

SER
SOCIETY FOR
ECOLOGICAL
RESTORATION
International

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Global Restoration Network
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SERNews

The Newsletter of the Society for Ecological Restoration International
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SER Awards Recognize Contributions to Restoration

At the 2007 SER/ESA Joint Conference, the Board of Directors of SER International will present awards to the following individuals for their outstanding work in the field of ecological restoration. This year's winners were chosen from the largest-ever pool of nominees.

The John Rieger Award
William Halvorson

By this award, the Society acknowledges its debt to those who have dedicated their time and skills to the advancement of ecological restoration and/or to the development of the Society. This award, originally called the Service Award, was renamed in 1997, to honor John Rieger who is one of the four founders of the Society and who served as its first President.

Bill Halvorson has been one of SER's most active members, practically since the founding of the organization in the mid-1980s. Most often working behind the scenes, "his performance has been distinguished by a quiet and persistent competence," wrote colleague Dennis Martinez, who nominated Bill for the award.

A botanist and plant ecologist, Bill has particular expertise in arid and semi-arid ecology and restoration of natural ecosystems. He was first asked by the Board, in 1988, to become a member of the Program Committee, and he helped to put together the first SER annual conference, which took place in Oakland, California. Little



Bill Halvorson

did he know that he would still be coordinating programs for SER conferences 19 years later.

Bill served for three years on the Standards Committee, and then became Treasurer of SER for nine

years. When he stepped down as Treasurer in 2001, he remained on the Board as an At-Large Representative through 2004. And in 2002, he became chair of the Conference Working Group, a position he will hold through 2007.

While Bill was developing his particular expertise in arid and semi-arid ecology and restoration of natural ecosystems, and gaining wide experience with research and education programs related to natural resource management and natural area public policy and law, he was also becoming an expert on conference logistics, financial spreadsheets and navigating airports around the world.

As a volunteer for SER, he traveled across the globe to help coordinate and plan world conferences for the Society. He served as Program Chair for the 6-day, joint SER/ESA annual meeting in Tucson, Arizona in 2002, and also for the joint

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SER Awards

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SER/ESA meeting in San Jose, California, in 2007. He generously shared his wealth of knowledge and experience as a member of the SER Site Visit and Planning Team for the 2003 Austin, Texas, annual meeting and for the Zaragoza, Spain, 2005 World Conference on Ecological Restoration.

Bill is an inspiration to those who work to fulfill SER's mission. He has enthusiastically served the Society with energy, dedication, and graciousness. Passionate about ecological restoration, he has honored the field by donating thousands of hours of his time to SER during the last 20 years of his 45-year professional career.

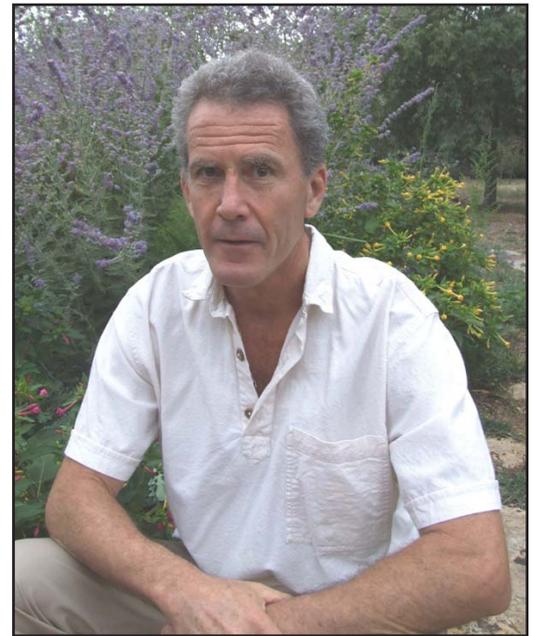
"Bill is the quintessential scientist," wrote Martinez. "He has demonstrated great dedication to both his professional field and to SER. Bill will be retiring from SER service after the San Jose conference. He richly deserves to be honored with the John Rieger Award for his numerous contributions to SER and the field of ecological restoration." The Board heartily agrees, and offers its congratulations and sincerest thanks to Bill Halvorson for his outstanding service to the field and to the Society.

Communications Award James Aronson

By this award, the Society acknowledges the importance of all forms of communications that advance the goals of the Society.

In the history of the field of ecological restoration, there are few people who have been more passionate than James about spreading the word about the need for ecological restoration. James has traveled across the world to speak and write and teach about the importance of restoring all nature's goods and services for the benefit of people. Not only has James been dedicated, but he has also been extremely effective in enriching the public conversation about restoration.

Based in France, James recently created the Restoring Natural Capital (RNC) Alliance. His focus on restoring natural



James Aronson

capital has been the subject of his numerous presentations at conferences, journal and popular writings, papers, books, and website, www.rncalliance.org. With co-founders James Blignaut, Andy Clewell, and Olga Martha Montiel, the RNC Alliance is an international network of non-profit, non-governmental organizations that offer locally appropriate solutions to resolve environmental and economic development problems simultaneously, in underdeveloped countries and industrialized countries alike. The RNC Alliance has projects in the Mediterranean Basin, Africa, Madagascar, Australia, Latin America and South Asia.

In addition to his pioneering work communicating the mission and importance of the RNC in as many venues as possible around the world, James also has served as editor of the SER/Island Press Book Series. During a period of just a few years, he has facilitated the publication of 13 seminal books on restoration ecology.

"In my opinion, James Aronson proves that one person can make a difference for the better, even in the troubled and damaged world today," wrote Sue Milton in her nominating letter. The Board of Directors offers its congratulations to James Aronson for being a passionate and effective advocate for restoration.

SER Awards

Theodore M. Sperry Award Edward Redente

By this award, the Society recognizes achievement in those elements and approaches that improve restoration programs. Recipients are acknowledged who are innovators and pioneers in restoration. Other restorationists “stand on their shoulders” because they truly lead the way.

As a professor of Restoration Ecology at the Warner College of Natural Resources at Colorado State University in the United States, Edward has inspired colleagues, students and collaborators for more than a quarter of a century as a teacher, researcher, author and advocate for ecological restoration.

While acting as Director of the Center for Ecological Risk Assessment and Management, Edward incorporated sound ecological restoration research that had originally been addressed to the academic community and made it applicable to practitioners and land managers. His role allowed

him to influence the restoration practices of many different organizations, both public and private, in the United States. He received numerous research grants from various entities including the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Defense, the National Park Service and numerous natural gas and mining companies.

Specializing in the ecology of disturbed lands, and with his personal interest in plant ecology and plant-soil relationships, Edward has improved the field’s understanding of the methods and mechanics of restoring some of the more drastically disturbed ecosystems. For example, he helped to develop metal toxicity thresholds for numerous plant species commonly used in mine land restoration plans.

Throughout his career, he has been prolific, authoring and co-authoring



Edward Redente

more than 60 peer-reviewed articles and six book chapters related to the restoration of soils, heavily disturbed ecosystems, invasive species and rangeland ecosystems of the western United States. He has also been a leading educator of restoration. At Colorado State University, Edward was appointed Interim Department Head of the Warner College of

Natural Resources Forest, Rangeland and Watershed Stewardship Department. He became Vice Provost for Research, and was later tapped to serve as Interim Dean of the College.

After many years of teaching, research, writing and being an inspiration in the field, Edward retired this year. He leaves behind an impressive legacy. The Board of Directors offers its congratulations to Edward Redente for his pioneering work in the field of ecological restoration. ☞

MEMBER BENEFITS SPOTLIGHT

Restoration Marketplace

As a member, you are eligible for a free or discounted ad in SER’s online marketplace, which showcases vendors in the field of restoration. Categories include academic programs, consulting services, contractors, corporations, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, publications, training/workshops and others.

SER’s website receives 20,000 hits per day. Position yourself as a leader in the field of restoration with an ad on our Restoration Marketplace page. Just go to our website at www.ser.org/marketplace.asp to activate your FREE ad today!

Organizational Members:

To activate your FREE large ad, send a 250-word description, website link and 2 images/logos by email to cynthia@ser.org, and we’ll post it for one full year.

Professional Members:

To activate your FREE medium ad, send a 150-word description, website link and 1 image/logo by email to cynthia@ser.org, and we’ll post it for one full year.

Full Members:

To activate your FREE small ad, send a 50-word description by email to cynthia@ser.org, and we’ll post it for one full year.

Basic Members:

Visit the Restoration Marketplace to receive your members-only 25% discount on all ad orders. Monthly, quarterly and yearly options are available.

CASE STUDY

Atlantic Forest Restoration in Minas Gerais, Brazil

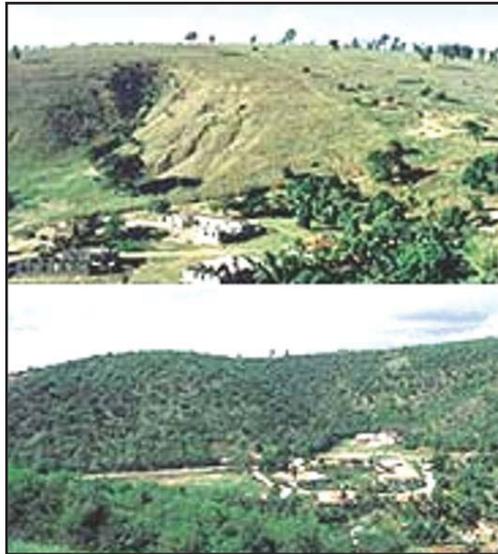
By Levi Wickwire | SER's Global Restoration Network

The Atlantic Forest, or *Mata Atlântica*, is a broadleaf tropical forest that stretches along Brazil's Atlantic coast and extends inland to eastern Paraguay and the province of Misiones in northeastern Argentina. This biome is considered one of the biggest repositories of biodiversity on the planet, harboring around 2,200 species of birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians—5% of the vertebrates on Earth. This includes nearly 200 bird species found nowhere else, as well as 26 of Brazil's 77 primate species (21 of which are endemic).

The forest is also home to approximately 20,000 species of plants, representing fully 8% of the plants on Earth. In fact, a survey conducted in the 1990s found 454 tree species in a single hectare in southern Bahia, more than double the number of tree species found in the entire U.S. eastern seaboard. This richness in biodiversity is accompanied by a high occurrence of endemism, as the Atlantic Forest is isolated from other South American forest blocks. Thus, 55% of the tree species and 39% of the mammalian species are unique to this biome.

Prior to the arrival of Europeans in the 16th century, the Atlantic Forest covered over 1,100,000 square kilometers. Since that time, more than 93% of the forest has been cleared as a result of logging, cattle ranching, and land conversion for coffee and sugarcane plantations. In addition to these historic causes of degradation, urbanization has now become the most serious threat to the already fragmented forest, as two of the world's largest cities—Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo—lie within the Atlantic Forest ecoregion.

In response to these mounting pressures, Lélia Deluiz Wanick Salgado and the famed Brazilian photographer Sebastião Ribeiro Salgado founded Instituto Terra in 1999. Located on the Bulcão Farm in Aimorés, Minas Gerais, Instituto Terra is a non-profit organization dedicated to the restoration of native forest cover on the farm's 676 hectares, and to the



encouragement of local community participation in the ongoing conservation and restoration of forested areas throughout the region. Since its inception in 1999, the institute has partnered with national and international government entities, private donors, and other environmental organizations to raise more than \$2.3 million for the restoration of degraded stands of Atlantic Forest both on the farm and in the surrounding region.

Restoration activities on the farm have been tailored to the four types of ecosystems encountered there. Areas covered by Aroeira (Brazilian Pepper) trees have been thinned and planted with seedlings of other species in an attempt to restore natural biodiversity. In areas of former pastureland, where brachiara grass was dominant, the removal of the cattle enabled other herbaceous plants to recover, eventually eclipsing the brachiara and allowing seedlings to grow. Work in riparian areas has focused on the removal of silt and the re-creation of natural hydrologic processes, thereby facilitating the establishment of native vegetation. Finally, areas covered by secondary forest and shrubs have been managed in order to promote natural regeneration.

As part of its ongoing work, Instituto Terra has also established nurseries to provide seedlings for the revegetation of

degraded areas. Seeds are collected in the remaining forest fragments around the farm by botanical specialists and trained collectors, and in 2003, approximately 160 species of Atlantic Forest trees were raised in these nurseries. Instituto Terra has used the seedlings in its own reforestation efforts, and has also provided seedlings for the Aimorés Project and other projects in neighboring municipalities.

Since November 1999, 175 hectares have been successfully reforested (26% of the farm's total area), and 470,000 native trees have been planted in areas that were either completely degraded or previously used as pastureland. These reforested areas are now home to over 142 plant species; 156 species of birds (6 of which are endangered); and 21 species of mammals, 2 of these—*Leopardus pardalis* (Ocelot) and *Callicebus personatus* (Atlantic Titi)—in danger of extinction.

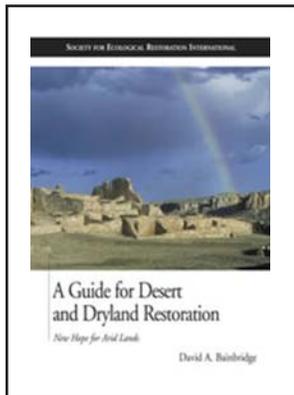
Instituto Terra hopes to build on this success and to ensure continuing community involvement in the restoration and conservation of the Atlantic Forest. An environmental education center, the Center for Environmental Recovery (CERA), has been established on the farm, and participants from 46 municipalities in the states of Espírito Santo, Rio de Janeiro and Minas Gerais attend courses on such subjects as environmental degradation, ecology, forest management, agro-ecology, silviculture, permaculture, environmental education, and fire science. By raising community awareness about pressing environmental issues and working with key stakeholders, such as high school teachers, community leaders, environmentalists, political and civil leaders and rural resource users, Instituto Terra hopes to foster the sustainable use and longevity of this unique and irreplaceable forest.

For more information about Instituto Terra, visit www.InstitutoTerra.org.

To read more case studies or to submit your case study to the GRN database, visit

www.GlobalRestorationNetwork.org

SER Bookshelf



A Guide for Desert and Dryland Restoration: New Hope for Arid Lands

David A. Bainbridge
Island Press, 2007

1-55963-968-7 Hardcover
1-55963-969-5 Paperback

Dryland degradation and desertification now affect almost a billion people around the world. Tragically, the biological resources and productivity of millions of acres of land are lost to desertification each year because people remain unaware of strategies and techniques that could improve yields, reduce risk, and begin healing the world's deserts. *A Guide for Desert and Dryland Restoration* is the first book to offer practical, field-tested solutions to this critical problem.

The book discusses the ecology of desert plants, explores the causes of desertification and land abuse, and outlines the processes and procedures needed to evaluate, plan, implement, and monitor desert restoration projects. Each chapter represents a guide to a critical topic for environmental restoration; extensive photographs, diagrams, and drawings give detailed information for immediate application, and additional resources are included in appendixes.

A Guide for Desert and Dryland Restoration is the first comprehensive book focused on restoring arid regions, and clearly demonstrates that arid lands can be successfully rehabilitated. In addition to restorationists, the book will be an invaluable resource for anyone working in arid lands, including farmers, ranchers, gardeners, landscapers, outdoor recreation professionals, and activists.

A Guide for Desert and Dryland Restoration is part of the series the Science and Practice of Ecological Restoration, from the Society for Ecological Restoration International and Island Press.

David A. Bainbridge, trained as an earth scientist and ecologist, is associate professor in the Marshall Goldsmith School of Management at Alliant International University in San Diego, California, USA. He is author of *The Straw Bale House*. ☞

“David Bainbridge presents a realistic view of the ecological challenges to healing the world's deserts and drylands. Moreover,

he offers innovative approaches to desert protection and restoration that can be practically implemented by those in the field.”

—Yvon Chouinard, founder and chief executive officer, Patagonia

“*A Guide for Desert and Dryland Restoration* provides an all-in-one handbook for restoration ecologists, farmers, ranchers, and others ready to roll up their sleeves and get to work restoring degraded drylands, whether in temperate or tropical environments. It synthesizes practical lessons for restoring ecosystem functions in a dryland landscape, drawing upon diverse methods from time-tested indigenous knowledge to cutting-edge science.”

—Sara J. Scherr, president, Ecoagriculture Partners

“David Bainbridge integrates ecological theory with the specific, researched technologies to restore disturbed arid lands. Both his passion and his expertise show in this outstanding summary of knowledge from his experiences, published research, and the crafts of farmers and herders through the millennia. This book belongs in every manager's toolbox and on the shelf of every researcher seeking to improve our understanding of desert ecosystems and new approaches to managing them.”

—Michael F. Allen, director, Center for Conservation Biology, chair, Department of Plant Pathology and Microbiology, University of California, Riverside

“This book presents a comprehensive overview of the myriad challenges inherent in arid lands restoration and presents practical approaches, field tested by decades of trial and error, to successfully restore these globally important lands. David Bainbridge has provided an important and informative guide to restoration of fragile desert ecosystems.”

—Robert MacAller, principal, restoration biologist, RECON Environmental

Wick Irrigation

By David Bainbridge | *A Guide for Desert and Dryland Restoration* (2007)

One of the lesser known methods of irrigation uses a wick to conduct water to plants. I was first introduced to this in a paper from India, where wicks were used in conjunction with buried clay pot irrigation (Mari Gowda, 1974; Bainbridge, 2001). A hole or holes are punched in the buried clay pot and a porous wick made of cotton is inserted in the hole. The material wicks the water from the container into the soil and provides a slow steady source of water to encourage root development and plant growth further away from the buried clay pot.

I couldn't find any research on the use of wick irrigation in the field, but various forms of wicks and capillary mats have been used in the laboratory and greenhouse. I evaluated possible wick material using water with a dilute vegetable green dye in a reservoir and horizontal wicks laid on absorbent paper, Table 1.

This revealed several important issues. Used rope was much better than new rope. The increased wicking of used rope may be due to increased breaks in the fibers, dirt, changes in the fiber caused by UV light or aging, and removal of lubricating materials used in manufacturing. Washing rope improved performance but previous heavy use was best.

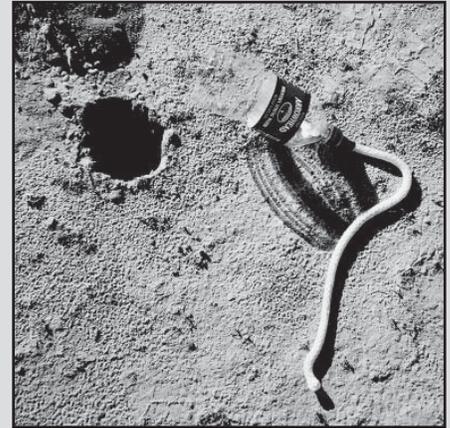
The flow rate and wetting distance over time were evaluated using a 2 liter bottle reservoir with a copper tube glued in the lid fitted with a short length of vinyl tube through which a 6 mm used nylon rope was threaded. The exposed wick length was 38 cm. After 60 days outside in a sunny but sheltered location the wick had consumed 850 ml of water, or an average of 14 ml/day. Through most of this

period the wick was wet to the end and maintained a damp spot on the concrete. During periods with low humidity and direct sunlight the wick would stay damp for only 5-10 cm from the bottle cap during midday, but would be rewetted by morning.

An initial field test of wick irrigation was installed on a very dry east-facing slope at a borrow pit restoration site in the Coachella Valley. Mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*) transplants with wicks and conventional hand watering at the surface were compared. The wicked plants were fed by capillary wicking from an inverted bottle and a wick rising above the reservoir through a plastic tube. The wicked plants lasted longer and grew faster than the controls. One of the wick systems was chewed up by wild animals. To get a more controlled view of water use, a capillary wick system was set up in the greenhouse at Riverside using a palo verde (*Cercidium floridum*) seedling in a bucket of 16 grit silica sand. After one month the plant was still growing and exhibited no sign of water stress. Water consumption ranged from 20-30 ml/day.

Wick systems for a subsequent field trial of capillary wicking were made using 1.5 liter plastic reservoirs, plastic tubing and cotton wicks. The 5 mm cotton wicks became moldy and considerable biological activity developed in the reservoirs. This probably limited water transfer. Water consumption was not calculated precisely, but appeared to be running about 20 ml/day. Several systems were chewed up by wild animals. Nylon wicks feeding from a buried pipe reservoir were installed in 1990 along highway 86, also in the Coachella Valley performed better than cotton. Survival was modest, but water use was very low.

In 2002 I set up a small wick experiment using gravity fed wicks instead of capillary fed wicks, again in the Coachella Valley west of the Salton Sea in another borrow pit. Here wicks were compared with surface irrigation. The wicks were made with 9 mm woven nylon rope that had been washed with detergent. The rope was fed into a 1 liter sports water bottle and a small section of heat shrink tubing was used to seal the bottle to the wick. The bottles were then fastened to the pins holding the treeshelter and filled by cutting out the bottom. The wick was placed in the hole as the seedling was planted. The



control plants were surface irrigated with a small basin.

The small mesquite seedlings (10 per treatment) from plant bands were planted on January 5 using just 2 liters of water. They were protected with twin wall tree shelters (Tubex type). They were then given 1 liter of water a month. The results are shown in the following graph after 6 months and a total of 8 liters of water. The ratings are the mean of ten plants, with 4 being excellent and 0 being apparently dead.

My conclusion from these small studies is that wicks work and are worth considering on a wide range of restoration and landscape projects (Bainbridge, 2007). Much more needs to be done to develop the best wick systems and to more fully evaluate the more appropriate uses of capillary and gravity fed wicks. One of the advantages of these systems is their robust nature and low cost. The flow rate could conceivably be adjusted with a clamp on the wick just below the reservoir. A multiple wick arrangement could be used to develop a root pattern that would improve wind-firmness. ☺

ENDNOTES

Bainbridge, D. A. 2001. "Buried clay pot irrigation." *Agricultural Water Management* 48(2):79-88.

Bainbridge, D. A. 2007. *A Guide for Desert and Dryland Restoration: New Hope for Arid Lands*. Island Press, Washington, DC.

Mari Gowda, M. H. 1974. "Dry orcharding." *The Lal Baugh* 19(1/2):1-85.

Table 1. Wick Performance.

Material	Rate of wetting cm/min
nylon parachute cord, used	0.51
4 mm cotton cord, new washed.....	0.15
4 mm braided nylon, new washed.....	0.11
6 mm woven nylon, used.....	0.33
6 mm woven nylon, used*	0.27
6 mm woven nylon, new	0.06
7 mm cotton tape (tube), used.....	0.43
7 mm cotton polycore	0.03
7 mm cotton polycore, new washed	0.15
1 cm manila	0.00

*wetted a large area 28 cm from the reservoir within 2 hours.

SER/ESA 2007

Joint Conference Preview

Connect with your SER colleagues at the San Jose meeting in a few short weeks. With more than 417 sessions on ecological restoration, we know you'll be busy! Below are a few not-to-be-missed events.

Opening Plenary Session --

**Keynote: Don Kennedy,
Editor-in-Chief, Science**

Sunday, August 5, 5:00-6:30 pm

San Jose Civic Auditorium, Main Hall

Now that the reality of climate change has achieved full-bore political momentum, it is driving a whole portfolio of proposed responses -- mitigation strategies, alternative energy sources and geoengineering solutions. If we're too eager for a solution, we may not give careful examination to the externalities of each proposal.

Symposium: Key Concepts and Research Questions in Restoration Ecology

Monday, August 6, 1:30-5:00 pm

San Jose McEnergy Convention Center

Hear some of the SER's leaders discuss the ecological concepts and theory at the heart of restoration ecology. Moderated by incoming Board Chair George Gann of the Institute for Regional Conservation in Miami, Florida, the Symposium will assess the current status of the science of the field and how best to advance it. Co-organizers include Richard Hobbs, editor of SER's journal *Restoration Ecology* and a professor at Murdoch University in Perth, Australia, and Jim Harris, Chair of SER's Science and Policy Working Group and a professor at Cranfield University in the United Kingdom.

SER Membership Meeting & Board Elections

Monday, August 6, 5:00-6:30 pm

San Jose McEnergy Conv. Center, F1&2

Meet the leaders and staff of SER ---they want to meet you!--- and enjoy free beer, wine and snacks. The agenda for the meeting includes annual elections, unveiling the Board's 5-year Strategic Plan, and hear updates on important Society work such as certification, workings groups and more. (If you cannot attend, please remember to email or fax in your ballot.

SER Awards Reception and Banquet

Tuesday, August 7, 7:00-10:00 pm

Hilton Hotel, Almaden I & II

(ticketed event)

Come enjoy an evening set aside to honor SER's 2007 award winners. You will be provided with a lovely hosted reception prior to the delicious dinner. The selections include either grilled Atlantic salmon, with sun-dried tomato salsa, garlic potatoes, and seasonal vegetables, or roasted breast of chicken stuffed with spinach, cheese, pinenuts, and roasted red-skinned potatoes, or eggplant parmesan coated with seasoned breadcrumbs on a bed of linguini, marinara sauce. After the main course you will be served a wonderful dessert and coffee or tea. Truly a memorable evening!! (\$80 ticket includes reception and wine with your meal)

SER Chapter Caucus

Tuesday, August 7, 11:30am-1:15pm

San Jose McEnergy Convention Center, F1

Meet up with other members from your SER Chapter, or shmooze with members from Chapters around the world. This is a great time to share ideas and inspiration.

SER Exhibit Booth

Monday, August 6 - Thursday, August 9,

11:30am-6:30pm daily

Main Exhibit Hall, Booth #803

Stop by the booth, located in the main Exhibit Hall, and meet SER's staff and take a live tour of the Global Restoration Network with SER Project Director Sasha Alexander, who built the site. Members can upload their expert profiles to the database at the booth. Also, we'll be offering special SER member renewal discounts. Learn about what SER has to offer you.

Closing Plenary Lunch: Summary of Meeting by Senior Ecologists

Friday, August 10, 11:30-1:00 pm

Marriott Hotel, Salon II

(ticketed event)

This is an informally structured opportunity to hear the perspectives of a panel of distinguished ecologists on the meeting just past, and their more general reflections on the history and future of the Society's meetings. All who attend will be invited to share questions, comments, and table talk. Panelists include SER International's incoming Board Chair George Gann.

SER Elections

Please join us on August 6, 2007, in San Jose, California, for SER's 2007 Board of Directors Election at our Annual Membership Meeting. The Board Development Working Group has received nominations and qualified a slate of candidates.

If you can't attend the membership meeting to vote, please fill out the 2007 Absentee Ballot available online at www.ser.org/content/07election.asp or on Page 11 of this newsletter. Completed absentee ballots may be emailed to info@ser.org, faxed to (270) 626-5485 or mailed to SER International, 285 W. 18th St., Suite 1, Tucson, AZ 85701. Absentee ballots must be received by August 2, 2007. Please contact SER's membership department at (520) 622-5485 if you would like the ballot in MS Word or another format or to verify your membership status and voting eligibility.

Voting is open only to current SER members at the Basic level and higher. Members at the Basic, Full and Professional levels may cast one (1) ballot per person. Organizational members may cast two (2) ballots per organization.

Oliver Enuoh

Candidate for Africa Representative



Oliver is an environmental management (biodiversity conservation) consultant and an NGO activist on African ecological restoration. He is from Cross River

State (South Eastern) Nigeria, and he obtained his master's degree training in the above field at Yale University (USA), under a Ford Foundation fellowship, graduating in May 2006. He came in contact with SER's leaflets and pamphlets while at Yale Univer-

Thank You, Outgoing Board Members!

SER extends a sincere thank you to outgoing board members **Bonnie Harper-Lore** (Midwest U.S./Canada), **John Munro** (Northeast U.S./Canada), **Steve Moddemeyer** (Pacific Northwest U.S./Canada), **Bill Halvorson** (Representative-At-Large) and **David Borland** (Southeast U.S.) for their dedicated service to the organization and its mission of promoting ecological restoration around the world.

sity, and his conviction that Africa needs ecological restoration more than other continents made him join SER without delay. When he returned to Nigeria in June 2006, he says he was shocked to realize that most African environmental stakeholders – governments, private sector, NGOs, CBOs, academia and local communities had no knowledge of SER as the source for expertise on restoration science, practice and policy. Accordingly, he formed an NGO called African Ecological Restoration Network to promote awareness of SER and to catalyze ecological restoration initiatives in Africa.

SER is one of the greatest environmental ideas of our time, Oliver says, and Africa needs to be part of that idea: "Indeed, I liken SER to a vaccine which will go a long way in healing the ecological wounds of our time, vis-a-vis managing and repairing ecosystems globally." SER has no chapter(s) in Africa and no African representative on the board. Oliver says his desire to serve on SER's board is to fill the above gap, including the propagation of the organization's mission, policies and programs in Africa. "SER's example of accommodating scientists, planners, administrators, ecological consultants, first peoples, landscape architects, philosophers, teachers, engineers, natural area

managers, writers, growers, community activists and volunteers etc, constitutes the world's greatest strength in tackling ecological restoration," he says. "I will strive to replicate the above in Africa if elected onto the Board of SER."

Jim Harris

Candidate for At-Large Representative



Jim has served on the SER Board of Directors since 1999. His contributions have been many, including currently serving as Chair of the Science and Policy Working Group. He also is a

contributing editor for SER's journal, *Restoration Ecology*.

Jim is Professor of Environmental Technology at Cranfield University. He has worked extensively on the use of microbial community measurement for the determination of soil quality in a number of degraded ecosystems, and the application of microbial communities for the transformation of wastes. There has been a clear emphasis on the development and application of soil microbial measurement methodology. This work has been set in a broad theme of land restoration and reclamation, and land-use monitoring in general. This has covered everything from the practicalities of providing objective ecosystem measures of the success of restoration programmes, through the interaction of governance and science, setting conceptual frameworks for restoration ecology, to educational initiatives, such as the establishment of the world's first degree in Restoration Ecology, and authoring a book on the subject.

SER Elections

Bobby Keeland

Candidate for Southeast U.S.
Representative

Representing Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee or Virginia



Bobby is a research ecologist at the U.S. Geological Survey's National Wetlands Research Center in Lafayette, Louisiana. He has been a member of

SER since 2001, has served two terms as the Louisiana representative to the SER Coastal Plain Chapter, for which he currently is treasurer. His areas of expertise are in the ecology and restoration of forested wetlands of the southeastern United States, population and community ecology, dendroecology, primary production/decomposition processes and hydrology. He received his doctorate in 1994 from the University of Georgia, where he studied differential growth patterns of wetland trees under different hydrologic regimes.

Since graduation, Bobby's research has remained focused on the effects of hydrologic regimes on forest dynamics in forested wetlands (cypress-tupelo swamp, bottomland hardwood forests and Atlantic white cedar swamps), and the restoration of forested wetlands of the southeastern United States. Dendrochronological techniques are being used to determine the long-term effects of hydrologic regime changes on individual tree growth and community dynamics. The major goal of his research is to develop an understanding of how water management activities affect reproduction, recruitment and long-term growth in forested wetland ecosystems.

Bobby became interested in restoration while working for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Washington state, and specifically in forested

wetlands while studying at the Savannah River Ecology Lab in South Carolina. His current job with the USGS involves restoration activities in bottomland hardwood forests throughout the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley.

Bobby hopes to continue to expand the dialogue among restorationists by bringing the southeastern experience in restoration to SER and to, in turn, bring the international experience back to the southeast. He says is especially interested in furthering knowledge of the basic life history characteristics of all species so that they can be more easily and realistically incorporated into restoration plans. In too many cases, he says, we are working with species for which we don't even know the basics, let alone fully understand.

Carolina Murcia

Candidate for At-Large Representative



Carolina has been serving on the SER Board of Directors since 2000 and has made many contributions, including helping translate the *SER Primer* into

Spanish and helping create the case study database currently housed on the Global Restoration Network.

She is a conservation ecologist with the Wildlife Conservation Society in Colombia, working on projects throughout Venezuela, Ecuador and other South American countries. She works with local communities on global conservation issues, and she also teaches and conducts research in the field of restoration ecology.

As a SER board member representing Latin America, Carolina's focus has been on fostering cultural diversity and bringing varied perspectives to the organization. She has

been active in advocating for reduced membership dues and journal subscription fees for people from developing countries working on ecological restoration issues.

Jim Thorne

Candidate for Northeast
North America Representative

Representing Labrador, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont or West Virginia



Having grown up in rural Northern New York in a dairy farming family, Jim says his connection to ecological restoration has been through working the

land and time spent in the unfarmed lands there -- the forests. His professional interests have been mostly in forest restoration, especially on how forest soils and disturbance affect ecological succession. He says his awareness of ecological restoration started while he was a botany student at the University of Wisconsin, before SER started. A member of the Society from its beginning, Jim taught landscape architects and ecological planners at the University of Pennsylvania and then began working with The Nature Conservancy and Natural Lands Trust.

Today, Jim's restoration interests include eastern native grassland restoration, restoring eastern old growth and restoring habitat for the federally-listed bog turtle. Currently, he is a board member for the SER Mid-Atlantic Chapter. He would like to serve as Northeast representative for the SER Board of Directors to help strengthen the New England and Mid-Atlantic chapters and to facilitate the start of an Atlantic Canada Chapter.

SER Elections

Alan Unwin

Candidate for Midwest
North America Representative

Representing Manitoba, Ontario, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota or Wisconsin



Al is a full-time professor in the Ecosystem Restoration Post-Graduate Program at Niagara College, located in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Canada, where he has been

teaching various aspects of ecological restoration and environmental management for 12 years.

In 2001, Al chaired the 13th Annual International conference of SER in Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada, with a theme of restoration work that transcends political boundaries. Since that time, he also has served on the SER Board of Directors as an At-Large Representative and has helped to steer the board in a direction of growth and prosperity. In addition, Alan also has served as the chair of the SER Awards Committee for the past 5 years.

Al would like to continue to serve on the Board, this time as the Midwest U.S./Canada representative. He would like to see the completion of several initiatives that the Board has been

working tremendously hard on, including certification, a detailed strategic-planning initiative, continued improvement in Chapter communications and representation, and a renewed and revamped awards program that achieves truly international notoriety.

Vivienne Wilson

Candidate for Rocky Mountains/Great Plains North America Representative

Representing Alberta, Saskatchewan, Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah or Wyoming



Vivienne is a project manager and technical lead in reclamation for the Oil Sands Division of Golder Associates Limited in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Located

in northern Alberta, the oil sands deposit is one of the world's largest petroleum reserves, and the site of an enormous extraction effort. It has major reclamation and, it can be argued, restoration challenges.

Golder Associates is an international engineering and environmental consulting firm with 4,500 employees. Prior to this position, Vivienne was director of the Masters in Environment and Management Program at Royal Roads University, located in Victoria,

Canada. Her background is in vegetation ecology (B.Sc. and M.Sc. from the University of Auckland, in New Zealand; Ph.D. from the University of Victoria in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada), followed by consulting work with the British Columbia (B.C.) Ministry of Forests, as well as riparian restoration and integrated stormwater management work with a consulting consortium in B.C.

She joined the SER Board of Directors in early 2007 as the Rocky Mountains and Great Plains representative, and she attended the Board's strategic planning retreat in April 2007. Since that time, Vivienne has been working on the draft strategic plan with other members of an interim committee. She says she believes very deeply in the work of SER and in the challenge of finding a way to integrate restoration ideas into industry. "This is particularly important as the focus in many large extraction industries moves to issues of healing the land after development," Vivienne says.

"The Rocky Mountains and Great Plains area is made up of a huge variation in ecosystem types, many of which can be described as extreme environments to restore (and reclaim!). My work, and my interest in developing ways to effectively restore ecosystems in this area are the impetus behind my wish to contribute time and enthusiasm to the SER cause."

DON'T FORGET TO VOTE!

SER Membership Meeting & Board Elections

Monday, August 6, 5:00-6:30 pm -- San Jose McEnergy Conv. Center, F1&2

Meet the leaders and Staff of SER International---they want to meet you!---and enjoy free beer, wine and snacks.

The agenda for the meeting includes annual elections, unveiling the Board's 5-year Strategic Plan, and hear updates on important Society work such as certification, workings groups and more. (If you cannot attend, please remember to email or fax in your ballot. Please vote!)

SER Board Elections Absentee Ballot

2007
Conference
Special Edition

2007 Election Slate

The Board Development Committee has qualified the following candidates for our 2007 Election Slate. Members are welcome to write in the candidates of their choice. Voting is open only to current SER members. Associate members do not have voting rights. Members at the Basic, Full and Professional levels may cast one (1) ballot per person. Organizational members may cast two (2) ballots per organization. Completed absentee ballots may be emailed to info@ser.org, faxed to 270-626-5485 or mailed to SER International, 285 W. 18th St., Suite 1, Tucson, AZ 85701. Absentee ballots must be received by August 2, 2007. Election results will be announced after voting is concluded at the membership meeting August 6, 2007.

At-Large Representative

VOTE FOR ONE – ALL SER members are eligible to vote

- Jim Harris
- Other (please specify) _____

At-Large Representative

VOTE FOR ONE – ALL SER members are eligible to vote

- Carolina Murcia
- Other (please specify) _____

Africa Representative

VOTE FOR ONE - Vote ONLY if you are a resident of the continent of Africa

- Oliver Enuoh
- Other (please specify) _____

Southeast U.S. Representative

VOTE FOR ONE - Vote ONLY if you are a resident of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee or Virginia

- Bobby Keeland
- Other (please specify) _____

Pacific Northwest U.S./Canada Representative

VOTE FOR ONE - Vote ONLY if you are a resident of British Columbia, Northwest Territories, Yukon Territory, Alaska, Idaho, Oregon or Washington

- Cara Ritchie Nelson
- Other (please specify) _____

Northeast U.S./Canada Representative

VOTE FOR ONE - Vote ONLY if you are a resident of Labrador, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont or West Virginia

- Jim Thorne
- Other (please specify) _____

Midwest U.S./Canada Representative

VOTE FOR ONE - Vote ONLY if you are a resident of Manitoba, Ontario, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota or Wisconsin

- Al Unwin
- Other (please specify) _____

Rocky Mountains/Great Plains U.S./Canada Representative

VOTE FOR ONE - Vote ONLY if you are a resident of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah or Wyoming

- Vivienne Wilson
- Other (please specify) _____

REQUIRED INFORMATION:

Member name: _____
Organization: _____
Email address: _____
Phone number: _____

Chapter Updates

British Columbia Chapter Sponsors Regional Sessions

The SER British Columbia Chapter is co-sponsoring two October events with the Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology. One is a course on soil bioengineering, and the other is a conference on regional ecological restoration.

A two-day course on “Soil Bioengineering” will be held October 10-11, 2007, in Cranbrook, B.C. Taught by SER member **David Polster** of Polster Environmental Services (Duncan, B.C.), this course will focus on soil bioengineering techniques and options involved in restoration and reclamation of damaged ecosystems, using a combination of structural materials, vegetative cuttings and other specialized techniques.

Topics to be covered during the course include factors involved in successful restoration; succession reclamation; soil bioengineering techniques; regional differences in climate, soils, hydrology, plant types and growing seasons; and maintenance and monitoring. The first day is a classroom session at the Prestige Inn, and the second day is a hands-on field session. Details, registration information and a course outline are available at www.cmiae.org.

The regional conference, “Ecological Restoration in Southeastern B.C.: Grasslands to Mountaintops,” will be held Oct. 11-13 at the Prestige Inn in Cranbrook, B.C. Some of the themes to be covered at this conference include restoration of grassland and adjacent forests, rehabilitation of mine spoils and restoration of riparian areas. While showcasing local activities, this event also will address subjects of global interest such as climate change, invasive plants and the use of traditional ecological knowledge.

SER members who will be presenting at the conference include **Michael Keefer**, Keefer Ecological Services (sedge revegetation trials in Leach Creek); **Brendan Wilson**, Cordilleran Ecological Research (Whitebark pine restoration on the continental divide); **David Polster**, Polster Environmental Services (mine reclamation strategies in British Columbia); **Clint Smyth**, Matrix Solutions (natural colonization of high-elevation mine exploration disturbances in the Elk and Flathead river drainages); and **Eric Higgs**, University of Victoria (reflections on the conference and the future of ecological restoration in British Columbia).

Registration information and a complete list of speakers are available at www.cmiae.org. For questions about the conference, contact the Columbia Mountains Institute at 250-837-9311 or office@cmiae.org.

For more information about the SER British Columbia chapter, visit www.serontario.org or email info@serontario.org.

New England Chapter Sponsors Phragmites Workshop Aug. 29

The SER New England Chapter, with The 300 Committee, is co-sponsoring a Native *Phragmites* Workshop on August 29, 2007 in Woods Hole, Massachusetts. A recent survey of the wetlands of Falmouth, Massachusetts, has showed there are a number of populations of native *Phragmites australis* growing in two areas of the town. Since there are few documented native *Phragmites* populations in Massachusetts, the Chapter has offered to run a workshop on recognizing the native haplotype, with the hope that participants will look for it on other Massachusetts locales.



After a morning of talks on *Phragmites australis* subsp. *Americanus*, we will go to the Great Sippewissett Marsh in West Falmouth, which contains several populations of both native and introduced *Phragmites*, to view the morphological differences first hand. The workshop will be held at the Woods Hole Research Center and includes a panel discussion on recognizing native *Phragmites*.

Discussion topics include Managing Mixed *Phragmites* Populations, Observations of Native *Phragmites* in Northeastern Fens, Intraspecific Hybridization of Native and Introduced Subspecies of *Phragmites australis* in North America, and Native *Phragmites* and the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. For more information about the workshop, contact **Dick Payne**, chair of the Falmouth Wetlands Invasives Steering Committee (WISC), at dannas@cape.com.

For more information about the SER New England Chapter, visit the group's website at www.ser.org/serne.

Chapter Updates

New England Chapter Accepting Board Nominations

The SER New England Chapter is coming up on its first anniversary, and it is time that the Interim Board be replaced by an elected Board. The chapter includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont. If you are a new member or if you did not receive the Call for Nominations, please contact the Chapter vice chair, **Mike Toohill**, at mtoohill@ensr.aecom.com.

Northwest Chapter Conference Slated for Sept. 25-28

The SER Northwest Chapter is co-sponsoring, with the Society of Wetland Scientists (SWS) Pacific Northwest Chapter, a joint conference September 25-28, 2007, in Yakima, Washington.

SER member and chapter chair **Jake Jacobson** of Snohomish County Surface Water Management will present "Beaverworks versus Humanworks: How Can We Co-exist?" This workshop is designed to provide hope and guidance to those challenged with co-existing with beavers and their beaverworks. Jake will tell you what has worked, and more importantly, what has not worked in his six years of trying to figure out how to protect a road or a restoration site from beaverworks impacts. Rather than removing beaver from their habitat, techniques focus on learning to co-exist by managing water levels, by influencing dam construction site selection, and by protecting selected plant materials from browse.

Another SER member, **Steve Erickson** of Frosty Hollow Ecological Restoration, will present "Seeds in Restoration," a workshop focusing on the use of native plant seed in restoration settings. Discussion will center

around seed mixes, ways to get seed, tracking and documenting of collections, processing and cleaning seeds, testing methods and seed storage.

Other workshop topics include Vegetation Management on Floodplain Levees; Vegetation Manager (VEMA) Database; Pioneering Mitigation Banking in the Northwest; Streambank Erosion Control Alternatives; and Wetland Rush, Sedge and Grass Identification.

Numerous conference field trips include hydrological restoration in montane meadow at Teepee Creek, spawning habitat for the Middle Columbia River steelhead; restoration of Oregon white oak stands in the Tieton Canyon and Swauk Valley; and restoration at Selah Cliffs Natural Area Preserve, including conservation efforts of the basalt daisy, which grows nowhere on earth but in the Yakima River canyon.

For more information about the SER Northwest Chapter, visit www.ser.org/sernw or email info@sernw.org.

Texas Chapter Conference Held June 8-10 in Lubbock

The Texas SER Chapter held its 12th annual conference June 8-10, 2007, at Texas Tech University in Lubbock. Co-sponsored by the Texas Tech Department of Natural Resource Management and the Beach Family Ranch, the conference featured restoration efforts from around Texas, with a special session on urban ecology and restoration.

The keynote speaker was **Loren M. Smith**, Ph.D. Loren is the Kleberg Professor of Wildlife Ecology at the Department of Natural Resource Management at Texas Tech University. His research focuses on various aspects of wetland ecology and principles of biodiversity, while his personal research focuses on biogeography of playa

wetlands and biotic diversity in Great Plains ecosystems.

The conference coincided with the Texas Riparian Association's "Riparian Essentials Workshop" held June 8. The two groups held a joint Friday evening social with a full dinner and a plenary by keynote speaker Loren Smith. The Saturday evening social included an informal meal and live Irish music.

Two field trips also were held in conjunction with the conference. On June 9, the current owners of the 6,000-acre Beach Family Ranch gave a tour and described their practices, successes and failures. They have focused on restoring ecological function, while maintaining some cattle operations. They have restored prairie dogs, resulting in the return of burrowing owls and other species, and they are currently restoring a playa lake. On June 10, field trip participants visited the Windmill Ranch Preserve near Snyder. This 1,000-acre ranch is being revitalized, with ecotourism as its main goal. Habitat restoration is ongoing, and visitors will have a chance to see these activities first-hand and hear about future habitat work.

For more information about the Texas SER Chapter, visit the group's website at www.ser.org/txser or email txser@ser.org.

Ontario Chapter Native Plant Resource Guide Available

The SER Ontario Chapter has published its 2007-2008 "Native Plant Resource Guide." It is available for \$5, plus \$2 additional for mailing, from SER Ontario, c/o **Steve Smith**, 331 Linsmore Cr., Toronto, Ontario, M4J 4M1, Canada.

For more information about the SER Ontario Chapter, visit the group's website at www.serontario.org or email info@serontario.org.

Chapter Updates

6th European Restoration Conference Planned for 2008

The 6th European Conference on Ecological Restoration is scheduled for September 2008 in Belgium. The conference theme will be "Toward a Sustainable Future for European Ecosystems - Providing Restoration Guidelines for Natura2000 Habitats and Species," focusing on the areas, habitat types and species designated under the Habitat and Bird Directive.

The main objectives of the conference are improving the exchange of knowledge between science and policy makers, practitioners and stakeholders; learning from approaches and experiences in different EU-countries; stimulating trans-boundary contacts and use of good restoration practices; and exploring socio-economic and

legal issues of nature restoration in the Natura2000 context.

The conference is being organized by the Research Institute for Nature and Forest (Brussels), in cooperation with different government bodies and international NGOs. The conference likely will take place in Ghent, Belgium, Sept. 8-12. Specific details will be available soon at www.ser2008.be. For more information, email kris.decleer@inbo.be.

Europe Chapter Sponsors Summer Ph.D. Course

A summer course for Ph.D. students is being organized by the SER Europe Chapter, in cooperation with the Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands. The course, "Restoration Ecology of Low-Productive Ecosystems," is scheduled for

Sept. 23-27 and includes lectures on theoretical background, practical field work to build restoration-related skills, and short presentations of research projects by the participants.

Interested students should register before August 1, 2007. For more information, visit www.eco.science.ru.nl/mibiol/mibio.htm or email jose.broekmans@science.ru.nl.

Contact SER Europe

Norbert Hölzel, Chair:
nhoelzel@uni-muenster.de

Kathrin Kiehl, Secretary:
ser.europe@wzw.tum.de

Various conferences and workshops on ecological restoration in Europe are announced on our website at www.ser.org/europe/events.asp

Staff Notes

New Membership Assistant Joins SER International Staff

SER International welcomes our new Membership Assistant, **Cynthia Taylor**, to the Tucson office.

Cynthia has been working in media and nonprofits for more than 15 years. She has a B.A. in Journalism from the University of New Mexico and is an M.A. candidate in Nonprofit Management at Prescott College. With an emphasis on the animals and environment subsector of nonprofit organizations, her masters thesis discusses language use, public perception and social change.

She also earned a Certificate in Environmental Journalism from the Society of Professional Journalists and is a member of both the American



Society of Association Executives and the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

Cynthia has experience in communications, fundraising and grassroots organizing for numerous nonprofit groups. Previously, she has worked as Director of Administration for the Animal Defense League of Arizona, Manager of Member Services for the Tucson Botanical Gardens, and Associate Director of Annual Giving for Florida Atlantic University. She also was Managing Editor of *The Workbook*, an award-winning environmental magazine published by Southwest Research and Information

Center in Albuquerque, N.M.

In her spare time, Cynthia volunteers as a birding field trip leader for the Tucson Audubon Society, advocates for companion animals while serving on the board of the Tucson nonprofit group Spay and Neuter Solutions, and teaches vegan cooking classes in the Tucson community. She is an avid birdwatcher, writer and photographer, and she enjoys spending time in nature. Her special area of interest is birding sites that use reclaimed water, such as constructed wetlands, to provide habitat.

If you have any questions about membership, journal subscriptions, chapter relations or SER's newsletter, please contact Cynthia by calling the Tucson, Arizona, office at 520-622-5485 or by emailing cynthia@ser.org.

What I Did on My Summer Vacation

By MK LeFevour

In June, I made my first-ever visit to South Africa and was treated to tours of several inspiring restoration sites. The impetus for the trip came from an invitation by the Christensen Fund to present at the Society for Conservation Biology's pre-conference workshop on creating innovative partnership for landscape restoration using Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

The conference, held at the Nelson Mandela Municipal University in Port Elizabeth (on the Eastern Cape), included a fair number of restoration biologists. After I spoke about the Society's efforts to bring more information about TEK to our members through our Indigenous Peoples' Restoration Network and other initiatives, SER India's **Narayan Desai** gave a fascinating talk about how he uses quotes from the ancient Hindu texts—the Vedas—to generate understanding and cooperation among villagers where sacred forests are being restored. He reports that it has helped make local land users much more supportive and excited about restoration work in their area.

Before and during the conference, I had the opportunity to visit several long-term restoration sites on the Western and Eastern Capes. My guide on the Western Cape was a South African expert on environmental impact assessment named **John Raimondo**, who has consulted for the United Nations and worked on a national level to implement restoration. He took me to the outskirts of Cape Town where we met with SER member **Patricia Holmes** and her husband, botanist **Tony Rebelo**. They have been deeply involved in restoring the fynbos, which is rare and endangered fine-leaved native vegetation. Before the Dutch and English settlers colonized the area, fynbos covered the mountains around Cape Town. The need for lumber and grazing land caused most of the indigenous forests to be cut down, and now pine trees (im-



MK at Linda Redfern's native plant rescue farm

ported from North American) dominate the landscape. The trees are harvested regularly and replenished, but Holmes and colleagues pushed to get permission to restore fynbos in several areas.

It was a windy day—so windy that a tree nearly fell on us as we trudged across the muddy field. Like proud parents, Pat couldn't help pulling up young invasive plants as she gave us the tour, and Tony kept bending down to exclaim over plants that have not been seen growing in the wild in decades. Removing the tight tree canopy and doing several controlled burns allowed the existing seed bank to release these treasures back to the land.

On the border of the restoration site a small creek ran down the mountain. A crew of local workers was busy building gabions to hold the streambank in place and were pulling out invasive grasses. I spoke with a grandmother named Jennifer, the crew supervisor, who told me that she loved her work because it was going to benefit "my grandchildren's grandchildren."

What struck me as one of the most inspiring aspects of South African restoration projects I visited was the way they are thinking about natural capital and that the community is as important a part of the restoration as the plants,

soil and air. The poorest members of the community benefit not only from the ecological aspects of restoration, but also from the jobs and mentoring and training that are created.

Bool Smuts is a good example of this kind of thinker. Trained as a doctor, Bool woke up one morning and realized he needed to change careers and do something he felt more passionate about. He went back to school and earned a degree in environmental studies. Bool is now involved in an exciting project to restore indigenous forests in the Western Cape. He and his partners have done extensive research into which native plants will sink the most carbon, and

they are now working to get financing and mentoring to help the poorest population in the area to become self-employed as suppliers of indigenous plants as well as the restorationists of the forest.

Toward the end of my visit, I caught up with **Linda Redfern**, an SER member I met at the SER B.C. Conference in 2004 and with whom I became fast friends. When she heard I was coming to South Africa, she put together my itinerary and set me up to visit with these wonderful restorationists. While I was in Port Elizabeth, I had the great fortune to see the farm where she and her team rescue native plants from construction sites. Eventually, the plants are returned to those areas as natural landscaping. Her crew, made up of local Africans from the nearby Townships, was busy replanting aloes while I toured the farm.

You can read more details about the fynbos restoration I visited in **James Aronson's** new book, *Restoring Natural Capital: Science, Business and Practice* (our latest in the SER/Island Press restoration book series) as well as in a podcast and accompanying photos I will be uploading in the near future on www.GlobalRestorationNetwork.com. ☪



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