

What Are The Important Differences Between California's CRM Program and The International SRM's CPRM and CRMC Programs?

By Larry Ford, Chair, Certification Panel

CALIFORNIA CERTIFICATION/LICENSE—Certified Rangeland Manager (CRM)

The Certified Rangeland Manager (CRM) program in California is designed to provide evidence of professional competency, to protect the public interest, and to ensure proper management of California's rangeland resources.

The CRM license is required by law and public resources code for professional range management activities on non-federal, state and private "forested landscapes" in California, unless the work is performed personally by the owner of the land. A "forested landscape" is defined as "tree dominated landscapes and their associated vegetation types on which are growing a significant stand of tree species or which are naturally capable of growing a significant stand of native trees in perpetuity." Such a definition doesn't explain what constitutes a "landscape," and seems to exclude some types of non-forested rangelands. Nevertheless, the CRM license is clearly required for work on hardwood rangelands, while not necessarily for work on permanently treeless shrublands or grasslands that are separated from any "forested" landscapes. Furthermore, in the conduct of rangeland management on affected rangelands or resources, a CRM must be directly in charge of the professional work, and all professional products must be prepared by that CRM or by others under his or her supervision. Only a licensed individual may use the title of "Certified Rangeland Manager". These legal requirements were clarified in a recent analysis by the state Attorney General's office.

The California-Pacific Section of the Society for Range Management (CalPac) is authorized by the California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection and by statute to administer the CRM Program. CalPac's Certification Panel certifies applicants based on their educational and experience qualifications, including experience with California rangelands, and passing of the CRM examination, which is developed and graded by the Panel. The examination focuses on principles and skills as applied to California rangeland types. The Panel recommends the certified individuals to the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, which then may license the CRM after successfully passing the exam. CRMs are strongly encouraged to maintain their proficiency through continuing education, but there is no formal requirement to do so. As of June 2010, there are 78 valid CRMs licensed to practice in California. There have been 92 CRMs licensed since the beginning of the program in 1994, but 14 have withdrawn, not renewed, or otherwise relinquished their licenses.

For additional information about the CRM program, including application forms and instructions, go to <http://www.rangelands.org/casrm/HTML/certified.html>.

SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS

The Society for Range Management (SRM) certifies individual professionals as a Certified Professional in Rangeland Management and/or a Certified Range Management Consultant as a means of improving the standards of professional expertise used to plan and implement management of public and private rangelands broadly around the U.S and the world. These programs are voluntary, and not legally mandated by the state under a government agency as is the California CRM Program. Individuals may use the certifications by SRM as credentials to demonstrate their expertise for consulting or employment.

Certified Professional in Rangeland Management (CPRM)

The SRM Procedures for Certification as a Professional Rangeland Manager states the CPRM designation signifies the individual has met the basic qualifications to do professional work in this field, has pledged to follow the SRM Code of Ethics, maintains proficiency through a specified level of continuing education, and has not been found to engage in unprofessional conduct. Granting of the CPRM status by SRM is based on the applicant's educational and professional experience qualifications and passing of the CPRM exam, or by other means specified in the Procedures for Certification. As of August 2010, there were 390 active CPRMs in good standing (pers. comm, Vicky Trujillo, SRM).

For additional information about the CPRM program, including application form and procedure description, go to http://www.rangelands.org/cprm_public/.

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Certified Range Management Consultant (CRMC)

The SRM Procedures for Certification of Range Management Consultants states the CRMC designation signifies the practitioner is adequately trained and ethical in the science of range management, practices a standard of consultation that is in the best interests of the public and our environment, and serves as an independent, paid consultant or with a private or nonprofit contractor. The CRMC's area of specialization is, within the broad definition of range management, that of "grazing and its impact on plants and soils." The intent of this focus is to avoid certifying ecologists, botanists, agronomists, reclamation experts, land administrators, land appraisers, and individuals with other specialties closely allied to range management. Like the CPRM, the CRMC addresses rangeland management broadly around the U.S and the world. The program is voluntary, and not legally mandated as is the California CRM Program. Granting of the CRMC status by SRM is based on the applicant's prior certification as a CPRM, a combination of formal education and length and diversity of professional experience qualifications, and record of publications and consulting reports that demonstrate writing ability. CRMCs are listed in a registry of consultants maintained by the SRM for consultation by the public. As of August 2010, there are approximately 35-50 valid CRMCs (pers. comm, Vicky Trujillo, SRM).

This program is undergoing some changes. For additional information about the CRMC program, including application form and procedure description, go to http://www.rangelands.org/education_cert_professionals.shtml.

SUMMARY

Question	CRM	CPRM	CRMC
Which entity administers the program?	CalPac-SRM, Certification Panel & California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, Foresters Licensing Office	Society for Range Management, CPRM Committee	Society for Range Management, CRMC Committee
What's required to be certified?	Education, experience, references, exam, adherence to SRM Code of Ethics, fees (continuing education encouraged)	Education, experience, exam, references, adherence to SRM Code of Ethics, continuing education (recorded by SRM), fees	Education, experience, references, writing skills, adherence to SRM Code of Ethics, working as contractor, concurrent CPRM, fees
What specializations does it cover?	Rangeland management in California	Rangeland management in the U.S. and world	Consulting on grazing and its impact on plants and soils in the U.S. and world
What geographic areas and vegetation types does it cover?	Non-federal, state, or private "forested landscapes" in California	Rangelands in the U.S. and world	Rangelands in the U.S. and world
For what is this certification required?	Use of the title "CRM;" license to practice professional rangeland management, except for owners of the affected property	Not required, but useful for certification as NRCS TSP and other employment	Not required, but useful for consulting
How many people are currently certified?	78 (Jun 2010)	390 (Aug 2010)	Est. 35-50 (Aug 2010, under analysis)