



Society for Ecological Restoration Code of Ethics

Adopted 2011; Updated June 2020

Preamble

"SER advances the science, practice and policy of ecological restoration to sustain biodiversity, improve resilience in a changing climate, and re-establish an ecologically healthy relationship between nature and culture.

– SER mission statement

We serve all those who engage in restoration: researchers, practitioners, experts and volunteers. We aspire to constant learning, openness to many forms of knowledge, humility and perseverance in the face of ecological challenges, and honesty and responsibility in our practice.

As a relatively young science and practice, the ecological restoration community is coming to terms with rapid environmental, ecological and cultural changes. Our understanding of ecosystems and how to assist their recovery is constantly evolving.

This work takes courage and a willingness to live with complexity and uncertainty. There are difficult choices involved in addressing the needs of ecosystems, people, animals, plants and other organisms.

We know that the health of human communities depends on the health of ecosystems, and that our human communities thrive when our ecosystems thrive.

This Code of Ethics guides the conduct and work of SER members, boards and staff. We uphold this code and hold each other accountable to advance the science and practice of ecological restoration, develop and use knowledge pertaining to restoration, serve as an ambassador of SER, promote fairness and equality, and maintain high standards of conduct in our activities.

Advance Ecological Restoration

- We advance the field of ecological restoration by promoting competence, high standards, professional development and the sharing of knowledge.
- We encourage education, research and the exchange of ideas as part of a community of practice in the continuing development of the art, practice and science of ecological restoration for members, the public and the ecosystems we serve.
- We actively encourage the sharing of ideas, techniques and products to spark innovation and advance the field.
- We widely share achievements and failures, discoveries and inventions through mediums and channels that are accessible to restoration scientists, practitioners and the public.

Develop and Use Knowledge

- Since we realize that all forms of knowledge have value, we base our decisions on the following: scientifically-derived information; local and traditional ecological knowledge; project-derived outcomes; and other available knowledge and experience.
- We share our processes, decisions and project outcomes in a transparent and accurate manner to the extent possible.
- We behave honestly and with integrity in all aspects of generating and disseminating accurate information.
- We actively acknowledge all sources of information used in our work.
- We seek permission for the use of unpublished data or methods and disclose the context in which they will be used.

Serve as Ambassador

- We uphold the dignity and integrity of SER and the field of restoration by being honest, respectful and responsible.
- We serve as spokespersons for SER only when and as authorized.

Promote Fairness and Equity

We are committed to building a fair and equitable profession by:

- honoring local partners through respect of their knowledge, engaging them through two-way communication, and building local capacity when possible. We are committed to communicating our work to diverse audiences. We are also committed to listening to and learning from local partners, including soliciting input and feedback.
- applying a critical lens to SER's programs and practices in order to unearth structural racism internally, and across economies, policies, and partner institutions.
- promoting practices that respect cultural diversity and support sustainable livelihoods in the same way we respect ecological diversity.
- committing to becoming an anti-racist organization, working to end racism by consciously and proactively recognizing, interrupting, and stopping racism within our sphere of influence.
- treating people fairly. We will not allow barriers to social inclusion to affect our work, including prejudice and discrimination against people because of their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, social and economic class, educational level, color, immigration status, sex, age, size, family status, political belief, religion, mental ability, and physical ability.
- actively promoting and emulating respectful behavior. This includes recognizing, exposing, and fighting abuse of power and authority, including bullying and harassment of any kind. Harassment includes, for example, unnecessary scrutiny or attack, threats of violence, unwelcome sexual attention, discriminatory jokes and language, and advocating for or encouraging the above behavior.

Standards of Conduct

- We abide by and support the advancement of the policies, rules, regulations and laws that govern our professional and volunteer activities.

- We accurately represent our qualifications, credentials, capabilities, experience and knowledge.
- We encourage open and direct dialogue to resolve conflicts and disagreements, respecting the reputation, prospects and practices of others.
- We endeavor to identify and avoid any conflicts of interest by proactively disclosing any real, potential or perceived conflicts.
- We use our best informed judgment for decision-making.
- We protect proprietary or confidential information that has been entrusted to us.
- We avoid fraud, deception and misuse of information.
- We take responsibility for our work and work done under our direction or supervision.
- We undertake ecological restoration projects in which we, and those with whom we collaborate, are qualified by education, training or experience.
- We exercise care to minimize or avoid adverse ecological consequences.
- Because ecological restoration sometimes involves causing harm (e.g., removal of invasive species) to achieve greater ecological benefits, we believe difficult choices should be acknowledged, aired and undertaken with care.

Note: The Society provides other guidelines and principles for specific audiences to complement this Code of Ethics.