

Attendance:

In Person: Mark Paschke, Casey Cisneros, Jayne Jonas, Brett Wolk, Kristina Hufford, Chris Herron, Carolyn Browning, Andrea Borkenhagen.

Phoneland: Jennifer Neale, Richard Alward, Steve Yochum, Colleen Cunningham, Susan Sherrod, Brock Bowles, Denise Arthur, Randy Mandel, Tim Hoelzle.

President's Report

This is a critical time for our chapter. After much work by the current board and our past president, we now have established a solid framework for our SER chapter. Where the chapter goes from here is largely up to each and every one of YOU. We can either stand still and watch the degradation of Central Rockies ecosystems, or we can rally together and form a strong professional organization that brings our collective expertise together to solve our most pressing challenges. I hope that many of you will step up and volunteer to serve on one of the several committees that we'll be forming to organize activities in the coming year. If enough of us step up, it will lessen the burden on everyone and make for a strong and vibrant chapter.



Our small efforts are already paying dividends. The Central Rockies chapter proposed organize session at the 2013 SER World Conference in Wisconsin has been accepted! Speakers working or doing research in the region were chosen to showcase restoration of montane and alpine ecosystems. While student talks were considered, unfortunately no students met the criteria for our session, so a scholarship committee will be formed to determine how the chapter can support student attendance at the 2013 SER world conference.

Opportunities abound for the chapter to get involved in regional restoration issues, and there is potential for us to co-host a conference in 2014 with High Altitude Revegetation, Wildland Shrub Symposium, and the Society for Wetland Scientists, among other organizations. Our vibrant chapter energy could be put to good use synergistically bringing diverse but interconnected disciplines together when these groups gather next year in Laramie, WY. Something to ponder for now, co-hosting a meeting involves a large commitment.

While there is a lot of work ahead, it is clear the Central Rockies is nearing restoration as an organization and will have a larger presence in the year to come.

Treasurer Report

Newly minted treasurer Tim Hoelzle reported we still have a plush bank account with \$15,153.03. Expenses included \$500 sponsorship of the High Altitude Restoration field tour this past summer, and we gained a nearly equal amount of income from past member dues. As the new treasurer, Tim has taken over the responsibility of nagging Randy for the t-shirt sales he made many moons ago.

Secretary/Membership Report

We gained several members in the past two months and now have 53 current members. Interest is continuing to grow, *don't forget about the discount promo through March*: \$10 off registration for anyone new to SER who joins the Central Rockies chapter!

<http://chapter.ser.org/centralrockies/membership/rates/>

Chapter secretary and membership coordinator Brett Wolk will be taking the Central Rockies info and recruitment poster to the National Native Seed conference in Santa Fe, NM, in April to recruit new membership. There will be a joint meeting and info booth with the Central Rockies, Southwest, and Great Basin SER chapters at the conference. Hopefully we will discuss how the neighbor chapters might collaborate or share resources in the future.

Webmaster Report

Website Address: <http://chapter.ser.org/centralrockies/>

Webmaster contact: Jayne Jonas Jayne.Jonas-Bratten@colostate.edu

Photo contest and free classic t-shirt!

We are still in need of photo's to make the website more appealing, specifically a few photo's to put in the top header banner. Only one member sent in photos over the past two months, so we are offering a free Central Rockies SER *classic* t-shirt for the best photo, or heck, any photo, sent to Jayne for the website. Photos of Central Rockies habitats and especially people working and doing restoration in the region make us look good.

New events are being added to the webpage calendar frequently, send Jayne your earth saving events, volunteer opportunities, and restoration happenings to post.



Action Committee's

Student Scholarship Committee

A scholarship committee was formed to determine criteria for awarding student scholarships to the 2013 SER World Conference in Wisconsin. The chapter decided to award four \$500 scholarships to support students attending the conference. This committee will determine criteria for awarding the scholarships and evaluate applications. The committee comprises both self-nominated and arm-twisted but willing members, including Tim Hoelzle, Brett Wolk, Denise Arthur, Kristina Hufford, and Brock Bowles.

Events Committee

Let's do something already! An events committee was created to start planning events for the chapter to sponsor. The committee is charged with forming a list of potential events by our next chapter meeting and initially reviewing logistical constraints and costs associated with hosting each event. Hopefully at the next chapter meeting we will finally be ready to put our words into practice and start having more organized fun sharing restoration stories with each other. The events committee is so far comprised of Susan Sherrod, Randy Walsh, Amber Shanklin, Casey Cisneros, and Steve Yochum. New members always welcome!

Fundraising Committee

If we want to have events, we need cash, so a fundraising committee was created to find ways to generate income for the chapter other than waiting for Randy to send in his t-shirt sales receipts. Ideas include soliciting sponsorship from companies and working with the events committee to see which events we might be able to make a profit at while also having a good time and spreading restoration knowledge. Yup, we want to have our cake and eat it too.

Special Issue: COGCC Importance of Restoration

Central Rockies SER member Rich Alward solicited the chapter for help in educating the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (COGCC) on the importance of and best practices for restoration following oil and gas development. The COGCC completed a major re-write of their rules governing oil and gas extraction for Colorado in 2008, including some rules for restoration following the completion of extraction activities. Performance standards were set such as vegetation must be 80% of a reference area, and Colorado state law requires wildlife habitat is restored following oil and gas disturbances, but no guidelines on how to achieve these standards were set and no rules were established for monitoring restoration efforts other than 4 color photographs. Richard has been appointed to the COGCC for 6 years and feels the issue of restoration has fallen by the wayside. He solicited the chapters' assistance to develop a 15-20 minute presentation to educate the COGCC board members on the importance of reclamation and some general best practices.

This issue falls within the Central Rockies SER bylaws in our capacity to educate, advise, and consult with public agencies on areas within our expertise. Central Rockies members present at the meeting were excited to tackle the issue, and President Mark Paschke offered to lead the effort in developing an educational presentation for the COGCC. Chapter vice president Randy Mendel, Denise Arthur, and Carolyn Browning all offered assistance, and Kristina Hufford was interested in reviewing Wyoming rules and regulations as well as a means of comparison.

Next Meeting

The meeting was adjourned promptly at noon with a decision to hold our next chapter meeting near the **end of April**. Everyone loves a doodle, so chapter secretary Brett will initiate a poll to determine when we can all get together in April for another hour of Central Rockies fun.