

Society for Ecological Restoration Texas Chapter



Restoration Update

January, 2014

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TXSER News Flash

Conference Volunteers Needed

We are heading west for our 18th Annual Conference. If you live in West Texas and are interested in giving us a hand with the 2014 conference, we would love to have you join our conference planning team. Any assistance great or small would be much appreciated. Please dash Gwen Thomas, TXSER's Chapter Coordinator, an e-mail at: gonthomas_eco@fastmail.fm. We welcome your input!

Announcements

Keep Texas Beautiful is now accepting applications for the 2014 Governor's Community Achievement Awards. Ten communities will be selected to share in \$2 million from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). For more information, click here: [Governor's Community Achievement Award](#).

Texas Invasive Plant and Pest Conference. February 26-28, 2014, Port Aransas, TX. For more information, click here: [TX Invasive Plant and Pest Conference](#)

Southwest Stream Restoration Conference. May 28-30, 2014, San Antonio, TX. For more information, click here: [Southwest Stream](#)

Coordinator's Corner

Ecological Restoration Policy

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**We are heading west
for 2014!**

**18th Annual
TXSER Conference
will be held
in Alpine, Texas**

Details to come.

Because I have worked on issues of environmental policy for a number of years, the article in the January 2014 edition of Restoration Ecology entitled "Policy Language in Restoration Ecology" caught my attention. Since the Society for Ecological Restoration has as one of its goals "advising international organizations with policy and legislation," I thought I would take the opportunity to highlight key points in the article relevant to all of us concerned with ecological restoration issues. Please note that much of the article below is paraphrased from Jorgensen, D., et al. (2014). "Policy Language in Restoration Ecology." Restoration Ecology. 22: 1-4.

Historically scholars writing articles based on restoration ecology research communicate primarily with other scientists and restoration practitioners. While this type of information sharing is vital to research development, restoration scientists also have important messages for those shaping domestic and international policy. Seldom however, do scientists consider whether their findings have implications in the policy realm and most do not make those critical linkages as explicit as possible.

The study explored in the article was carried out by an interdisciplinary team of researchers in both the ecological and political sciences. Their goal was to point out how scientific research in ecological restoration can facilitate linkages between research investigations and decision makers' concerns on all levels from local practitioners to regulatory agency specialists to interstate-level policy makers. The team determined that language matters because scientific information will be incorporated into environmental policy only when stakeholders perceive the information as: (a) credible (scientifically adequate); (b) salient (strongly relevant); and, (c) legitimate (respectful of the stakeholders' values and beliefs).

Linking the relevance and implications of research to salient issues using commonly understood language is critical to increasing the impact of restoration research on policy. This does not mean taking a stand on a particular policy option and advocating for one policy over another, but rather providing an "actionable message" stating how the research is applicable to, and provides solutions to, policy concerns.

Analyzing the literature on restoration science and climate change, the authors note that practitioners are a common target audience, yet very little of this research considers policy implications. While the authors argue that restoration scientists may not have findings relevant to overarching policy on CO2 emission totals, for example, they are likely to have substantive information that may affect the implementation and impact of policy measures like the European Union Water Framework Directive or the Convention on Biological Diversity. The authors urge that the implications of ecological restoration research on various policy choices be brought into focus.

The authors offer four "implications for practice:"

1. Restoration ecologists should be aware of (and make explicit) how their scientific results could and should be incorporated into policy decisions.
2. Working collaboratively with social scientists would aid in identification of specific local, regional, and even global policies that could be affected by restoration science.
3. Restoration ecology scientific publications could better incorporate policy-relevant concerns, such as climate change.
4. Journals interested in restoration should encourage two-way communication between scientists and policymakers to help integrate scientific results into policy practices.

Ecological restoration scientists have important messages for those shaping public policy. Without advocating one policy over another, we need to make those linkages clear by providing an "actionable message" so that our research findings are useful in crafting and refining public policy.

To read the entire article, click here: [Ecological Restoration Policy](#)

The Society for Ecological Restoration, Texas Chapter 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.

Become a member today!

[Click Here to Join Us!](#)

Join the Texas Chapter of the Society for Ecological Restoration. Chapter members receive valuable benefits including:

- the opportunity to network with restoration practitioners and enthusiasts;
- discounts to our Annual Conference, an opportunity to share and learn;
- invitations to attend volunteer workdays around the state; and,
- monthly updates and quarterly newsletters with articles and notices about regional events that allow you to connect to the local restoration community.

Chapter membership fees of \$15 support chapter administration. The TXSER Board of Directors consists of volunteers who share a passion for furthering ecological restoration in Texas.

Joining SER links you with a global restoration network. SER member benefits include:

- RESTORE bi-weekly e-bulletin;
- SERNews quarterly newsletter;
- discounts on journal publications;
- discounts to SER World Conferences;
- discounts on SER Career Center;
- access to a searchable, online member directory, and,

- promotional opportunities through the SER Calendar of Events, and Restoration Project Showcase.

To become a member visit: [**www.ser.org/membership**](http://www.ser.org/membership)

Be sure to click the Texas Chapter as your Chapter Affiliate. We look forward to having you join us!

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