

# IDAHO RANGELAND

Resources  Commission

## 2019 Annual Report

### Big year for IRRC!

#### *BLM National Stewardship Award, 5-part Wolf Series and I-Roam Education Trailer*

As Idaho grows by leaps and bounds, it is critical that new residents and youth understand what makes Idaho's wide open spaces so appealing. The livestock industry is a critical component of managing rangeland and keeping rural communities economically viable year-round.

Our mission is to provide educational programs about rangeland, livestock grazing and the importance of natural resource management to local communities and healthy landscapes. Our target audiences are the urban youth and outdoor enthusiasts who recreate and live in areas surrounded by rangeland.

The Idaho Rangeland Resources Commission (IRRC) completed some big projects this year! This spring, after three years of collecting stories and video, Steve Stuebner completed the 5-part Life on the Range series, "Wolves in Idaho." This series was rolled out in May via Idrange.org, YouTube and Facebook, and in Idaho newspapers.

The wolf series has had huge engagement, with more than 318,000 views of these videos online. (see more on page 3) The wolf series is being featured in IRRC educational curriculum for Idaho high school classes to facilitate discussions of endangered species, livestock management and the social implications of wolves on both our history and our future. If you know a high school teacher who would be interested in this subject, please have them contact me to request the curriculum materials.

Another big achievement in the last year: Completion of the I-ROAM (Idaho Rangeland Outdoor Adventure Mobile) youth educational trailer and curriculum guide. This trailer is a unique, hands-on, educational exhibit for students to learn about rangeland ecology, management

issues and career opportunities. (see more on page 2)

In September, we were thrilled to receive a National Sagebrush Steppe Stewardship Award from the BLM in recognition of IRRC's many outreach and educational programs. We were nominated for this honor by Idaho BLM State Director John



*L-R: April Hulet, University of Idaho; Darcy Helmick, Simplot Company and IRRC board member; Josh Uriarte, Governor's Office of Species Conservation; Gretchen Hyde, IRRC Executive Director; John Ruhs, BLM Idaho State Director.*

Ruhs. Presented at the Public Lands Council meeting in Great Falls, Mont., the award recognized the Life on the Range video series (over 65 stories to date), the I-ROAM youth education project, and the Care/Share outdoor recreation campaign to minimize conflicts between recreational users and livestock on public land. These efforts are unique to Idaho. Our polling data shows that we are making a positive impact on public perceptions about grazing livestock on public and private rangeland.

After 25 years of work for the Rangeland Commission, it was incredibly gratifying to receive a national award for our outreach efforts.

Please contact the IRRC office at (208) 398-7002 or email me at [ghyde@idrange.org](mailto:ghyde@idrange.org) for more information or if you would like to help us with education outreach.

Gretchen Hyde, *Executive Director*



## Education Update

Youth education continues to be priority for the IRRIC in K-12 Idaho public schools and with partner groups like 4-H and FFA.



The I-ROAM trailer is the culmination of working with youth educators, rangeland specialists and exhibit professionals. We received grant funds from the BLM, NRCS, and USFS to make the project possible. Antonia Hedrick, a talented artist and designer who works in the BLM public affairs office, offered her amazing skills to bring all of our ideas to life in the illustrations for the I-ROAM trailer (inside and out), and in our curriculum materials.

The I-ROAM trailer has a companion booklet, "Roaming the Range with Sage," the reliable border collie, that guides the students through the lessons. This endearing dog takes the students through the I-ROAM trailer and the seasons of the year. A curriculum guide allows teachers to expand the lessons either before or after the trailer experience. There are also two replica traveling educational tents which can be used indoors or in fair weather, if the trailer is not available.

The I-ROAM trailer is available for your local school or youth event. Please contact IRRIC to schedule a visit or become involved as an I-ROAM Ambassador!

Next summer, the IRRIC and the University of Idaho will host an Idaho Range Camp for teachers and students of all ages.

This team event will include continuing education workshops for teachers, educational field trips for everyone, and a youth competition. Mark your calendars for June 29-July 3, 2020, in McCall at University of Idaho's McCall Outdoor Science School (MOSS). Space is limited so make your reservations soon!

Watch the IRRIC calendar of events for more items of interest coming up in the next year: <https://idrange.org/events/>



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## IRRC 5-part wolf series gets broad distribution online and print

**W**hew, it's been a busy and eventful year for the Life on the Range video crew!

Top of the list was launching the 5-part educational series on wolves in May. See all the stories on the Life on the Range web site ([idrange.org/life-on-the-range](http://idrange.org/life-on-the-range)), or the Life on the Range YouTube channel.

We rolled out the wolf series in 5 successive weeks on our digital platforms to coincide with the weekly delivery of *Farm & Ranch* in the *Idaho Falls Post-Register*, *Idaho State Journal* in Pocatello, the *Idaho Press* in the Treasure Valley, and it's also delivered with many weekly newspapers such as the *Emmett Messenger-Index*, *Kuna-Melba News*, *Jefferson County Star*, plus the *Bozeman Chronicle* and the *Herald-Journal* in Logan, Utah.

We also partnered with the Idaho Farm Bureau and Idaho Cattle Association to share our wolf series in their communications channels, both print and online, and our material was shared by the Public Lands Council, National Cattlemen's Association, *Western Livestock Journal*, several hunting groups and more.

It was truly amazing to see our stories literally take off on YouTube in a way that surpassed all expectations. Part 4, "Unforeseen impacts caused by wolves in Idaho," has been viewed by more than 154,000 people on YouTube, and Part

5, "Wolf Management in Idaho," has had 125,000 views and counting so far.

Our stories were not the sugar-coated stories put out by wolf advocates in the Yellowstone National Park area, but the brutal truth of how an estimated minimum population of more than 1,000 wolves and more than 100 wolf packs are harming Idaho ranchers, hunters and Idaho's rural economy from I-84 to Canada.

In 2018, there was a record number of direct livestock kills statewide, making our series especially timely. Wolf carnage totals nearly 1,000 cattle, 3,150 sheep and 53 guard dogs over the last 25 years, causing \$1.6 million in damages and impacting 435 ranchers and counting in Idaho.

On a more positive note, IRRC was proud to partner with the Owyhee Initiative collaborative group to produce a documentary video about how the ranchers in Owyhee County and Boise environmental groups developed a long-range plan for the spectacular Owyhee Canyonlands. We rolled out the Owyhee Initiative video as a premier at the UI Rangeland Center's Fall Forum in early October to a packed meeting room in Marsing. The story and video have been shared in the *Idaho Statesman*, KIVI-TV Channel 6, the *Idaho Press* and most recently *Farm & Ranch*.

Earlier in the summer, we published a video documentary on man-made structures that resemble beaver dams called beaver dam analogs (BDAs). We profiled a BDA project on rancher Chris Black's land in Owyhee County, and a win-win project on Hawley Creek near Leadore, put together by the Governor's Office of Species Conservation in Salmon.

In the fall, we produced a documentary on the Gill Ranch in Lucile and Marty Gill, the outgoing board president of ICA. That story features a mix of history, Marty's thoughts on key issues facing the cattle industry, and the challenges of running cattle in steep and scenic country by the Salmon River and Hells Canyon.

As always, please go to the IRRC web site, [idrange.org](http://idrange.org) to see any of our 65-plus Life on the Range videos and written feature stories.

*Steve Stuebner is the writer and producer of the Life on the Range education series, a public education project sponsored by IRRC.*

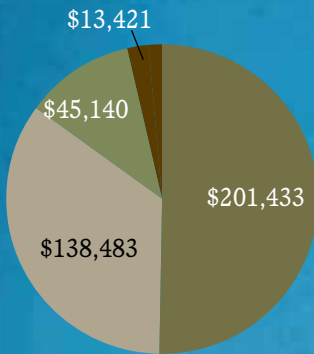




## IRRC Revenue



Total Funding \$398,477



- Assessments
- Grants
- License Plate
- Other



Like us on Facebook!

[facebook.com/Life-on-the-Range](https://facebook.com/Life-on-the-Range)

The IRRC appreciates every dollar contributed by ranchers, landowners, and partners. The IRRC is audited annually and presents the financial statements to the germane legislative committees. This year includes two large grants from BLM and NRCS to produce the I-ROAM project. IRRC supports the Life on the Range program fully, underwrites with proactive messages about rangeland and ranching on NPR stations in Boise and Pocatello and Idaho Public Television statewide. Local grant projects are funded by IRRC and are available for 2020 as well.

Our educational, public relations, and research programs would not be possible without the support of the ranching community. The license plate is another source of funding which goes directly into the educational campaigns. The IRRC works hard to get the most out of every dollar.

### IRRC Board and Advisory Members:

A volunteer board of five voting members, appointed by the Governor, governs the IRRC.

#### IRRC Board Members

**Royce Schwenkfelder,**  
**Chairman**

*SS Cattle Company  
Cambridge, Idaho*

**Todd Holbrook, Vice Chair**  
*Holbrook Ranches LLC  
Bancroft, Idaho*

**John Peavey**  
*Flat Top Sheep Company  
Carey, Idaho*

**Ross Goddard**  
*Goddard Cattle Company  
Tendoy, Idaho*

**Darcy Helmick**  
*Simplot Livestock  
Grandview, Idaho*

#### IRRC Advisory Members

*BLM Idaho State Director*

*Idaho Department  
of Fish and Game Director*

*Idaho Department  
of Lands Director*

*Idaho State Department of  
Agriculture Director*

*Governor's Office of Species  
Conservation Director*

*Natural Resource Conservation  
Service, Idaho State Conservationist*

*US Fish and Wildlife Service Idaho  
State Director*

*US Forest Service Forest  
Supervisors*

*University of Idaho College of  
Natural Resources Dean*

*University of Idaho College of  
Agriculture and Life Sciences Dean*

*University of Idaho Rangeland  
Center Director*