

## Western Rangelands Partnership: providing access to rangeland information and research

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Rangelands are an important part of Wyoming's character and economy, and UW Libraries has been doing its part to educate and inform all rangelands stakeholders, whether they be in agriculture, natural resources, conservation, or recreation.

Since 2005, UW Libraries has been involved in the Western Rangelands Partnership and its Rangelands West information site. Originally founded by the University of Arizona in 2002, the Western Rangelands Partnership now encompasses nineteen land-grant universities in the western United States, including the University of Wyoming. Through its website, the Western Rangelands Partnership seeks to build on the strengths of each of the twelve university members by providing current research, information, and content regarding issues, best practices, and resources in the western range.

Since 2008, UW Agricultural Research Librarian David Kruger has led the efforts of UW Libraries in the Western Rangelands Partnership, along with UW Extension Range Specialist Rachel Mealor and UW Rangeland Professor Jon Tanaka. Kruger, Mealor, and Tanaka have actively maintained a Wyoming Rangelands website for Wyoming constituents and represented the

University of Wyoming at the partnership's annual meetings. In March of 2010, University of Wyoming Libraries hosted the ninth annual Western Rangelands Partnership meeting for all nineteen land grant universities at the recently renovated and expanded William Robertson Coe Library. Agricultural librarians and range specialists came to Laramie from as far away as Anchorage, Alaska.

Most recently, UW Libraries and University of Arizona Libraries have applied for a grant to digitally capture and preserve the valuable historical narratives and best practices of ranchers who have made a living on Wyoming and Arizona rangelands. UW Libraries is also working with the University of Arizona and the University of Florida to create a single user interface for digitally accessing agricultural resources throughout the United States.

UW Libraries' involvement in the Western Rangelands Partnership supports the National Agricultural Library and its Agricultural Network Information Center (AgNIC). As agricultural and rangelands information becomes increasingly digital, UW Libraries will continue its efforts to ensure that information is readily accessible to the Wyoming stakeholders who depend on it.