



## **Central Rockies SER Meeting Summary** **Wednesday, March 7, 2017 - 12:15pm - 1:00pm** **Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO**

**Attendance:** Brett Wolk (President), Mark Paschke (Chair – Scientific committee meeting), Hannah Riedl (Student Representative), Jayne Jonas (Communications Committee chair), Casey Cisneros (Treasurer), Tim Hoelzle (Vice President), Randy Mandel (Past president), Susan Sherrod (Chair of Outreach committee), Magda Garbowski (Secretary), Bethanie Walder (SER)

This meeting was held during the High Altitude Revegetation/Central Rockies Chapter of SER biannual scientific meeting with the primary goals of informing individuals about the regional chapter, discussing past and future chapter happenings, and receiving feedback from members about possible ways to improve the chapter.

### **General Information/Updates:**

- CeRSER is a chapter of the national/international Society for Ecological Restoration organization covering Colorado and Wyoming. At this meeting we hope to give members an overview of what we do as a chapter and receive feedback from members about how to improve. (Brett Wolk)
- CeRSER established in 2006 and after a few slow years was reinvigorated in 2010. The chapter now has about 100 members. The student guild started being active in 2008 and the professional society decided they needed to catch up. As the chapter grows, we have sought to give people a chance to participate. Currently, there are 11 board positions, from four initially. CeRSER is a volunteer organization and no one gets paid so we really appreciate the work members contribute to the group. Currently we have committees overseeing tasks associated with: membership, communications, outreach, etc. With tasks broken up between committees, no one is on the hook for everything.
- Most positions are 2-year term board positions (Treasurer, Secretary, Outreach Committee Chair, Communications Committee Chair, etc.). Currently, four positions are open for election. Elections will be held in April, 2017 for vacant positions. Certain board positions will turn over in April as well - Vice President, Treasurer, 2 student representatives and President elect. Two board positions are reserved for student representatives. Representatives can be recruited from participating universities and colleges. Right now, we have chapters at CSU and CU Boulder but we hope more universities join in the near future.
- It costs \$65 for SER membership and CeRSER membership. \$15 goes to us. Conference is more or less self-sufficient. (Brett Wolk)

### **CeRSER Board Member Roles**

- Treasurer (Casey Cisneros) - Tracks expenses and revenues. Fairly easy board position and still gets to come to the board meetings and provide input. Expecting profit of \$6,000 from the conference. As a board we decide what to do with these funds.
- Vice-president/President Elect is up for a position. Move right into the president role. A bit more of a commitment but can get involved with many things – nationally and internationally.

- Secretary (Magda Garbowski) – Takes notes at meetings and oversees the CeRSER mailing list.

### **CeRSER / High Altitude Re-vegetation relationship**

- Mark Paschke was the chair of the scientific program committee in charge of organizing this year's meeting. Mark is also the president of HAR. Because he bridges the two groups he is able to facilitate interactions between them. For this conference, it was Mark's job to organize and direct others in planning the meeting. This year, five committees organized the meeting: logistics committee (mics and rooms etc), vendors and sponsors committee, program committee, communications committee and a financial committee. The chairs of each committee made up the executive committee. The executive committee would meet a couple of times a month to make sure everything was on track and moving forward for the meeting. Having different tasks split up between committees was efficient and effective. (Mark Paschke)
- While many CeRSER members helped organize the meeting, Brett's role was to make sure everything else with CeRSER kept going.

### **Providing Feedback**

- Two forms to provide feedback for SER – one about the conference specifically and one about SER. We would like attending members to fill these out.

### **Updates from SER (Bethanie Walder)**

- North American chapters contribute greatly to the international SER community: 11 of the 14 SER chapters are in North America. The Europe chapter has 27 countries whereas chapters here in the US are smaller. SER has members in 70 countries (79% in north America). A lot of the work SER does happens at the chapter level. SER would like to move forward to increase benefits to members. Currently, SER publishes Restoration Ecology and has an island press book series. SER also puts on a webinar series that is open to everyone. SER is now trying to create more access to resources and should have a new restoration resource center open within the next couple of months. This resource center will have videos, Environmental Impact Assessments, project database etc.

Two major SER initiatives from the past year:

- SER is working on establishing international standards for ecological restoration to address specific questions:
  - o How do you think about and set up a restoration project correctly.
  - o How do you look into the past, present, and future to develop successful restorations?
  - o SER aims to set up restorative continuum to address these questions. Some of the projects may not make it into a five-star system but can be on the continuum somewhere.
- Over the last year SER has also launched a certification program.
  - o The certification program is for practitioners that want restoration credentials. It is not an audited program. SER aims to assess whether an individual has the knowledge base and experience to receive the restoration certificate.
  - o There is a grandfathering component for the knowledge base.
  - o In addition, folks will need to sign and abide by disciplinary policy.
  - o SER is also developing an electronic course so individuals seeking the certification can become exposed to principles of restoration. This will be a 2 hour course.

- SER has set up five certification committees to get the program rolling. There will be openings on the committees next year. Committees include: Standards committee, certifying committee, continuing education, marketing and outreach. The first application cycle is March 17.

**Member Questions:**

Would like to talk about chapter issues and the certification program, global initiatives from Bethanie. (Kristina Hufford)

- Addressed above

What does it take to get a student chapter going?

- Student chapters you need \$160 dollars/year for the membership fee. This covers SER membership for faculty advisor and as many students as possible. There needs to be a supportive faculty advisor. Colorado College and University of Colorado, Colorado Springs may have faculty and folks interested in restoration so there is potential to get things going at these schools.

Is SER still looking for North American chapters to help/host the bi-annual North American meeting? (Randy Mandel)

- Chapters have said it is “too” large currently. Currently the plan is for Ontario and New England to provide staff time.

Many North American members currently do not attend world conferences. Why may folks want to go to world conferences? (Kristina Hufford)

- Initially, SER intended to come back to North America every other time but there has been a need for conferences in other parts of the world as well. This year the International Conference will be in Brazil, and in South Africa in 2019.
- The conferences bring in wonderful speakers: Katharine Suding will be a keynote in Brazil this year.
- World Conferences also host a variety of symposia – this year there will be a total of six consecutive symposia on forest and landscape restoration.
- Many other groups attend these conferences (e.g. Bonne challenge – restored lands).
- Provides a venue to talk about the context of new standards, new tools, how to build capacity in other countries to improve restoration.
- International Network for Seed based restoration. This year there will be three consecutive symposia looking at plant materials. There is an insurmountable gap in plant materials – how do we build local plant materials development centers.
- Other activities - 25 fieldtrips in Brazil.
- These conferences provide lots of really great on the ground opportunities but many people cannot go to the world conference and SER realizes that we need a North American conference. SER wants people to engage with each other and try to bring a conference to Canada/USA in the upcoming years.

What sort of experience in the field will be needed for the certificate in restoration?

- The certification is designed for people designing and planning restorations. There may be a more technical certification. Land managers from agencies, consultancies, landscape architects. Is there a cost? \$250 if you are an SER member and there is an annual maintenance fee, \$200 for Practitioner in Trainer. \$150? For continuing certification. Funds help run and keep the program going. Seeking sponsorships for the certification program to get need-based folks.