

October 16, 2025

North American Women Pastoralists' Gathering
February 7, 2026
Monterey, CA

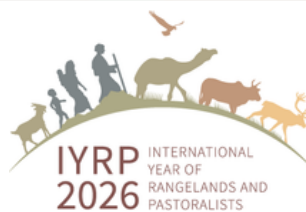
Women represent a significant yet often underrepresented portion of livestock producers in North America and globally. Despite their critical role in pastoral systems—raising cattle, sheep, and goats among others—women pastoralists face unique challenges including limited access to peer networks, markets, grazing lands, and leadership development opportunities. (We are using the broad definition of pastoralist - someone who raises mobile grazing livestock.)

The pastoral sector is at a critical juncture, facing challenges from climate variability, invasive species, generational succession concerns, and market access barriers. Women pastoralists bring unique perspectives on sustainable management, community development, and holistic approaches to rangeland stewardship that are essential for the future resilience of these systems.

We are excited to be planning a regional Women Pastoralist Gathering in conjunction with the upcoming Society for Rangeland Management Annual Meeting in Monterey, CA. This Gathering will address a documented need for targeted programming that empowers women through peer-to-peer learning, skills development, and network building. According to the 2017 USDA Census of Agriculture, women are principal operators on 14% of U.S. farms and are involved in day-to-day decision-making on 51% of farms, yet they report significant barriers including limited access to capital, land, agricultural networks, and technical assistance programs. Research on women in agriculture demonstrates that gender-specific barriers—not lack of capability—constrain women's full participation in agricultural systems. However, women often lack access to professional development opportunities, decision-making platforms, and peer support networks specific to their experiences in pastoral systems.

The proposed Gathering will bring together women pastoralists to share experiences, develop leadership and advocacy skills, and learn sustainable pastoral practices. This gathering supports rural communities across North America by strengthening the capacity of women pastoralists to manage rangelands sustainably, adapt to climate change, and ensure the long-term viability of pastoral systems that provide critical ecosystem services including carbon sequestration, biodiversity conservation, water quality protection, and open space preservation.

We have organized women pastoralists from Canada, U.S. and Mexico planning the Gathering to ensure the pastoralist woman's voice is heard. The North American Gathering will mirror and funnel information to the Global Women Pastoralists Gathering occurring in Nepal, May 2026. To make the Gathering more accessible to larger numbers of women scattered across the three countries, we will be utilizing Zoom platform and encouraging women in other areas to create "Satellite Gatherings"



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to foster peer to peer learning in other locations.

We are currently looking for funding to help cover costs of the Monterey Gathering. A grant has been submitted to help offset travel to the Gathering and we are actively looking for more support. The budget is itemized so you can see what we are budgeting for the day. We do intend to charge a registration fee, a nominal amount to reduce any barriers for women pastoralist to attend the event. We will also end the Gathering and then hold a film festival focused on global women pastoralists with a discussion after the films with women pastoralists and the audience which will provide more opportunities for networking. Our main focus will be covering the costs of lunch and supporting our panel to attend the Gathering. Raising funds to help support the North American woman selected to represent North America at the Global Gathering is included as well, but we do have more time to secure funding for the Global Gathering.

We thank you for your interest in the Gathering and if nothing else, if you would like to host a local “satellite Gathering”, please let us know so we can include you in logistics for the day.

Theresa Becchetti (UCCE), Lauren Svejcar (IYRP), and Maria Fernandez-Gimenez (Colorado State)

North American Women Pastoralists’ Gathering Budget:

Expected attendance : 50 people, 45 pastoralist women and 5 support facilitators.

Registration : \$20/person, \$1,000 income

Lunch (50 people) : \$4,000

Costs for one person in Nepal : \$1,400

6 pastoralist women travel (speakers, panelists): \$6,000

Flight to Nepal (\$1700 from St Luis, MO RT) : \$2,000

Total expenses : \$13,400

Total Income : \$1,000

Total need : \$12,400

If you would like to support this effort, any amount is helpful and can be submitted to SRM, a 501c(3), by check with “Women’s Gathering” in the memo to earmark it for this event and mailed to SRM, 100 N 27th Street, Suite 600D, Billings, MT 59101. Or if you prefer credit card, please email maggie@rangelands.org to request a link to pay by CC, again noting the “Women’s Gathering”.

We thank you for your time and support in this effort.

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