Code of Ethics
Society for Ecological Restoration – Updated March 2022

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. This includes 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.

As a Society, we promote a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusivity in all of our endeavors and interactions. We believe that each person in their own unique way contributes directly to SER’s development and to the field of ecological restoration at large. We prioritize safety, inclusion, equal opportunity, community, and mutual caring in all SER events, programs, and activities and in our own work.

We provide a robust and dynamic platform to foster collaboration, knowledge sharing, networking, research, and discussion among different stakeholders in the field of ecological restoration, including members, the public, decision-makers, and the ecosystems we serve.

This Code of Ethics (hereafter referred to as the “Code”) establishes the expected ethical behavior as well as enforceable standards of conduct and work for all SER members, committees, boards, Certified Ecological Restoration Practitioners and Practitioners-in-Training, and staff. We uphold this code and hold each other accountable to advance the science, practice, and policy of ecological restoration by maintaining high standards of conduct, promoting fairness and equity, developing, respecting, disseminating, and integrating knowledge and practice, and acting as ambassadors of SER.
As members and affiliates of SER to whom this Code applies, we will:

1) Maintain High Standards of Conduct by:
   • abiding by and supporting the advancement of the policies, rules, regulations, and laws that govern professional and volunteer activities.
   • representing qualifications, credentials, capabilities, experiences, and knowledge accurately.
   • encouraging open, direct, and autonomous dialogue to resolve conflicts and disagreements while respecting the reputation, prospects and practices of others.
   • identifying and avoiding any conflicts of interest by proactively disclosing any real, potential, or perceived conflicts.
   • protecting proprietary, confidential information; knowledge; and intellectual property that has been entrusted to us.
   • taking responsibility for one’s work and work done under one’s direction or supervision.
   • avoiding, in any form, fraud, deception, and misuse of information.
   • not fabricating, falsifying, or suppressing results, deliberately misrepresenting research findings, or otherwise committing scientific fraud or claiming authorship or taking credit for the work of others.
   • being accountable to others for those papers, ideas, or practices to which one has made substantial and significant contributions through writing, study concepts and design, data collection, data analysis, and/or interpretation of data for the work.
   • exercising care to minimize or avoid adverse ecological consequences when practicing restoration. Because ecological restoration sometimes involves causing disruption or short-term impacts (e.g., removal of undesirable or weedy species) to achieve greater ecological benefits, difficult choices should be acknowledged, aired, and undertaken with care.
   • reporting, in a timely manner, conduct by a member that may violate or breach any provision of the SER Code of Ethics or Code of Conduct.
   • using best informed judgement for decision-making.
   • undertaking ecological restoration projects in which we, and those with whom we collaborate, are qualified by education, training, or experience.

2) Promote Fairness and Equity by:
   • recognizing and acting to promote respectful inclusion and to safely address disrespectful behavior, including bullying, abuse of power or authority, and harassment. Harassment includes, for example, unnecessary scrutiny or attack, threats of violence, sexual harassment, and/or discriminatory jokes and oppressive language.
   • treating people fairly and not practicing or condoning prejudice and discrimination against others in the course of any restoration-related activity, including on the basis of race, ability, age, ethnicity, gender or gender identity, gender expression, nationality or origin, physical appearance or ability, political views or other affiliation, professional status, educational level, religion, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, technology choice, and/or working language proficiency.
   • acknowledging that restoration embraces the interrelationships between nature and culture, and practicing inclusivity and power-sharing with diverse racial, cultural, and economic groups.
   • honoring local indigenous communities as partners, respecting their knowledge and wisdom, listening wholeheartedly, and building local capacity by sharing power.
• identifying and addressing structural racism and colonialism in ecological restoration as it is applied across economies, policies, and partner institutions, and advancing justice-centered ecological restoration.
• promoting equal opportunities in restoration-related spheres like education, funding, publications, employment, and in participation in SER’s activities.
• promoting practices that respect cultural diversity and support sustainable livelihoods in the same way we respect ecological diversity.
• acknowledging that racial and cultural differences are assets.
• working to end racism by consciously and proactively recognizing, interrupting and stopping racism within our sphere of influence.
• honoring our local partners through respect of their knowledge, listening to and learning from them, engaging them through two-way communication, soliciting input and feedback, and building local capacity where possible.

3) Advance ecological restoration through standard practices by:
• promoting competence, high standards, professional development and the sharing of knowledge
• encouraging education, research and the exchange of ideas, techniques and products as part of a community of practice, that helps advance the field and spark innovation.
• widely sharing achievements and failures, discoveries and inventions through mediums and channels that are accessible to restoration scientists, practitioners and the public.
• utilizing standard practices in line with the SER International Principles and Standards for the Practice of Ecological Restoration for planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and maintenance post-completion, of ecological restoration projects.
• complying with human, work, health, and safety legislation, regulations, and permits that apply to any project or program.

4) Develop and Integrate Knowledge and Practice by:
• realizing that all forms of knowledge have value, and basing our decisions on scientifically-derived information, local and traditional ecological knowledge, practice-based information and evidence, and other available knowledge, experience, and evidence.
• identifying appropriate ecological restoration approaches and treatments to facilitate species or ecosystem regeneration.
• recognizing the interests of stakeholders and other community members, and ensuring that both human and environmental considerations are taken into account during our endeavors.
• staying informed of advances in the field of restoration through both sharing and engaging in recent developments in both science and practice.
• behaving honestly and with integrity in all aspects of generating and disseminating accurate information.
• sharing our processes, decisions, and project outcomes in as transparent and accurate a manner as possible.
• seeking permission for the use of unpublished data or methods and disclosing the context in which they will be used.
• acknowledging all sources of information used in our work.
5) **Serve as an Ambassador by:**
   - upholding the dignity and integrity of SER and the field of restoration by being honest, respectful and responsible.
   - offering professional advice and guidance only on those subjects in which one is informed and qualified through professional training and/or experience.
   - striving to accurately represent understanding and knowledge of ecological restoration; avoiding and discouraging dissemination of erroneous, biased, or exaggerated statements about restoration.
   - serving as spokespersons for SER only when and as authorized.

**Ethical Breaches**

If a possible breach of this Code is witnessed, any entity or individual is encouraged to notify SER of the possible breach via the SER Ombuds program/system. SER will review the matter and may in its discretion take appropriate steps to address the situation, such as those specified under Article 4 of the SER Bylaws. The Incident Reporting Guidelines applicable to Code of Conduct breaches, which include specified timelines for response, are separate and do not apply to reports of breaches of this Code of Ethics.

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

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