



November 2020 SER-Rocky Mountain Chapter Member Newsletter

SER-RM Outreach Activities are Back!

Upcoming Webinar with Dr. Mark Paschke

Rocky Mountain actinorhizal plants: their importance for post-fire recovery and restoration

November 20th, 12pm - 1 pm

[Register Here](#)

Actinorhizal plants are a diverse group of shrubs and trees that form a symbiosis with nitrogen-fixing *Frankia* bacteria. Actinorhizal plants in the Rocky Mountains are among the most important browse species for wildlife in the region owing to their high protein content resulting from an abundant supply of nitrogen supplied by *Frankia* in root nodules. Like nitrogen-fixing legumes, actinorhizal plants play critical roles in soil development and succession following fires. However, unlike legumes, which are important agricultural crops, wildland actinorhizal plants and their *Frankia* symbionts are not as well-studied or understood. Important taxa of actinorhizal plants in the Rocky Mountains include bitterbrush (*Purshia* spp.),

mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus* spp.), alder (*Alnus* spp.), ceanothus (*Ceanothus* spp.), buffaloberry (*Shepherdia* spp.) and avens (*Dryas* spp.). This webinar will focus on the ecology of Rocky Mountain actinorhizal plants in post-fire environments and their potential for expanded use in ecological restoration of burned areas.

Speaker Bio:

Mark Paschke is Professor and Shell Endowed Chair of Restoration Ecology at Colorado State University. He also serves as Research Associate Dean for the Warner College of Natural Resources (WCNR) at CSU. His research focuses on the mechanisms controlling community assembly in terrestrial plant communities. For much of his research career he has worked across multiple scales, from the molecular to the ecosystem level, and across multiple disciplines. He currently teaches undergraduate and graduate classes in Ecological Restoration at CSU. Mark has served many roles in professional organizations including terms as President of the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Society for Ecological Restoration.

Postponing the 2021 SERRM-HAR Conference

As reported last month, we were looking forward to implementing the feedback we received from the last conference. We've also known that Covid19 would create a significant amount of uncertainty for us, and we've come to the realization that an in-person event is simply not feasible or responsible at this time. Although some conferences have gone entirely virtual, through many difficult conversations we've come to the conclusion that an entirely virtual conference simply wouldn't meet our objectives. It is thus with great reluctance that we postpone the Spring 2021 Conference another year, to be held during the Spring of 2022.

While we are still ironing out the details, we can comfortably say that it is our intent to showcase some of those great projects happening by our friends and collaborators across the region, and to provide opportunities to learn from them. We are thinking this will take the form of pre-prepared videos or live webinars. We'll send out more details as they become available, but please [email Jeremy Sueltenfuss, SERRM Scientific Meeting Committee Chair](#) if you are interested in showcasing one of your projects or providing some type of technical webinar. Even if you aren't completely sure what that presentation would entail, let's start a dialogue!

It's our hope that we can all be creative and embrace this as an opportunity to engage with each other in new ways. We're thinking of you all, and look forward to interacting with you in person again someday soon!

2020 SERRM Membership Committee Student Support Scholarship

In light of the difficulties and challenges of COVID-19, particularly financially, and subsequent reduction in conferences and training, the [SERRM chapter](#) is offering a **new type of scholarship** that will provide



financial support to graduate and undergraduate students focusing on ecology, restoration, natural resources, or a related field. Three to four scholarships in the amount of \$500 each will be awarded on a continuous basis until funds are expended. This scholarship is intended to support students during their studies and does not have specific spending requirements.

Requirements:

- Must be a current member of SERRM
- Must be a student focusing on ecology, restoration, natural resources, or related field and either:
 - An undergraduate student actively conducting an undergraduate research project
 - A graduate student
- Must show current proof of enrollment at their University
- Post award, the student may be asked to provide a short written narrative with photographs of how they spent the money.

Application directions:

- In a single PDF include the following documents:
 - A one-page, 300 words or less narrative describing how you will benefit from this scholarship and what your academic and/or professional aspirations are.
 - Proof of current enrollment at your University and proof of degree program
 - Proof of current SERRM membership
 - Send application package to the [SERRM membership committee](#)
-

Upcoming SER Webinars

November 12, 2020--and Beyond

As part of our webinar series, SER hosts at least one webinar each month to provide opportunities for members to engage with restoration experts from academia and the practice. Each [SER webinar](#) is pre-approved for 1 CEC under the [Certified Ecological Restoration Practitioner program](#) unless otherwise noted.



[Small Dam Removal: Lessons Learned from 20 Years of Dam Removal in Massachusetts](#)

December 3rd, 10 - 11 AM MST

Speaker: Nick Wildman, CERP (Dam Removal Practice Lead for the Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration)

Regulations and funding sources for river restoration vary considerably across each of the 50 United States of America. In Massachusetts, a state with over 3,000 dams, dam removal has been employed as a means to restore riverine ecological processes and eliminate public safety liabilities since around 1999. Over the last 20 years, more than 60 dams have been removed in the state with approximately 50 of those involving the state's Division of Ecological Restoration. This presentation will describe the evolution of the practice of dam removal in Massachusetts including lessons learned, ecological and community benefits realized, and the goals and challenges for expanding the practice in the future.

[Thornforest Restoration Along the Lower Rio Grande: Retrospectives and Innovation in the Face of Climate Change](#)

December 17th, 10 - 11 AM MST

Speakers: Kimberly-Wahl Villarreal (plant ecologist for the South Texas National Wildlife Refuge Complex). Jon Dale (American Forests' senior manager for forest restoration).

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's (USFWS) South Texas National Wildlife Refuge Complex facilitates conservation within the subtropical 4-county delta of the Rio Grande River, adjacent to northeastern Mexico. Historically, much of this cover was a species-diverse Tamaulipan thornforest and most of the

region's remaining mature forest fragments are now under the stewardship of public agencies like USFWS. In order to re-establish connectivity between these fragments USFWS began a sustained effort at thornforest restoration on adjacent croplands in the 1980's. Over time, the restoration program's efforts have yielded a strong support network of partners and a foundation on which different restoration methodologies have been tested. To this end, USFWS and American Forests have partnered since 2018 to develop a "drought resilience" strategy that includes development of modified planting designs.

Check back often as we are constantly adding new sessions at [Restoration Resource Center » Webinars!](#) Recordings of past webinars can be found in our Webinar Library.

SER's Restoration Ecology Journal

Check out some of our top picks from the latest issues of the society's journal!

Ecological restoration may be a key avenue for societal, environmental, and economic recovery after the COVID-19 crisis. [Check out this opinion piece](#) about how investing in green recovery and restoration can " simultaneously ease pressure on the environment and create immediate jobs and revenues"

Adding to a growing body of evidence for the utility of trait-based approaches to ecological restoration, Leger et al. (2020) find that local, wild collected perennial grass seeds have traits "more conducive to seedling establishment in degraded sites than commercial sources." In [this article](#), the authors provide clear and easy to follow methods for determining which traits may be important in different restoration systems as well as for screening plants for those traits.

Identifying appropriate reference sites is a foundational component of the ecological restoration process. In [this article](#), Durbequ et al. (2020) "provide a framework based on ecological theory, and more precisely on relationships between vegetation and environmental factors, to identify reference plant communities". With a proof-of-concept study, they find that sites with similar environmental conditions may are not necessarily those that are geographically closest to the restoration site.

**Southern Rockies Seed Network's Virtual 2020
Conference**

December 8-9, 2020

SRSN's 2020 Annual Conference will cover current topics under three main areas, "**Ecotypes: Research, Policy & Practice**".

The keynote speaker is: Francis Kilkenny, PhD, Research Biologist with the U.S. Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station.

Attendees will include professionals from:

- * Federal, state, and local agencies
- * Seed and nursery industry staff
- * Restoration practitioners & conservation professionals
- * Students & academic researchers
- * And other private citizens interested in native plants!

Colorado Weed Management Association Virtual Winter Training

December 8-10, 2020

CWMA is gathering online! Connect with weed managers from across the state ? and beyond ? to get the latest updates on effective tools, relevant research, and strategic management approaches. Earn CE credits to renew your license, network with professionals in our industry, and learn the latest trends and techniques.



If You Were Registered for the 2020 Spring Training

Please do not start a new registration! We will help you transfer over your registration and payment information including a possible refund. You should have received an email with options and instructions. Please contact info@cwma.org for more information.

Draft Agenda and CE Credits

We will have sessions and various breaks peppered throughout each day. We will offer great content and opportunities to engage with others and promise that you will not have to sit in front of your computer all day!

For more information, visit [CWMA's website](#).



©2021 Society for Ecological Restoration - Rocky Mountains Chapter | SER Rocky Mountains Chapter | 1472 Campus Delivery | Fort Collins, CO 80523



Powered by **Mad Mimi**®
A GoDaddy® company