

Rangeland Technology and Equipment Council (RTEC)—Past, Present and Future

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The Rangeland Technology and Equipment Council (RTEC) is an informal organization whose members are interested in developing and testing new equipment and technology to improve disturbed rangelands. Today's RTEC originated in 1946, when the Reseeding Equipment Development Committee was formed to meet the need for rangeland seeding equipment to improve forage production on degraded western rangelands. Later the organization was known as the Vegetation Rehabilitation Equipment Workgroup until the current name was assumed in 1990. Among the many accomplishments of RTEC and its predecessors were the development of the rangeland drill, brushland plow and contour furrower. More recently RTEC members assisted in developing the disk chain, a site preparation/seeding machine capable of economically treating large acreages and co-sponsored a restoration symposium held in Boise, Idaho in 1999. Although equipment remains the emphasis, new technologies are addressed in the organization's seven workgroups: 1) Information and Publications, 2) Plant Materials, 3) Fire, 4) Seeding and Planting, 5) Seedbed Ecology, 6) Structures, and 7) Weeds and Weed Management. Future plans include the updating of the widely used "Catalog: Revegetation Equipment" first published in 1980. The challenges faced by all rangeland managers in restoring or maintaining rangeland productivity and diversity will continue to be addressed by RTEC's workgroups and members as expressed in the groups mission statement: "To promote the wise use and improvement of rangelands through the supporting functions of equipment development and application of innovative technology."