



Strategic Plan (2012-2016)

Mission

The Society for Ecological Restoration promotes ecological restoration as a means of sustaining the diversity of life on Earth and re-establishing an ecologically healthy relationship between nature and culture.

Vision

Ecological restoration is widely and effectively implemented to successfully enhance biodiversity, ecosystem services, and human well-being. The Society for Ecological Restoration fulfills its mission through its role as a leading global network that advances the science and practice of ecological restoration worldwide.

Guiding Principles

The following underlying principles guide the Society for Ecological Restoration's work:

- **Knowledge and Practice Based** - Successful ecological restoration requires the integration of knowledge and practice. Science, other forms of knowledge and related disciplines are essential for designing, implementing and monitoring restoration projects and programs. At the same time, lessons learned from practical experiences are essential for determining and prioritizing the scientific needs of the field.
- **Engaging and Collaborative** - Ecological restoration is an inclusive process that embraces interrelationships between nature and culture, engages all sectors of society, and enables full and effective participation of indigenous, local and disenfranchised communities.
- **Policy Relevant and Essential** - Ecological restoration is essential for achieving biodiversity conservation, climate change adaptation and mitigation, ecosystem service provisioning, connection of people with nature, sustainable socioeconomic development, and improvement of human health and well-being.
- **Locally Practiced with Global Implications** - Ecological restoration takes place in all regions of the world, with local actions having regional and global benefits for nature and people.

Introduction

The global environment, and indeed life itself, faces unprecedented challenges. As world leaders struggle with 21st century realities such as climate change, biodiversity loss, unsustainable resource extraction, food and water security, and human poverty and conflict, they are increasingly turning to the restoration of ecosystems as a solution.

For the past two decades, the Society for Ecological Restoration (SER) has given voice to the field of ecological restoration and has provided leadership in all aspects of its development. It serves as a dynamic global network that fosters the exchange of knowledge and expertise among ecological restoration practitioners and scientists from diverse disciplines. In addition to communicating leading-edge tools, technologies and scientific findings, SER actively promotes best practices around the world. The establishment of SER's Executive Office in Washington, D.C. in 2010 positioned the Society for growth and facilitates networking with conservation organizations, scientific societies, and governmental agencies involved in restoration across the globe. The Society continues to increase its influence through thirteen international chapters, hosting biannual conferences, and informing domestic and international about restoration-relevant policy and legislation. SER also serves the restoration community by linking restoration professionals through its online networks, including the Global Restoration Network (GRN) and Indigenous Peoples' Restoration Network (IPRN). The Society's collection of publications includes *Restoration Ecology*, a peer-reviewed journal, *The Science and Practice of Ecological Restoration*, a book series published in collaboration with Island Press, as well as *Ecological Restoration* and *Ecological Management & Restoration*, two affiliated journals.

SER's strategic plan provides a framework for the future growth and development of the Society and its contribution to the field of ecological restoration. The plan identifies the Society's mission, and vision as well as the underlying principles that guide its work. It consists of six strategic initiatives, with desired outcomes for each that will guide program and planning decisions during 2012-2016. SER's Executive Office, committees, working groups, and chapters are integral to fulfilling this plan by taking actions consistent with its goals and desired outcomes.

Strategic Initiatives for 2012-2016:

- I. Facilitate the integration of leading-edge science and practice
- II. Promote excellence in ecological restoration practice and projects
- III. Build a global network
- IV. Facilitate education and training
- V. Inform policy decisions
- VI. Build organizational capacity

Strategic Initiative I:

Facilitate the integration of leading-edge science and practice

Goal Statement: SER facilitates the integration of leading-edge science, and other forms of knowledge, with the practice of ecological restoration for the benefit of nature and culture.

Desired Outcome #1: Restoration scientists and practitioners actively exchange information on the latest knowledge and best practices through new and improved SER products and programs.

Desired Outcome #2: SER actively promotes leading-edge restoration science and practice and is mindful of the opportunities and challenges of integrating science and practice.

Desired Outcome #3: SER proactively promotes and facilitates cooperative research efforts among scientists, practitioners, and diverse communities including indigenous, rural, and urban communities.

Strategic Initiative II: *Promote excellence in ecological restoration practice and projects*

Goal Statement: The practice of ecological restoration is improved through the establishment of standards for professionalism, standards for practice, and the implementation of a certification program for practitioners of ecological restoration. Ecological restoration projects and programs are improved as a result of new and improved educational materials and training opportunities.

Desired Outcome #1: SER implements a successful ecological restoration practitioner certification program in North America and begins expanding certification around the world.

Desired Outcome #2: Professionalism in the practice of ecological restoration is improved by SER's establishment of standards of practice for ecological restoration.

Desired Outcome #3: The knowledge and capabilities of professional restoration practitioners is improved through the establishment of SER education and training programs.

Desired Outcome #4: The practice of ecological restoration is advanced globally through leading-edge, widely distributed SER publications.

Desired Outcome #5: SER publications and programs benefit academic programs teaching ecological restoration.

Desired Outcome #6: The practice of ecological restoration is improved through the exchange of knowledge pertaining to ecological restoration practice among practitioners and the peer review of restoration projects.

Desired Outcome #7: SER evaluates opportunities for creating other certification programs (i.e. college curricula) that advance the practice of ecological restoration and draw attention to ecological restoration.

Strategic Initiative III: *Build a global network*

Goal Statement: SER consists of a diverse and dynamic network of individuals working around the world to advance ecological restoration knowledge, policy and practice.

Desired Outcome #1: SER members, chapters, guilds and supporters actively exchange information and ideas through SER websites, social media, publications, conferences, trainings, networks and other platforms.

Desired Outcome #2: Restoration scientists, social scientists, practitioners, policymakers, funders, and other relevant individuals and organizations turn to SER as the leading organization for engaging with and exchanging leading edge ecological restoration knowledge and practice.

Desired Outcome #3: SER plays a leadership role in building a network of organizations interested in advancing ecological restoration.

Strategic Initiative IV: *Facilitate education and training*

Goal Statement: Ecological restoration education is incorporated into primary to secondary academic curricula, relevant governmental agency training programs, educational programs of non-profit environmental organizations, and for-profit environmental education courses to advance the practice and science of ecological restoration. The general public and decision-makers are aware of the importance of supporting education and training in the science and practice of ecological restoration.

Desired Outcome #1: Ecological restoration education and training plays an important role in SER's activities such as conferences, workshops, publications, online networks and the awards program.

Desired Outcome #2: SER collaborates with non-profit organizations, government and intergovernmental agencies and NGOs on restoration education initiatives.

Desired Outcome #3: SER develops and implements a public and media outreach campaign to support its education and training initiatives.

Desired Outcome #4: Educational institutions and programs benefit from the advice, information, and resources provided by SER and/or its members.

Desired Outcome #5: SER reaches out to government agencies to enhance restoration regulations.

Desired Outcome #6: SER implements and/or co-sponsors educational programs.

Strategic Initiative V: *Inform policy decisions*

Goal Statement: The development and implementation of ecological restoration policies and related instruments (e.g. legislation, regulation, financing mechanisms) locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally are informed by the highest quality of science and other forms of

knowledge, tools, technologies, and guidance, such that the likely outcomes of policy decisions are fully understood and resulting actions are ecologically and culturally appropriate and effective.

Desired Outcome #1: SER collaborates with a broad range of partners and stakeholders to develop informed policy guidance that is grounded in current science and other forms of knowledge.

Desired Outcome #2: Policymakers and financing organizations at all scales understand the role and value of ecological restoration as a cost-effective, participatory approach to achieving multiple co-benefits for society and the environment.

Strategic Initiative VI: *Build organizational capacity*

Goal Statement: SER is an enduring, robust and resilient organization that effectively supports and promotes the field of ecological restoration around the world.

Desired Outcome #1: SER's diversifies its sources of revenue from membership, conferences, publications, individual donors, endowment investment income, foundation grants, corporate sponsors, and funding agreements with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

Desired Outcome #2: SER's membership program continues to play an integral role in its institutional development, with membership growing threefold by 2016.

Desired Outcome #3: SER's Board of Directors is fully engaged in its strategic direction, ensuring that SER has the necessary human and financial resources to implement its strategic plan.

Desired Outcome #4: SER promotes the growth and development of its chapters, guilds and other affiliates around the world.

Desired Outcome #5: SER has the appropriate administrative and financial management procedures that ensure its proper function as an international NGO.

Desired Outcome #6: SER staff has the guidance, training and resources necessary to implement the strategic plan.