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Policy & Institutions

Regional & Community Development

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The Western Economics Forum

A peer-reviewed publication from the Western Agricultural Economics Association

Purpose

One of the consequences of regional associations nationalizing their journals is that professional agricultural economists in each region have lost one of their best forums for exchanging ideas unique to their area of the country. The purpose of this publication is to provide a forum for western issues.

Audience

The target audience is professional agricultural economists with a Masters degree, Ph.D. or equivalent understanding of the field that are working on agricultural and resource economic, business or policy issues in the West.

Subject

This publication is specifically targeted at informing professionals in the West about issues, methods, data, or other content addressing the following objectives:

- Summarize knowledge about issues of interest to western professionals
- To convey ideas and analysis techniques to non-academic, professional economists working on agricultural or resource issues
- To demonstrate methods and applications that can be adapted across fields in economics
- To facilitate open debate on western issues

Structure and Distribution

The *Western Economics Forum* is a peer reviewed publication. It usually contains three to five articles per issue, with approximately 2,500 words each (maximum 3,000), and as much diversity as possible across the following areas:

- Farm/ranch management and production
- Marketing and agribusiness
- Natural resources and the environment
- Institutions and policy
- Regional and community development

There are two issues of the *Western Economics Forum* per year (Spring and Fall).

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Special Issue: Public Lands and Resources

Public lands and resources play a significant role in the welfare of western communities, producers and citizens. Four articles are featured in this special issue as follows:

Nagler, Bastian, Taylor and Foulke provide evidence of the contribution to the Wyoming State Economy of motorized recreation on public lands trails. They juxtapose these with values for non-motorized recreation.

Richardson, Herbst, Harris and Helmar demonstrate the value of private irrigation investments in concert with different public lands post-fire grazing regimes. They convey this exercise with the use of a representative public lands grazing ranch in Nevada and present the alternatives based on simulation techniques.

Warziniack and Thompson approach fire prevention and watershed protection investments on public lands with a financial tool aimed at reducing wildfire risk in northern Colorado. The tool is based on measures of excess benefits and the (risk) standard deviation of the portfolio of prevention investments.

Bilby and Wilson revisit state water management in Arizona and examine the extent to which the policy met its intended objectives. A Best Management Practices program was evaluated by an expert panel to determine the impact of the program on water conservation practices by irrigators.

USFS fire prevention investment, post fire production decisions by grazers, public lands recreation and state water policy all reflect key issues in public lands and resources. These articles provide insights into some of the facets of these issues.

Donald M McLeod, editor
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