

Thank you for coming to the 2013 Western Rangelands Partnership Annual Meeting in Alaska



The excitement is over but I must admit that when Jodee texted that she had taken the last of our visitors to the airport, I felt a moment of relief followed by a feeling of sadness that it was all over. It was fun to share our beautiful home state with both old and new friends. We hope the meeting was productive for everybody and that the partnership developed that vision for the future. We also hope everybody had a great time and may have actually learned a little about Alaska. However, we are disappointed our Spring never appeared while the group was here (our weather still sucks, snowed 6 inches today).

We wanted to thank the twenty-four intrepid souls who made the long trek to Alaska to participate in the meeting, you are the spirit of the Rangelands Partnership (I think I got that right, we are now leaving off the “Western” because we are so much more than that). We were also delighted to see that so many family members could make the trip. Their addition made the meeting more delightful and much more fun. I must say I was surprised there were so many “moose kissers” in the crowd, by the way did anyone get a video of Mark kissing the moose?

We are now starting the job of paying all the fine people that helped make our event so successful. My Dean/Director at UAF donated \$1,000 for the meeting and the Dean of Libraries at UAA gave \$650 (amazingly generous for a non-member institution). These donations plus the meeting fees should cover all the costs associated with the meeting, thereby enabling us to reach our break-even goal. Once we have completed making our payments we will post the resulting balance sheet.

The meeting would not have been possible if not for the strong support team that helped plan and host the event (and tried to keep me out of trouble). Jodee Kuden was amazing to watch as she skillfully arranged the Anchorage portion of the meeting (what a great library building) which went off without a hitch. Theresa Isaac and Beth Hall showed great ingenuity and went the extra mile to make things run smoothly. The three of them cannot be thanked enough for their efforts. Thanks to Jim Ericksen for cooking up the beef for our meal on Tuesday and driving the tractor for our hayride. Thanks to Jud Scott for cutting the meat and helping to serve the meal on Tuesday. Thanks to the rest of the Farm crew for their help in cleaning and setting up the facility. It is their efforts that made the meeting work. Thanks to all the great speakers; Gary (Magic Bus), Greg Finstad, Talis Colberg, Denise (Reindeer Farm), Peggy Hunt, Ashley (Muskox Farm), Bill Collins, you made it truly interesting. Finally, thanks to my wife Connie for her extraordinary efforts and help with the event. If a person is measured by their friends, I am extremely lucky and blessed beyond belief.

Norm Harris

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