



SDI Review Form 1.6

Journal Name:	American Journal of Experimental Agriculture
Manuscript Number:	2013_AJEA_7969
Title of the Manuscript:	Plant Parameters for Plant Functional Groups of Western Rangelands to Enable Process-based Simulation Modeling
Type of the Article	Original Research Article

General guideline for Peer Review process:

This journal's peer review policy states that **NO** manuscript should be rejected only on the basis of '**lack of Novelty**', provided the manuscript is scientifically robust and technically sound.

To know the complete guideline for Peer Review process, reviewers are requested to visit this link:

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PART 1: Review Comments

	Reviewer's comment	Author's comment <i>(if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)</i>
<u>Compulsory</u> REVISION comments	<u>Title</u> The title suggests that the entire study covers the entire western States. The study seemed to centre only on a specific geographic region in the US; this should be so reflected in the title so as not to cause any wrong generalizations and assumptions. <u>Abstract</u> The abstract is devoid of certain measured parameters as well as significant results obtained in the study. Majorly, the abstract was not prepared using the SDI format including a statement of the aims of the study, study design, place and duration of study, methodology, results, and the conclusion. <u>Keywords</u> You have just 2; add at least 3 more. <u>Introduction</u> The introduction lacks a scientific justification for carrying out the study. Also include the economic benefits and significance of the study, not only to the geographic region where the study was carried out, but to the West; and perhaps the applicability of the study to present environmental challenges in the globe. <u>Mat and Meth</u>	Title: We respectively disagree. The title says “Western Rangelands” and we feel, as shown in Figure 1, that we have a good representative set of sites where plants were measured. Abstract: Abstract has been rewritten as recommended within the SDI format. Keywords: Additional keywords have been added as recommended. Introduction: The aim and scientific justification have been added on lines 117 to 121, as recommended. We feel that adding an economic component would be beyond the intended scope of this study. We also feel the environmental challenges described are beyond the scope of this study. Mat and Meth: The Lat. And Long. Are



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	If it is possible, include longitudinal and latitudinal and/or GPS locations of the study areas. The environmental conditions of the study areas given (line 79 – 152) may have been copied from referenced materials. Please it is important that you state the reference sources of the various weather and geographic data provided. If they were determined by the researchers, then the methods for determination should be so stated, while the geographical descriptions moved to the results section. Also information about <i>planting of the forages</i> as well as <i>fertilization</i> provided on lines 79 – 152 are sketchy and very difficult to understand. Rewrite the statements separately. Were the forages planted by the researchers or not? State categorically please. The entire section is not scientifically presented; please you may not assume that the reader understands the concept. Provide the reference source of Fig. 1 as well as title/legend. Provide reference source(s) for Table 1. Line 162: “<i>Values for FIPAR.....</i>” Write FIPAR in full. Please correct the other abbreviations. You may include the full meaning first before following up with their respective abbreviations. What were the duration and/or interval of study? Please include it. <u>Results</u> The Appendix A as reported on line 209 should either be	included in Table 1 for each location. The “environmental conditions of the study areas” were not copied from referenced materials, thus no citation is needed. We also respectfully disagree that the weather and geographic data should be moved to the results. We feel it should remain in the methods section. This information has been rewritten as recommended, on 127-216. Both Figure 1 and Table 1 are original for this paper, so no references source is needed. FIPAR is defined the first time it is used, on line 112 of revised manuscript. Durations are given on line 128 of revised manuscript. Results: Appendix A: We respectively disagree. The data is too detailed to be
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	deleted or renamed as Table 2 if the information therein are relevant to the study. Line 220: ..." Radiation use efficiency (RUE) values ranged from..." How were these carried out? Determination of RUE missing in M&M. Line 225: "... the two leguminous forbs were 0.6 and nearly 3.0....: No units. Line 237: Avoid personalizing the statements. Do not use words like "we:, :you", "I", etc. For example, change "We grouped the grasses into: to : grasses were grouped into..." Table 3: the words on the first column should begin with initial caps. Also is Table 4. How does Table 6 relate to the study in question? You have not categorically created the link. Line 289-294: these are statements best suited for the discussion section. Please relocate.	included in the body of the paper as a Table, but should be included at the end as an Appendix table for readers who are interested. RUE: This is described on lines 234-241 of revised manuscript. LAI is unitless, so no units are given. This has been corrected throughout as recommended. This was changed on Lines 288, 295, 296, 325, 356, 404, and 409. We corrected this as recommended. Table 6 has been changed to Table 8. We have added a statement to address this concern on Line 424. We moved Table 6 and the lines in question to the Discussion section as recommended. These are now Lines 424-462 of the revised manuscript. These analyses are described on lines 225-
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	Line 292-303. How did you determine N and P concentrations/ not in M&M, yet reported? <u>Discussion</u> Results were not compared to those of previous findings or discussed using whatever platform or line of argument. This is not acceptable! Please discuss the relevance of the study, as well as its implications in science and management, using other people's works. <u>Conclusion</u> Conclusion should be concise. Most of what the authors included in the conclusion could have been used in the discussion section. <u>References</u> Reference No.14 on line 422 is not the acceptable way for referencing. Kindly delete/replace and then renumber the references. More than 60% of the references used to buttress this study were either the author's or from a co-researcher. That is not acceptable. It only amounts to research quality or lessening the room for proper cross-fertilization and cross-pollination of ideas, pro and counter. The work should include more references from other researchers. This work is not a new innovation.	228 of the revised manuscript. Discussion: This has been corrected by moving portions of the Conclusions into the discussion section (Lines 424-462). Discussion has been added discussing other people's simulation work and the work in this project (Lines 464-472) Conclusion is now concise, as recommended (Lines 495-499) References have been correct. References have been added to recognize previous works in this field. See insertions on lines 78-92; 464-472; and the references on lines 524-572.
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<u>Minor</u> REVISION comments	The work is good, but lacks lots of details for the study to properly and scientifically criticized. Poor use of references makes the project view very myopic.	We have added a more extensive set of references, as discussed above
<u>Optional/General</u> comments	none	