



Central Rockies Chapter of the Society For Ecological Restoration

CeRSER NEWSLETTER

Volume 8, Number 1 – Spring is just around the corner!

March 2005

ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION IS THE PROCESS OF REPAIRING DAMAGE CAUSED BY HUMANS TO THE DIVERSITY AND DYNAMICS OF INDIGENOUS ECOSYSTEMS. — THE SOCIETY FOR ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

By Chris Rutledge

Over the past few months, a core group of CeRSER members have had several discussions regarding what we would like to accomplish and how we can best serve the local restoration community. One objective that has come out of these discussions is to help spread the word on restoration-related events that are happening within our region. This issue is dedicated to getting the word out on a variety of restoration-related talks, conferences, volunteer opportunities, and even a job announcement. If you have events that you would like us to publish in future newsletters, please send information on your event (who, what, where, when, why, etc.) to: crutledge@greystone.us.

UPCOMING SER EVENTS

MICHAEL SOULÉ NATURE IS DYING: WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

CeRSER and the Colorado Mountain Club are hosting a talk by Michael Soulé. Spend an evening with the founder of conservation biology! Dr. Soulé will share his thoughts on ecosystem conservation and restoration and the intersection of both practices in our own backyards.

Although conservationists have won some battles and slowed the rate of species and habitat attrition, Nature and wildness are dying from too many people, the unintended consequences of technology (including climate change), poverty, and the globalization of investments, production, and commerce, etc. Exacerbating the crisis is the hostility between the adherents of the three life-affirming movements: Humanitarianism (including proponents of social justice, public health, culture, hunting, motorized recreation), Animalism (including animal rights and welfare), and Naturism biodiversity protection). The goals of conservation and restoration of nature will be more easily achieved if there is greater solidarity among the life-affirming movements. Social justice, animal welfare, and nature will all benefit, for example, by embracing some relatively simple habits of thought and consumption. In addition, continental-scale ecological restoration will be described.

Michael Soulé is Professor Emeritus in Environmental Studies, University of California, Santa Cruz. He was born, raised, and

mostly educated in California. After spending much of his youth in the canyons, deserts, and intertidal of San Diego, and after graduating from San Diego State, he went to Stanford to study population biology and evolution under Paul Ehrlich. Upon receiving his Ph.D. at Stanford, Michael went to Africa to help found the first university in Malawi. He has also taught in Samoa, the Universities of California (San Diego and Santa Cruz where he was chair of Environmental Studies), and Michigan. He has done fieldwork on lizards, birds, and mammals in Africa, Mexico, the Adriatic, the West Indies, and California, and Colorado.

Michael was a founder of the Society for Conservation Biology and The Wildlands Project and has been the president of both. He has written and edited 9 books on biology, conservation biology, and the social and policy context of contemporary conservation. He has published more than 160 articles on various subjects including population and evolutionary biology, population genetics, island biogeography, environmental studies, biodiversity policy, nature conservation, and ethics, and continues to do research on the genetic basis of fitness and viability in natural populations, on the impacts of keystone species, and on the causes of the destruction of nature worldwide. He was elected a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, has received a Guggenheim Fellowship, is the sixth recipient of the Archie Carr Medal, was named by Audubon Magazine in 1998 as one of the 100 Champions of Conservation of the 20th Century, and is a recipient of the National Wildlife Federations 2001 National Conservation Achievement Award.

Now living in Colorado, Michael restores wildlife habitat, serves on the boards of several conservation organizations, and consults and speaks internationally on nature protection. Currently, he is writing a book about nature and the wild, compassion for all life diversity, and about resolving conflicts between the three life-affirming movements - conservation, animalism, and humanitarianism.

When: March 25, 2005, 7:00 pm

Where: American Mountaineering Center, Conference Room
710 10th Street, Golden, CO

Cost: Student \$5, CeRSER Member \$7, Non-member \$9, pay at door or

Mail check to: CeRSER, 4521 West 41st Street, Denver, CO 80212

Reserve tickets: call CeRSER, 720 865-3562,
GRANTT@botanicgardens.org

CALENDAR OF OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

American Society of Mining and Reclamation (ASMR)

Raising Reclamation to New Heights

June 18-25, 2005

Breckenridge, Colorado

<http://ces.ca.uky.edu/asmr>

Botanical Society of America (BSA)

Learning from Plants

August 13-17, 2005

Austin, Texas

www.bsa.org

Colorado Weed Management Association (CWMA)

Weed Management Training School

April 5-7, 2005

Fort Collins, Colorado

www.cwma.org

Colorado Weed Management Association

Range Habitat Improvement Workshop

June 9, 2005

Grand County Fairgrounds

Colorado Weed Management Association

CWMA Conference & Trade Show

December 6-7, 2005

Fort Collins, Colorado

Denver Botanic Gardens & U.S. Botanic Gardens

Applied Plant Conservation Training Program

June 7-17, 2005 (1 or 2 week options)

Denver, Colorado

www.appliedplantconservation.org

Ecological Society of America (ESA)

Ecology at Multiple Scales

August 7-12, 2005

Montreal, Canada

www.esa.org

High Altitude Revegetation Committee

Summer Field Trip of Denver/Boulder Area

August 18 and 19, 2005

www.highaltitudereveg.com

The Natural Areas Association

32nd Natural Areas Conference

Changing Natural Landscapes:

Ecological and Human Dimensions

September 21-24, 2005

Lincoln, Nebraska

<http://www.naturalarea.org/>

Society for Ecological Restoration International (SER)

Ecological Restoration: A Global Challenge

September 12-18, 2005

Zaragoza, Spain

www.ser.org

Treasures of the Greater Southern Rockies: A Photographic Tour of Our Region's Endangered Species and Ecosystems

Denver-based biodiversity expert Jacob Smith will give a free slide show titled at the Aspen Center for Environmental Studies on Tuesday, March 15. Smith will repeat the show on Wednesday, March 16, in Carbondale at Colorado Rocky Mountain School.

Both presentations will start at 7 pm and are free, although donations are appreciated.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Wildlands Restoration Volunteers

Wildlands Restoration Volunteers (WRV) is a Boulder-based non-profit organization that provides an opportunity for people to learn about their natural environment, and take direct action to restore and care for the land. WRV organizes over fifteen volunteer stewardship projects per year in Boulder County and the greater Northern Colorado Front Range area. *We would love to have your help. It's a lot of fun and no experience is required. Great food provided!*

Wildlands Restoration Volunteers Activities

April-June, 2005

April 9: Monarch Prairie Dog Conservation

WRV will plant 1200 native shrubs to create a living hedge barrier to prevent prairie dogs from crossing between open space and private property. This is a great opportunity to learn more about prairie dogs, land management issues, prairie ecology and planting techniques.

April 23: Boulder Prairie Restoration

Wildlands Restoration Volunteers and Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado will continue the urgent effort, begun last year, to eradicate Mediterranean Sage from Boulder County. This is the only known population of this destructive weed in Colorado. Left unchecked, it aggressively invades grasslands, reduces native plant populations, degrades wildlife habitat and affects the overall health of prairie ecosystems.

June 4-5: Arapaho National Wildlife Refuge

WRV continue work begun last year to restore critical songbird habitat through a variety of willow planting techniques. WRV will also reconstruct portions of a 1700 foot boardwalk to provide wildlife viewing opportunities for persons with disabilities. The scenery is spectacular. We'll camp at a nearby Forest Service campground. The boardwalk portion of the project is five days long, from June 1-5. If you enjoy carpentry, or want to learn more from an expert, and you love working outdoors surrounded by spectacular scenery, you'll love this opportunity.

June 15: Rock Creek Wetland Restoration

Volunteers will plant 4,500 wetland plants to restore a quarter mile stretch of Rock Creek on Boulder County Open Space. This midweek project is a great opportunity for company groups and other volunteers available during the week to help restore an important oasis of habitat surrounded by development. You'll learn about riparian ecology and wetland planting techniques.

June 25-26: Glacier Creek Wetland Restoration

Volunteers will plant almost 20,000 plants at this site to restore a two acre wetland that was the site of a livery stable for the past 50 years. The project is located in Rocky Mountain National Park. We'll camp out, enjoying spectacular mountain scenery and abundant wildlife.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

To register for one or more WRV project, please contact Wildlands Restoration Volunteers at info@wlr.org or call 303-543-1411. For our full 2005 project schedule, and other info, see our website at www.wlr.org. Youth are welcome on all projects. See our website for minimum ages.

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers needed to help monitor artificial nest structures that target breeding waterfowl in the Denver Metro Area. Research focuses on analyzing nest success of urban populations of waterfowl using artificial "Hen House" nest structures. Specifically, the study will focus on three urban land uses that contain wetlands or artificial basins: 1) parks; 2) golf courses; and 3) check dams, stock dams, sedimentation or storm water ponds located within urban drainages. The objective of this study is to determine which of the three urban land uses may serve to increase waterfowl production through successful nesting. Tasks will include wading into the wetland to the associated nest structure, identifying nesting waterfowl species, candling eggs, counting the number of eggs, and taking precise field notes on a prepared field sheet. Willingness to work in occasionally difficult (hot, wet) conditions with is a must. The study requires checking structures on a weekly basis from April through July.

For more information, please contact Ryan Henning at ryan_henning@comcast.net or 303-807-2429.

JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUMMER TEMPORARY FIELD POSITIONS

ESCO Associates has temporary summer positions available beginning in late May through late September. These positions are intermittent in nature, scattered throughout the summer. Temporary employees are hired to assist permanent ESCO field biologists in the collection of quantitative vegetation monitoring data. These jobs require travel in western states. Pre-requisites include a B.S. or B.A. in biology, environmental sciences or related study, outdoor experience, familiarity with taxonomic keys, plant related biology course work, and ability to work well in team situations. Hours are long and work may require hiking through rough terrain.

Send your resume with cover letter to ESCO Associates, P.O. Box 18775, Boulder, Colorado, 80308, ATTN: Mignon Macias. For more information please visit us at esco-associates.com or contact Mignon at mignonm@mindspring.com.

If you would like to post a job announcement in the CeRSER newsletter, please contact Chris Rutledge at: crutledge@greystone.us.

EDITORIAL

Restoration and Water-Supply By Brian Murphy

The recent announcement by the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) that the "Flood Protection Section should *identify areas of the state that would benefit from (river restoration) projects when combined with a SWSI [Statewide Water Supply Initiative] identified project*" (www.cwcb.org) is the contemporary river paradox. This memorandum lays out the ironical nature of historic "river engineering" agencies' lack of a true agency defined mission. The CWCB has followed the doctrine of prior appropriation to the last drop by ensuring and even forcing that every appropriated water droplet is conserved for an anthropogenical beneficial use. And yet now the Flood Protection Section, which an "environmentalist" of any sort would not necessarily associate with restoration, is proposing "river restoration." Additionally, the CWCB is also proposing a

"Rocky Mountain Headwaters Partnership" which is a "proposal for a regional initiative for federal funding to support watershed restoration work in the Rocky Mountain headwater states of Montana, Wyoming, Utah, and Colorado." The partnership would be patterned after other federal regional initiatives in other geographic regions of the country such as the Chesapeake Bay, the Great Lakes and the Florida Everglades. This all sounds too good to be true?!

Not to be pessimistic because restoration is after all restoration. However, restoration combined with "SWSI-identified projects" is not exactly a good faith decision to restore a river back to a historical reference condition. Watershed and stream restoration are worthy pursuits but adding the catalyst of water supply initiatives leaves the true motivation to be questioned. Are the partners of the so-called "Rocky Mountain headwaters" truly motivated to restore the thousands of miles of streams that have been altered for our "beneficial" use? Or, are we simply restoring "our" rivers so we can suck more water out of them? If so, why restore them at all? Is it possible that the arid west communities, that survive from Rocky Mountain water supplies, and their water providers have a genuine interest in river restoration? After all, restoring a stream that provides water to our homes and agriculture fields to a natural flow regime will certainly cause modifications in our present-use scenarios.

We know, for example, that many of the water diversion projects constitute major interventions in the river system whose continued operation can result in continued massive ecological decline. Every time we decide to repair an eroding levee to stop potential flooding, we are preventing the river from reestablishing a healthy floodplain. Every time we decide to store all flood flows in reservoirs for crop and lawn irrigation, we eliminate flow pulses essential for ecological processes. Restoration returns the natural processes to streams (i.e. floods, sediment transport, etc.) that were designed to be controlled and/or eliminated. But, the driving ecological force – water – must come from somewhere. This is the conundrum.

I certainly do not claim to know the answer to the long standing conservation and beneficial use paradox. But, I also think if westerners are serious about stream restoration then we have to decide if we are ready yet to let natural processes be as important if not more so than anthropogenic needs? If so, the emphasis must be placed on restoration and conservation and let water supply initiatives derive from there rather than the traditional water supply projects necessitating restoration.

CURRENT EVENT TIDBITS

We've added this new section to our newsletter to provide current information on a number of subjects related to the field of restoration. Some subjects that we hope to include in this section in the future include updates on legislation, technology, plants, wildlife, and various industries. Please send me an email if you have information about current news that other CeRSER members might be interested in. Send your restoration related tidbits to: crutledge@greystone.us.

Plants Update

Colorado Butterfly Plant

On January 11, 2005, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), designated critical habitat for the Colorado butterfly plant (*Gaura neomexicana* ssp. *coloradensis*) under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act). In total,

approximately 1,432 hectares (3,538 acres) along approximately 82 kilometers (51 stream miles) fall within the boundaries of the critical habitat designation located in Laramie and Platte Counties in Wyoming. The designation excludes 30 percent of private and municipality lands through Wildlife Extension Agreements. Military lands as well as other areas within its range in Nebraska and Colorado are not included.

Wildlife Update

Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse

On February 2, 2005, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) published a 12 month finding / proposal to delist Preble's meadow jumping mouse (*Zapus hudsonius preblei*). But, there has been a lot of confusion in the media as to what this means. Pete Plague, of the USFWS, has provided the following clarification, "We want to make sure everyone understands the following:

This is only a proposal to delist. The Preble's remains fully protected until a positive, final listing decision is made. That is anticipated to take about a year.

Additional genetics information and other data regarding Preble's and related taxa are anticipated prior to a final decision.

Assuming that the best available science continues to support synonymizing Preble's and the Bear Lodge mouse:

- The Service will consider whether the combined *Z. h. campestris* subspecies is in need of ESA protection prior to a final decision.
- The Service will determine whether Preble's qualifies as a distinct population segment in need of ESA protection prior to a final decision.

Since its not yet certain that a final decision to delist will occur, discussion of how delisting would impact various development projects is premature. At this point nothing has changed. Activities done between now and a potential delisting need to adhere to the ESA and any existing permits. For now, parties considering work that may affect the Preble's are subject to the same process that has been in place."

Greater Sage Grouse

On January 12, 2005, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), announced a 12-month finding for three petitions to regarding listing of the greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. After reviewing the best available scientific and commercial information, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service found that listing is not warranted.

Pygmy Rabbit

The highly imperiled pygmy rabbit is one step closer to protection after a settlement between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and a coalition of citizen groups became final yesterday. Because of widespread declines and a growing risk of extinction, the citizen coalition a formal petition seeking protection for the pygmy rabbit under the Endangered Species Act. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which had refused even to review the petition, agreed to make a preliminary finding on the petition by May 16, 2005.

Pitkin County Insists on Lynx Protections

On February 23, 2005, the Pitkin County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution in support of lynx protections on the White River National Forest. Last week, Deputy Undersecretary of Agriculture David Tenny, a political appointee, removed lynx protections required by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and adopted by the Forest Service. Under new directives issued in December by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, language in a special plan governing the White River National Forest will be eliminated so that there are no longer provisions to protect lynx habitats there.

UPCOMING CERSER MEETING

CeRSER Planning Meeting

April 21, 2005 at 7:00 PM

The Thin Man, 2015 East 17th Avenue, Denver, Colorado

Come join us for a CeRSER planning meeting. During this meeting, we will discuss ideas for future CeRSER projects, including field trips, workshops, and other potential CeRSER events.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES WANTED

We are always looking for new material for our next newsletter. And, as a new added bonus - if you send us an article and it is published - we'll send you a **free t-shirt**. Deadlines for our next newsletter are May 1, 2005. The theme for our next newsletter is *Perspectives on Restoration*. Send us an article about this theme, or send us information about upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, or tidbits about current news events that others might find interesting.

CeRSER Officers and Committees

CeRSER address:
CeRSER
4521 West 41St
Denver, CO 80212

Chris Rutledge, *President*
crutledge@greystone-consultants.com

Tom Grant, *Treasurer/ Secretary*
GRANTT@botanicgardens.org

Newsletter Editor: Chris Rutledge

Open committee positions:
Vice President, Volunteer Projects, Elections, Membership, Grant Development

The headquarters for the **Society for Ecological Restoration** is located at:

SER

1955 West Grant Road, Suite 150

Tucson, Arizona 85745

Phone: (520) 622-5485

FAX: (520) 622-5491

Email address for general information: info@ser.org

SER website: www.ser.org

- RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2005 -

**CENTRAL ROCKIES CHAPTER OF THE SOCIETY FOR ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION
SER and CeRSER SUBSCRIPTION / REGISTRATION / SURVEY**

Please fill out and return to: SER, 285 West 18th Street, #1, Tucson, Arizona 8570; fax 520.622.5491; info@ser.org
You may also register online at: www.ser.org

Membership and Newsletter Subscription information:

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 City _____ * Required for confirmation of payment
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Membership and Subscription Options:

Check membership levels and put total amount enclosed on the line below.

CeRSER Chapter Membership and Newsletter (must also join national SER at some level) \$15.00 _____

Chapter membership includes quarterly newsletter and discounts to CeRSER sponsored conferences, workshops, and annual meetings.

Individual SER national membership (receive SER News national publication and basic membership benefits, no journals) \$35.00 _____

Student/Income Challenged SER membership (must include copy of student ID) \$22.00 _____

 National SER memberships below receive one or both of the SER peer-reviewed scientific journals. For additional membership choices see the national SER webpage at: <http://www.ser.org>. **Please note the rates below are good for the year 2005 only.**

	Restoration Ecology Journal	Ecological Restoration Journal	Ecological Management & Restoration	Conservation in Practice
Individual SER membership	_____ \$58.00	_____ \$43.00	_____ \$33.00	_____ \$25.00
Student/ Income Challenged	_____ \$46.00	_____ \$27.00		
Business / NGO SER membership	_____ \$108.00	_____ \$97.00		

NOTE: All national SER membership levels include SER News quarterly newsletter, information about member discounts to upcoming SER & SER Chapter conferences, workshops, and other services and activities.

Grand Total Enclosed _____

CeRSER
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