



The Australian Rangeland Society

MINUTES PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday 18 November 2015

5pm Australian Eastern Daylight Time
By Teleconference

Ron Hacker opened the meeting and welcomed members at 5.02 pm.

1. **Present:** Ron Hacker (Chair), Wal Whalley, Ken Hodgkinson, Steve Blake, Don Burnside, Jocelyn Davies.
2. **Apologies:** Andrew Ash, David Eldridge, Russell Grant, Noelene Duckett
3. **Other items of General Business**
None
4. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Amendment - Jocelyn Davies to be added to the members present at the previous meeting.

Motion: That the minutes of the Publications Committee meeting held by teleconference on 9 September 2015, as amended, be accepted.

Moved: Don Burnside

Seconded: Wal Whalley

Carried.

5. **Matters arising from previous minutes** (not listed as separate agenda items)

Nil

6. **Progress report on *The Rangeland Journal***

6.1. Report from A/Editor in Chief

Wal Whalley reported that issue 5 of 2015 was now available of the CSIRO web site although hard copies have apparently not yet been delivered. Eleven papers are now in hand for the final issue of 2015 - the Special Issue from the 2015 Biennial Conference - although a couple of these may not be accepted.

Jocelyn Davies spoke to a brief report she had prepared, based on her experience as a joint guest editor of this special issue, relating to the operation of the CSIRO Publishing ScholarOne system and the information provided in the Journal's Authors Instructions. They included:

- Guest editor access – difficulty in accessing manuscripts in Scholar One if more than one guest editor is preparing a special issue;
- Endnote – Endnote uses Output Style files to translate from the reference details in its data base to the citation format used by particular journals. No current style file for *The*

Rangeland Journal is available in Endnote X7. CSIRO Publishing may be able to provide an improved style file for downloading. The Author Instructions could also usefully refer authors to the Thomsen Reuter website where the most recent style file can be downloaded.

- Keywords – keywords available for selection from the ScholarOne menu are too restrictive for the scope of TRJ. If this is actually the most appropriate system, then the Author Instructions should be amended accordingly.
- Referee suggestions – authors are requested in ScholarOne to nominate three referees with contact emails and the Author Instructions could usefully alert authors to this requirement.
- Animal and human research ethics – the Author Instructions request authors to provide animal ethics approval numbers for research involving captive animals but there is no comparable requirement for wild animals or research that has involved people (including sociological research). This requirement is too narrow for current research practice.
- Formatting to journal requirement - Author instructions under 'Submission of manuscripts' appear to contain contradictory information in relation to the placement of tables and figures (in a separate file vs at the end of the manuscript). Some journals currently allow flexibility in the formatting of manuscripts at submission while providing specific guidelines for the preparation of revised manuscripts. This may be a useful practice for TRJ.
- Conflicts of interests and funding – some journals are now quite prescriptive in their requirements to reveal actual or potential conflicts of interest, as well as sources of funding and their influence on the work. TRJ may need to consider developing similar policies.

Action: Jocelyn Davies to provide Wal Whalley with her report; Wal Whalley to take up these issues with CSIRO Publishing and revise the Author Instructions, as appropriate (noting that some matters may require further discussion by the Publications Committee).

6.2. Appointment of Editor-in-Chief

Ron Hacker outlined the process that has been implemented so far - Expressions of Interest have been invited from Associate Editors, Advisory Editors, Guest Editors and a short list of 197 reviewers selected by PC members from the list of 2,590 provided by CSIRO Publishing. Two individuals have been approached personally following suggestions made by Associate or Advisory Editors. This process has resulted in formal Expressions of Interest from Dr Paul Novelty and Prof. Shikui Dong.

The PC considered that the search should be extended by;

- Seeking advice from Chris Anderson regarding any potential candidates that CSIRO Publishing may be able to identify (not necessarily from a rangeland background);
- Seeking to contact international research institutes via CSIRO Publishing;
- Distributing an email alert to previous reviewers not initially short listed;
- Attempting again to contact Dr Tony Grice;
- Distributing an alert via the ARS Facebook account.

Dr Novelty and Prof Dong should be advised that the search is continuing.

Action: Ron Hacker to implement the above actions to extend the search.

6.3. Special issues

6.3.1. Mining in rangelands

Don Burnside reported that he has had no success in trying to follow up this matter with the Mining Industry Council. The Publications Committee agreed not to pursue this matter further. Any special issue on mining in rangelands will require an alternative approach.

6.3.2. State of knowledge of Australian rangelands

Andrew Ash advised (by email) that he has had preliminary discussions of this concept and will circulate a proposal when more fully developed.

6.3.3. Mongolian steppe ecosystem

The Publications Committee considered the proposal submitted by Professor Gao entitled 'Pathways to climate change adaptation, ecosystem function and sustainable development in Mongolian steppe ecosystem'.

The PC supported the proposal in principal subject to the following amendments:

- Papers to include Mongolian authors if the issue is to deal with both Mongolian and Inner Mongolian grasslands;
- The focus of the issue must be clear in the title – the emphasis on experimental work in the titles listed is not consistent with 'Pathways' which implies an emphasis on policy or strategy;
- The issue include an introductory paper which sets the work in the context of the two related special issues recently published, and a synthesis paper at the end (not at the start, as proposed) which draws all three special issues together as far as possible.
- Guest editorship is shared with a co-editor whose first language is English.

The PC agreed to accept the offer from Prof Gao to fund a visit to China by the guest co-editor for the purpose of assisting with preparation of manuscripts prior to submission.

Action: Wal Whalley to contact Prof Gao to

- advise of the Publications Committee's in-principle decision and the amendments sought;
- request submission of a full proposal in the usual format (example to be provided) which includes details of funding arrangements;
- accept with thanks the offer to fund a visit by a guest co-editor to be selected or approved by the Publications Committee;
- seek confirmation of willingness to enter into a contract with the Australian Rangeland Society to produce the special issue, a draft copy of which will be provided after acceptance of the full proposal.

6.3.4. Additional opportunities for special issues

Wal Whalley advised that a vegetation regeneration program in the former North West Catchment Management area, conducted from Armadale, would conclude with a conference in January 2017 that could provide material for a Special Issue. The cost of \$10,000 would probably be acceptable to the organisers. The conference might also provide an opportunity for a Rangeland Journal lecture, possibly utilizing the presentation of an overseas speaker. If agreeable to the organisers the Society may be able to fund the cost of video production for this lecture. This expenditure would require Council approval.

Action: Wal Whalley to advise the organising committee of the PC's interest in the production of a Special Issue based on conference papers, and the potential to nominate one presentation as a Rangeland Journal Lecture.

Jocelyn Davies suggested that the Gas Industry Social and Environmental Research Alliance (GISERA) might be a source of material and funding for a special Issue.

Action: Jocelyn Davies to make informal enquiries to explore the potential of this option.

6.4. Sampler issue (virtual issue) of TRJ

The sampler or virtual issue is in preparation and CSIRO Publishing plan to launch it between email alerts for Issue 6 (2015) and Issue 1 (2016) to coincide with the Society for Range Management conference in USA (Jan. 31 - Feb. 4, 2016). The issue requires some introductory text which Ron Hacker will provide.

Action. Ron Hacker to provide CSIRO Publishing with introductory text for the sampler (virtual) issue.

6.5. Survey of recent papers

This initiative by Ron Hacker had been reported as a work in progress in the minutes of the 9 September 2015 meeting. It was aimed at establishing the likely extent of post-acceptance changes to manuscripts. With the passing of John Milne, and the establishment of a protocol to notify the Editor-in-Chief and corresponding authors of such changes there is no longer a need to pursue it. The PC resolved to discontinue this action.

7. Range Management Newsletter

Noelene Duckett reported by email that she is currently working on the November newsletter and is expecting a few more articles to come in over the next few days to finalise the issue. It will include an obituary for John Milne (written by Andrew Ash) and possibly a report from the recent Rangeland Carbon conference in western NSW. This will be the last newsletter to be published in hard copy.

8. ARS web site

In the absence of Russell Grant, Ron Hacker reported that the papers from the 2015 Biennial Conference were now available on the web site.

The PC considered the capability statement submitted by Camilla Osborn in support of her proposed appointment as Web Site Editor and agreed that she was well qualified for the role.

Action: Ron Hacker to forward a recommendation to Council for appointment of Camilla Osborn as Web Site Editor with effect from 1 January 2016

9. Social Media

9.1. Wright Social contract

Heidi Wright's contract finishes 4 December with the Final Report due 14 December. This will be distributed to the PC for out-of-session consideration with a view to enabling the final payment to be made before Christmas.

9.2. Draft policy documents

No response has yet been received from PC members to the three draft social media policy documents distributed on 3 September 2015, apart from brief comment made at the meeting on 9 September 2015. Clarification with Heidi Wright of any issues of concern, and redrafting, will occur after this initial feedback from the PC.

Action: Members to review social media policy documents and advise Ron Hacker of any concerns that require clarification with Heidi Wright; Ron Hacker to commence redrafting of the documents after initial feedback is complete.

9.3. Social Media Editor

Amber Marshall has been appointed Social Media Editor with effect from 23 September 2015. She has since been collaborating with Heidi Wright and has taken over partial responsibility for management of the Facebook account. She will assume full responsibility of all accounts from 5 December 2015. Ms. Marshall should be provided with the draft social media policy documents as the currently stand.

Council, by out-of-session vote, has approved the revised role statement indicating that the line of responsibility for the SME is directly to the Publications Committee rather than to the Web Site Editor. However, the role statement still does not indicate if the SME is a member of the PC, as are the Web Site Editor and the RMN Editor. The PC resolved that the SME should be an ex-officio member of the Publications Committee.

Action: (1) Ron Hacker to advise Council of the PC's resolution that the SME should be a member of the PC (2) Draft social media policy documents to be provided to the SME.

10. General business

10.1. Proposal for John Milne Memorial Lecture

The PC resolved to recommend to Council that the Rangeland Journal Lecture delivered at each Biennial Conference be named the John Milne Memorial Rangeland Journal Lecture. Iain Gordon, as a close associate of John Milne, could be an appropriate first presenter.

Action: Ron Hacker to convey this resolution to Council.

10.2. Extension of appointments – Associate Editors (Dube, MacLeod, Pressland, Cooke)
All these Associate Editors have agreed to an extension of their term apart from Brian Cook who has elected to retire from the role. John Reid and Iain Wright were suggested as possible replacements.

Action: Ron Hacker to convey these decisions to Council

10.3. Extension of appointments – Advisory Editors

All Advisory Editor appointments expired on 30 September 2015 but have been extended by Council pending acceptance of the extension by the individuals concerned. Eight of the 10 Advisory Editors have agreed to accept an extension. Brian Walker has elected to retire and no response has been received from Z Nan. PC considered that another attempt should be made to contact Z Nan.

Action: Ron Hacker to advise Council of the acceptances and attempt to make contact with Z Nan; PC members to suggest possible replacements for Brian Walker.

10.4. Role statement for Advisory Editors

At present there is no role statement for Advisory Editors. A draft role statement had been circulated and was discussed. Ken Hodgkinson suggested that the responsibilities should include provision of advice to the Editor-in-Chief on the appointment of Associate Editors, if required. No further amendments were suggested. The PC resolved to forward the revised role statement to Council for approval.

Action: Ron Hacker to forward the revised role statement for Advisory Editors to Council for approval

11. Date of 2016 meetings

The following dates for PC meetings in 2016 were accepted, noting that not all meeting dates may be utilized (e.g. the International Rangelands Congress meets in Canada 17-22 July which may preclude the July meeting) but should be reserved in members dairies.

20 January

16 March

11 May (before AGM)

13 July

14 September (RBH overseas)

23 November

The meeting closed at 6.43 pm.