2019
ANNUAL REPORT

Photo credit: Jacob L. Slusser
MISSION

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.

VISION

Ecological restoration becomes a fundamental component of conservation and sustainable development programs throughout the world by virtue of its inherent capacity to provide people with the opportunity to not only repair ecological damage, but also improve the human condition.
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2019 was an exciting, inspiring, and successful year for SER, including our first ever world conference on the African continent, the release of the second edition of the International Principles and Standards for the Practice of Ecological Restoration, and the extraordinary designation of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

In addition, SER membership and engagement both expanded. We counted ~3,000 members from nearly 80 countries at the end of the year. Our Certified Ecological Practitioner (CERP) program also continued to grow, adding close to 100 new CERPs and CERPITs in 2019.

SER continued to maintain and expand our partnerships to ensure we remain at the forefront of restoration science, practice, and policy. We hosted our second Global Forum on Ecological Restoration in partnership with the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management and its Ecosystem Restoration Thematic Group. We partnered with The Nature Conservancy and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity to develop guidance documents for restoration at the ecosystem and national/global scales. We finalized our partnership with the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research to develop the first thematic series of our journal (*Restoration Ecology-Arid Lands*), and we began a new multi-year partnership with the US Bureau of Land Management and the Fort Belknap Indian Community (Montana) on a grassland community restoration program.

And of course, SER members implemented on-the-ground restoration projects and research across the globe, while our 13 chapters continued to engage at the local and regional levels. SER succeeds because our members engage and contribute their wisdom, experience, energy, and knowledge to implementing SER’s vision. Our successes collectively belong to everyone in the Society. Thank you, to all SER members, for being part of the Society and for doing the incredible work you do to heal the planet! The need has never been greater, and restoration work has never been more important— we look forward to achieving even more together in 2020!
SER’s global community continued to grow in 2019. Members come from around the world and represent researchers (41%), the private sector (27%), government agencies (13%), NGOs (11%), indigenous/community organizations (1%), and other backgrounds.

Over the past year, membership efforts were focused on implementing the new benefits associated with the strategic membership plan (adopted late 2018); building the new business membership program; engaging members to attend the 8th World Conference on Ecological Restoration in Cape Town, South Africa; and providing existing and emerging chapters with services and support as they implement regional programs serving their local restoration communities.

“With global change, the need for ecological restoration is rapidly increasing. SER is the premier society bringing practitioners and scientists together to communicate and form partnerships. With the addition of the Africa Chapter, SER now has a truly global reach and has become the foundation for restoration science and practice in a changing world.”

Francis Kilkenny
US Forest Service
SER Lifetime Member

Membership:
Individual - 53%
Emerging Professional - 14%
Retired - 3%
Lifetime - 1%
Business and Organizational Members - 14%
Student Association - 15%

2,981 Members
26% of members from outside the US
2019 STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS

Brigham Young University
British Columbia Institute of Technology
Colorado State University
Eden Project Learning at Cornwall
Laurentian University
Northern Arizona University
Paul Smith’s College
SUNY College of Environmental Science & Forestry
Temple University
Texas A&M University
The Ohio State University Student Association
Trent University
UNED University Costa Rica
University of Arizona
University of Colorado at Boulder
University of Montana
University of North Texas
University of Tennessee
University of Washington
University of Waterloo
University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point
Virginia Commonwealth University
Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies

2019 BUSINESS MEMBERS

AECOM
Biohabitats, Inc.
Davey Resource Group
Delta Land Services
DIALOG
Eco Logic LLC
Ecogain
EcoHealth Network
Ecosystem Services, LLC
Environmental Quality Resources
GEI Consultants, Inc., P. C.
GZA
H. T. Harvey & Associates
HeidelbergCement AG
Indigenous Design Environmental Management
Kalbar Resources Ltd
Karara Mining LTD
Land Stewardship Inc.
Michael Baker International
Midwest Groundcovers LLC
North State Environmental, Inc.
Pepco Holdings, Inc.
Ramboll
RECON Environmental, Inc.
Savanta Inc.
Stantec
SumCo Eco-Contracting, LLC
SWCA Environmental Consultants
Syrinx Environmental PL
The Dawson Corporation
V3 Companies
Westervelt Ecological Services
Wilkinson Ecological Design
SER2019: Restoring Land, Water & Community Resilience

SER partnered with the South African Water Research Commission and the Department of Environment, Fisheries, and Forestry to organize SER2019 in Cape Town, South Africa from September 24-28, 2019. We were excited to host our first conference on the African continent, including developing a working group that is working to formalize an African Chapter of SER in 2020.

845 delegates from 70 countries gathered to engage on the conference theme “Restoring Land, Water, and Community Resilience.” The groundbreaking work on water security in the region was a key reason SER chose to bring our conference to South Africa, and a large number of presentations addressed the social components of ecological restoration. The scientific program included 630 talks, 170 posters, multiple workshops, and five field trips.

Keynote speakers from Kenya, Malawi, South Africa, Iraq, England, the United States, and Brazil brought a diversity of perspectives on the conference theme. Plenary talks focused on participatory restoration, restoration for water security, and the economics of restoration, as well as restoration of damaged marine ecosystems. The final plenary, a high level panel discussion, focused on restoration in the global context, including the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

Delegates enjoyed a wide variety of local culture, from traditional music and dance, to poetry performances, to regional foods, to “pop-up” shops with locally made arts and crafts.
In conjunction with the biennial SER World Conference, the Society recognizes individuals or organizations that have made outstanding achievements in advancing the craft, knowledge, and public awareness of ecological restoration.

JOHN RIEGER AWARD - Tein McDonald
The John Rieger Award honors those who have dedicated themselves to advancing ecological restoration through the development of SER. This year’s award went to Tein McDonald for her long and distinguished service to SER, especially her work in developing the SER-Australasia chapter, the SER Australia Standards, and the SER International Standards for the Practice of Restoration, 1st and 2nd editions.

THODORE M. SPERRY AWARD - Samira A.S. Omar
The Theodore M. Sperry Award honors individuals who have made a significant contribution to advancing the science or techniques used in restoration practice. This year’s award went to Dr. Samira Omar for her innovative work on arid land restoration, including her work to secure funding for the new Restoration Ecology-Arid Lands thematic series.

FULL CIRCLE AWARD - Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation - Mawas Program
The Full Circle Award recognizes restoration projects that incorporate the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples in significant ways and reflect a balance between indigenous and non-indigenous knowledge and practices. SER presented this year’s award to BOSF-Mawas Conservation Program, a group that takes a holistic approach to facilitating the recovery of tropical peatland and critical orangutan habitat.

COMMUNICATION AWARD - Lina Dolores Pohl
The Communication Award recognizes individuals that have made a significant impact in advancing the theory, practice or public awareness of restoration through innovative communication strategies. This year, SER recognized the outstanding effort of then-Minister of the Environment Lina Pohl and the El Salvador Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources for their leadership in successfully promoting the creation of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030.

REGIONAL AWARDS - Tony Rebelo & Lily Tanui
The Regional Award recognizes two outstanding individuals or programs from the region of the conference. Tony Rebelo (S. African National Biodiversity Institute) was recognized for his work towards the restoration of the unique Cape Flats Sand Fynbos habitat and its critically endangered plant species. Lily Tanui was recognized for her outstanding contribution to restoration in Kenya through her founding of the Tree Growers Association of Kenya.

As part of SER2019, SER and the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management Restoration Thematic Group convened their second biennial Global Forum on Ecological Restoration.

38 participants from 25 international organizations joined the forum for a working meeting on “The Role of Ecological Restoration in Achieving Global Biodiversity Targets: Broadening the Post-2020 Framework.”

After discussing challenges and solutions, participants identified seven broad categories of actions regarding restoration and biodiversity. These priorities are intended to inform the community as a whole, not just SER, as we work to improve biodiversity through restoration. Read the full report here.
SER extends a special thanks to our conference sponsors for their generous support.
Restoration Ecology (RE), the Society’s bi-monthly peer-reviewed journal, fosters the exchange of ideas among the many disciplines involved in the process of ecological restoration. A complimentary subscription to the journal is now included as a benefit to all SER members.

The Impact Factor and Immediacy index (Clairvate metrics) rose to 2.83 and 0.89, respectively, and the CiteScore (Scopus metrics) rose to 2.92. RE now sits above the 83rd percentile for journals in the “Nature and Conservation,” “Ecology, Evolution, Behavior and Systemics,” and “Ecology” categories. RE is also ranked as #15 in “Biodiversity and Conservation Biology” journals.

2019 was the journal’s busiest year, with 478 new manuscripts submitted from 49 countries (35% increase since 2018). The journal introduced Re-New, a space for early career restoration ecologists to share their views. We also announced the creation of a new thematic series, Restoration Ecology-Arid Lands in partnership with the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR).

### 2019 Most-Downloaded Articles*


* Published during 2019; downloads through April 2020
SER International Principles and Standards for the Practice of Ecological Restoration

In September 2019, we released the Second Edition of the *International Principles and Standards for the Practice of Ecological Restoration*, including a short summary version for quick reference. The Second Edition went through formal peer-review process and was published as a stand-alone, open access, special issue of *Restoration Ecology*; the Standards were published simultaneously in Chinese and English.

In three months, the Standards were downloaded from the SER website and *Restoration Ecology* more than 4,000 times and were cited in peer-reviewed literature four times. More than 1,000 copies of the summary were distributed through international meetings including the AFR100 meeting, the Ecosystem Services Partnership world conference, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity's thematic consultation on ecosystem restoration, the Global Partnership on Forest and Landscape Restoration meeting, and the Global Landscapes Forum.

The Standards have also been promoted via the Center for International Forestry Research, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature’s Ecosystem Restoration Thematic Group.

“In Mexico, the National Institute of Fisheries and Aquaculture (INAPESCA) is adapting the SER Ecological Recovery Wheel to coral reef ecosystems. This tool has allowed us to evaluate the impact that out-planting corals represents for reef restoration, showing an evident change in the physical conditions and composition of the species, some in structural diversity, but also initial changes in the functionality of the ecosystem.”

Claudia Padilla-Souza
INAPESCA
PARTNERSHIPS

GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

We partnered with the Nature Conservancy (TNC) to produce *Restoration Guidelines for Shellfish Reefs*. The Guidelines include components of the SER International Standards and are intended to provide a foundational starting point for shellfish reef restoration.

In November, we finalized *A Companion to the Short-Term Action Plan on Ecosystem Restoration (STAPER)*. The Companion document, developed in collaboration with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its Forest Ecosystem Restoration Initiative (FERI), offers an introduction and guide to STAPER through case studies and resources. STAPER provides guidance on the voluntary implementatation of national restoration strategies. Additionally, the Companion includes an online resource hub and links to selected resources housed in SER’s Restoration Resource Center.
WEBINARS

The SER webinar series provides a chance to interact with experts from across the restoration field. In 2019, more than 1,500 people participated in our webinar series, and we significantly expanded webinar-based continuing education by increasing the number of people who can participate in our live webinars from 100 to 500. After the December increase, participation immediately more than doubled, with 230 people attending the final webinar of the year.

SER chapters also regularly webinars for their members; SER-NW was the most active chapter, hosting regular webinars and an e-symposoium. Additionally, SER partners with the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the US Fish and Wildlife Service on their webinar series.

TRAININGS

We partnered with the Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve to host a full day workshop tiered to the SER Standards. The workshop was led by Certified Ecological Restoration Practitioners Paul Davis and Teresa Doss, and SER’s International Policy Lead and Standards author George Gann. Instructors shared regional case studies and examples, as well as working sessions, to illustrate real world implementation of the Standards to enable participants to improve their own restoration project outcomes. The initial workshop sold out and we added a second full day workshop to accomadate all 50 participants.

GRASSLAND RESTORATION & COMMUNITY

We secured funding for a multi-year restoration program with the US Bureau of Land Management to collect native seeds for restoration, to introduce members of the Fort Belknap Indian Community (Montana, USA) to restoration, and to create a pathway to restoration careers for the people who participate in the program. This program was designed and is being implemented by board member Cristina Eisenberg and is modelled after a similar program she has implemented in Canada.

NEW PARTNERSHIPS

We entered into Memoranda of Understanding and/or partnered with five new entities in 2019:

- The Nature Conservancy
- SIACRE
- [Logo]
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The SER Certified Ecological Restoration Practitioner (CERP) program was the world’s first for ecological restoration. Applicants must meet specific qualifications and demonstrate an understanding of the foundations of ecological restoration.

Since 2017, the CERP program has grown to include 393 members and saw a 30% increase in 2019. Applicants come from across the world and represent private industry, government, NGOs, and research institutions.

In 2019, the CERP program expanded its academic institution partnerships to include the University of Victoria, Virginia Tech, Ohio State University, and Niagara College.
INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

SER staff, board members, and representatives participated in a variety of international meetings including:

- **United Nations Environment Assembly of the UNEP** - Kirsty Shaw, Restoration Ambassador, April, Kenya
- **CBD regional consultation** - Luiz Moraes, SER board member, May, Uruguay
- **International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) US parties meeting** - George Gann and Jim Hallett, International Policy Lead and SER board chair, June, Washington DC
- **CBD open-ended working group meeting** - Kirsty Shaw, August, Kenya
- **Royal Society meeting** - Vicky Temperton, SER board member, September, London
- **Global Landscapes Forum (GLF)** - Al Unwin, Restoration Ambassador, September, New York
- **Ecosystem Services Partnership World Conference** - Bethanie Walder, SER Executive Director, Germany, October
- **Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration/GLF** - Jim Hallett, November, Luxembourg
- **CBD ecosystem restoration consultation** - Bethanie Walder, November, Brazil
- **World Economic Forum** - Jim Hallett, December, Switzerland

"This [SER2019] was genuinely one of the best conferences I have attended. Both in terms of the technical quality of the presentations and discussions, and the extremely nice atmosphere and friendly interactions of the participants."

Lucy Emerton, Environment Management Group, SER2019 Keynote Speaker
In January, the **Ontario Chapter** held their Annual General Meeting and Workshop in association with the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority. The 85 participants shared their perspectives on moving towards the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. After a day of presentations, the attendees had the opportunity to engage in workshops and field trips to learn more about seed processing and local restoration projects.

The **New England Chapter** hosted field trips to restoration sites in Connecticut, Vermont, and Rhode Island. These trips are part the chapter’s goal to offer annual field trips in each state within their region. The chapter also awarded three student grants to support research and studies in the field of restoration.

The **Midwest Great Lakes Chapter** hosted 200 participants at their annual scientific meeting in April. Focused on “Cultivating Innovative Restoration Connections in the Midwest,” the conference included workshops on pollinators, two days of presentations, and five field trips to local research projects, a wildlife refuge, and farms.

In November 2019, the **Texas Chapter** hosted their 24th annual conference. The 100 conference attendees had the chance to engage in 30 presentations, visit the Texas City Prairie Preserve, and participate in a restoration workday at the University of Houston Coastal Center. Additionally, the chapter continued to host the Notorious Ecological Restoration Discussion (NERD) group.

The **Northwest Chapter** partnered with the Xerces Society to host the Pollinator Habitat Restoration Strategies Workshop for Urban Landscapes in December. The event provided 42 attendees a chance to learn about the latest and most effective approaches for the restoration of pollinator habitat within the diverse urban settings of Portland, Oregon. The chapter also partnered with Geum Consulting in Missoula, Montana to host monthly pub talks with local restoration researchers and practitioners.
OUR TEAM

Bethanie Walder
Executive Director

Laura Capponi
Membership Director

Alexis Gibson
Program Manager

Jen Lyndall
Certification Program Coordinator

Levi Wickwire
Program Manager

2019 Board of Directors

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Jim Hallett
Chair

Kingsley Dixon
Vice Chair & Pacific Regional Director

Nancy Shaw
Treasurer

Carol Maxwell
Secretary

DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE
James Aronson
Kris DeCleer
Cristina Eisenberg
Vicky Temperton

REGIONAL DIRECTORS
Andrew Whitley - Africa
Ramesh Venkataraman - Asia
Anne Tolvanen - Europe
Luiz Moraes - Latin America/Caribbean
Dave Polster - North America
Tom Kaye - North America
Randy Mandel - North America

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE
Magda Garbowski

Editors & Organizational Consultants
George Gann - International Policy Lead
Sarah Cotter - Social Media Consultant
Mariah McIntosh - Social Media/Programs Consultant
MHR Accounting - Finance

Restoration Ecology
Stephen Murphy - Editor-in-Chief
Valter Amaral - Managing Editor

We’d like to thank our outgoing team members Levi Wickwire, Rebecca Shoer (Communications & Operations Associate), Megan Keville (SERNews), Mariah McIntosh, and Clarasophia Gust (intern) for all their work!
**FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

### Revenue
- **Grants & Contributions**: $129,224 (16%)
- **Publication Revenue**: $204,959 (25%)
- **Membership Dues**: $235,172 (29%)
- **Programs**: $209,975 (26%)
- **Other**: $29,458 (4%)
- **Total Revenue**: $808,788

### Expenses
- **Programs**: $720,542 (93%)
- **Fundraising**: $20,448 (3%)
- **Administration**: $36,771 (5%)
- **Other**: $1,063
- **Total Expenses**: $778,823

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*Unaudited financials.*
OUR SUPPORTERS

Restorationist Circle
Aronson Family Foundation
Jim Hallett
Nia Tero
Walton Family Foundation

Restorer Members
Steven Kent
Giovanni Marcantonio
Lissa Martinez
Phanor Hernando Maya
Florencia Panizza
Mariana Parra
Elizaveta Petelina
Kristen Qualls
Denis Schneider
Matt Stahman
Matt Stine
Christina Tiffany

2019 Lifetime Members
Nora Berrahmouni
Mark Bachmann
Karla Gallina
Matthew Hilliard
Harley Lacy
Nancy Shaw
Glenn Teschendorf

Special thanks to the following members and friends who made gifts to SER:

Sherri Albrecht
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Tyler Bassett
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Jerry Benson
Nina Berger
Nora Berrahmouni
Wouter Beyen
Diane Brewster
Gwen Brodsky
Hugh Brown
Kate Buenau
Gerard (Hans) Buys
Laura Capponi
Iri Cermak
Lisa Chandler
James Corson
Carla D’Antonio
Glorianna Davenport
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Linda Urban
Diana Van Buren
Linda van Diepen
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Ramesh Venkataramanan
Stefanie Vink
Bethanie Walder
Susanne Walder
Larry Weinberg
Kellie Westervelt
Beverly Weston
Joy Wood
Paddy Woodworth
Stanford Young
SER remains the leader in providing the science and linking restoration companies with the organizations who need them. Our corporate sponsor partnerships have enabled the Society to build extraordinary momentum over the last few years – launching the Restoration Resource Center, creating the industry’s only professional certification program (CERP), and drawing thousands of professionals to our social media, website and conferences. SER is pleased to thank all of our sponsors - their support is critical to SER’s ability to achieve our mission!