

# 2013 Western Rangelands Partnership Annual Meeting in Alaska

## May 12-14



Escape to the “Last Frontier” for fun, entertainment and..., oh yes, hard work as we once again get together to plan and guide the Partnership into the future. After all the state motto is “North to the Future”.

We are doing our best to give you a truly unique Alaskan adventure in an extremely short time frame, by Alaskan standards, but we are well on our way to accomplishing that goal.

First we will start in Anchorage, Alaska’s largest city (population: 295,570), for our Sunday evening social. We will meet Monday in the Consortium Library on the campus of the University of Alaska Anchorage for our business meeting. Monday evening we will be transported 43 miles northeast to the site of the 1935 Matanuska Agricultural Colony, now the city of Palmer (Population: 6,122). On Tuesday we will use the facilities at UAA’s MatSue College outside Palmer before moving to the University of Alaska Fairbanks Matanuska Experiment Farm (shown above) for our wrap-up sessions. We will be having hayride tours of the Farm (weather permitting), dinner featuring our own grass-fed beef and reindeer sausage while being entertained by the Ken Peltier Band. Shuttles to the airport in Anchorage are provided based on demand.

If you can come in early, we are offering a group tour Saturday (May 11) heading south out of Anchorage along the scenic Seward Highway down Turnagain Arm making several stops including the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center. Mike Miller, the director, will personally guide us through the park which houses the Wood Bison Reintroduction Project before returning to Anchorage in the evening. On Sunday, Mother’s Day, admission is free to the Alaska Native Heritage Center where you can enter examples of the living quarters of the diverse native people, see dance performances and demonstrations of the events in the Native Youth Olympics. Shuttles will be running from the hotel to the Center. If you stay later, we will offer a group tour of sights in the Matanuska Valley on Wednesday (May 15). Including the Muskox Farm and the Reindeer Farm. Spouse/partners accompanying attendees are also welcome on the group trips.

The temperatures in mid-May range from a balmy (by Alaskan standards) 55°F during the day down to night time lows of 39°F so plan accordingly. We can have sun, rain, or sometimes even snow during the month so we have to be flexible in our plans. If the sun is out, our days are long, about 17 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> hours, with sunset at 10:35 PM. We will have updates as we get closer to the event so you will know what to expect.

We hope you can join us for this event,

*Norm Harris*

Norm Harris, Associate Professor of Range Management, University of Alaska Fairbanks