button" value="Help"/>	Site Guides <a href="#">Search</a> Land Res Unit <a href="#">41-3A2 Southern Arizona Semidesert Grassland</a> Soil ass'n <a href="#">NICKEL-LATENE-CAVE</a> Ann Precip (in) 15 County <a href="#">COCHISE</a> Landowner PRIVATE T'shap-Range T14S - R20E Topo quad <a href="#">WILDHORSE MOUNTAIN</a> Watershed <a href="#">Lower San Pedro</a> X, Y -110 32, 32 22 Zoom 2.0

University of Arizona AgNIC - Rangelands **ARIZONA RANGELANDS**

**Geospatial Applications for Rangeland Management**

[Home](#)  
[About This Site](#)  
[Introduction](#)  
[Science & Mgmt](#)  
[Policy Issues](#)  
[Economics](#)  
[Education](#)  
[General Resources](#)  
[Practical Tools](#)  
[Geospatial Apps](#)  
[Climate and Weather](#)  
[Ask Questions](#)  
[Feedback](#)

What are Geospatial Applications?  
 Geospatial technology takes several forms: remote sensing, geographic information systems (GIS), the global positioning system (GPS), geographically referenced land process models, and 3D landscape visualization. Although each technology has a different end use, all involve information collected by satellites and sent back to earth. [\(more >>\)](#)

Satellites collect data that is not readily evident from the ground and that allow land owners and managers to "see" their land from a new perspective. Many tools exist to convert raw satellite data into maps, animations, and graphs that are easy to understand and use. A growing number of these tools can be accessed through the Internet.

Understanding Geospatial Tools  
 Remote sensing is an excellent tool for rangeland managers. The term "remote sensing" is usually used to describe the technique of looking at the earth from afar, either from airplanes and other low-flying objects, or from satellites. [\(more >>\)](#)

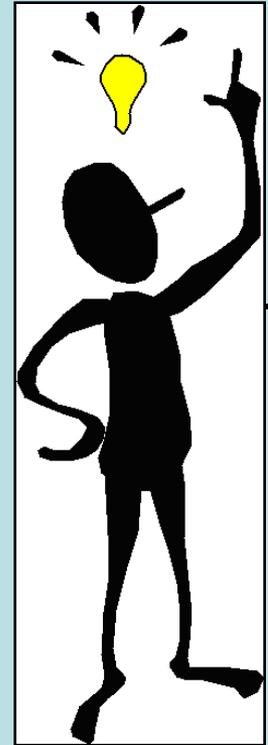
Geospatial Tools on the Web \_\_\_\_\_





# Beginning of Rangelands West

- Recognition that:
  - could not cover all issues related to understanding and management of rangelands
  - rangelands don't stop at political boundaries
- Idea:
  - invite other Western land-grant universities to join in the effort and move from an Arizona focus to a Western regional emphasis





# Involve Stakeholders



- UA Libraries and College of Ag administrators
- Administrators attending the Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture Western Regional Joint Summer Meeting
- Western Council for Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching (WCARET)





# Western Rangelands Partnership

- March 2002 meeting in Tucson
- 12 states sent representatives including both librarians and range specialists in keeping with the collaborative, multi-disciplinary model begun at the UA
- Representatives also from SRM, AgNIC, and NRCS





# Purpose of First Meeting

- To explore the possibility of forming a loosely structured consortium, similar to the AgNIC model, to provide access to evaluated rangelands information, resources, and learning and decision-making tools:
  - through state-specific websites (e.g., Montana Rangelands, Kansas Rangelands, and California Rangelands etc.)
  - with an umbrella Western rangelands gateway to link all together (first called *Rangelands of the Western U.S.* and now called *Rangelands West*).

\*\*The meeting resulted in a unanimous decision to pursue this common agenda/vision.



# Rangelands West Portal

Now 19 Western Land-Grant Universities in a Win-Win Collaboration



# Planning for Sustainability

- Western Extension & Research Administration Committee (WERA) status (2004)
  - legitimizes Rangelands West work and travel as officially sanctioned AES activities
- 2006: governance structure was drafted and voted on by the members of the Rangelands West partnership





# Governance Structure

- **Levels of membership:** Core and Affiliate
- **Elected Officers:** three-year commitment coming in as Secretary, then moving into the Vice Chair, and Chair positions respectively and, if possible, alternates between librarians and range specialists to maintain the cross-disciplinary collaborative model
- **Committees and Task Forces:** Includes Steering Committee, Outreach, Technical, Annual Meeting Planning, Evaluation & Assessment, and Content Working Groups





# Partners Survey

- Please identify your affiliation:

Academic department  Cooperative Extension  Library  Other

- If applicable, please characterize the extent of any internal/local campus collaboration in the development and operation of your state's Rangeland West Web site:

None  Some  Moderate  Considerable

- What do you see as the primary benefits and challenges of working collaboratively with your campus Rangelands West partners?
- What do you see as the primary benefits and challenges of working collaboratively with other states in the Rangelands West partnership?
- Do you have any other comments or observations about the Rangelands West collaboration?





# Survey Results



## Collaboration at campus level:

- Most respondents indicated only “some” (or fairly low) level of collaboration at the campus level in development of their state site.
- Only one institution showed “considerable” (high) level of collaboration from all partners (both extension/academic and librarian).
- Common areas of collaboration mentioned:
  - web site design, functionality and content
  - shared support from both library and college administrations



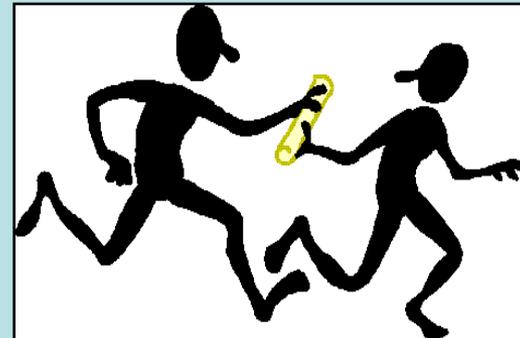


# Survey Results



## Benefits at campus level:

- Different but complementary skills, knowledge, expertise, and points of view that the extension, academic, and librarian partners bring to the initiative
- Networking, relationship building, and a sense of community



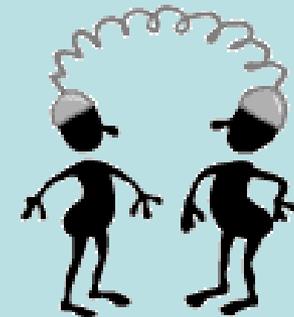
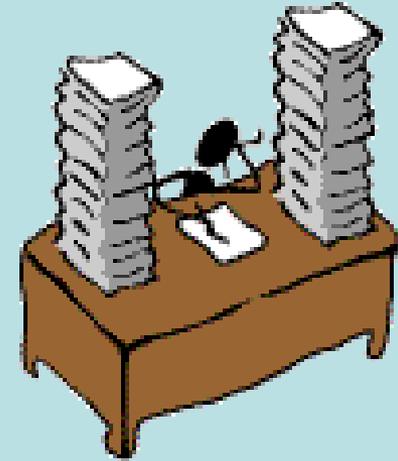


# Survey Results



## Challenges at campus level:

- Scarce time and heavy workload
- Constrained funding resources
- Communication and decision-making challenges
- Technical programming/"IT" support





# Survey Results



## Regional collaboration benefits:

- Networking
- Shared resources for rangelands info
- Fun; sense of community and shared purpose
- “Sum is greater than the parts”

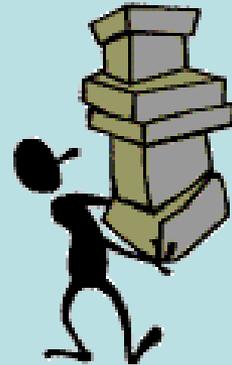


# Survey Results



## Regional collaboration challenges:

- Communication
- Heavy workloads and competing priorities
- Funding / financial support
- Technical issues with regional web site

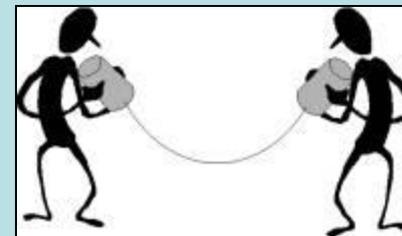




# Lessons Learned



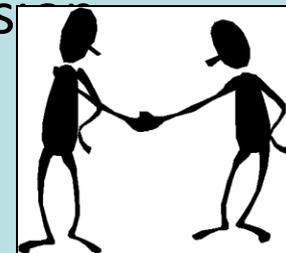
- Librarians and extension personnel have missions and professional *cultures that focus on outreach and collaborations*, therefore both AgNIC and Rangelands West have a solid foundation for the future as long as time, energy and resources can be sustained. (common mission)
- Even with *extensive voluntary commitment* and buy-in that might be considered features of integrative collaborations, there is still a need for ongoing high level support and considerable institutional resources to sustain the collaboration over time. (shared vision)
- It is *critical to keep partners engaged* through effective and consistent communication, and to maintain a shared sense of purpose. (organizational structure)





# Conclusion

- Progress is not always linear or one-directional & all partners do not operate at same level of collaboration.
- Collaborative organizations and partnerships naturally move back and forth between stages and modes of working together, although hopefully finding a gradual tendency toward the “higher” end of the continuum and true integrative collaboration.
- Rangelands West is still largely dependent on one institution, but that is slowly changing; Steering Committee is working to build a stronger collaboration to achieve its mission:
  - Pursue external funding & institutional commitments
  - Improve communication & sharing among partners
  - More actively engage more partners



# Meet the Western Rangelands Partnership



# Questions / Comments?

---

Jeanne Pfander, University of Arizona Libraries

[pfanderj@u.library.arizona.edu](mailto:pfanderj@u.library.arizona.edu)

Barbara Hutchinson, University of Arizona  
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

[barbarah@ag.arizona.edu](mailto:barbarah@ag.arizona.edu)

