



sustainable forests, communities, and economies for Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico

SWERI **Southwestern Ecological Restoration Institutes**

THE SOUTHWEST ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION INSTITUTES

In 2004, the Southwest Forest Health and Wildfire Prevention Act established institutes in Arizona, Colorado, and New Mexico for the purpose of ensuring the best available science is used in the development, implementation, and monitoring of forest restoration treatments. Known as the Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes (SWERI), they include:

- ◆ Colorado Forest Restoration Institute (CFRI) at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado
- ◆ Ecological Restoration Institute (ERI) at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, Arizona
- ◆ New Mexico Forest & Watershed Restoration Institute (NMFWR) at New Mexico Highlands University in Las Vegas, New Mexico.

The SWERI are dedicated to developing relevant knowledge and delivering effective service to communities, stakeholders, and land managers. These groups identify information needs, inform effective methods of knowledge transfer, and, ultimately, report on the effectiveness of our work. According to a recent five-year evaluation of the Institutes' performance, "*No other existing entity has the capacity or mandate to carry out landscape-scale forest restoration.*"

SWERI: A Collaboration-Minded and Results-Oriented Organization

The following list is an example of SWERI activities:

- ◆ Each of the SWERI units cooperates with other partners and the U.S. Forest Service on CFLRA-funded projects to develop and prioritize restoration-based, landscape-scale treatments that use the best available science and a collaborative process. The ERI is a key partner in the Four Forests Restoration Initiative, a project designed to introduce large-scale forest restoration to the four national forests in Arizona. Likewise, the NMFWR actively works on the Southwest Jemez Mountains project in New Mexico, while the CFRI supports two CFLRA projects—the Colorado Front Range and the Uncompahgre Plateau.
- ◆ The NMFWR is conducting applied research to develop socio-economic indicators for restoration projects, including those at the landscape level, as well as partnering with communities to develop restoration-based economies upon which stand-, watershed-, and landscape-level restoration efforts depend.
- ◆ The SWERI convened a panel of scientists and land managers to develop a simple, yet robust, set of biophysical monitoring variables that can be simply measured by practitioners to adaptively inform management practices. This workshop was convened in response to concerns expressed by land managers that monitoring goals could not be met due to the amount of resource required to adequately track the effects land management treatments. A report of this workshop is available from the ERI.
- ◆ The CFRI, in partnership with Colorado State Forest Service's COWOOD program, contributes to the small-diameter wood utilization problem by co-sponsoring networking workshops to bring wood producers and users together, by contributing to analyses linking available wood supply from current and proposed treatments with existing wood utilization infrastructure, and by disseminating wood biomass utilization information to collaborative forest health partnerships.
- ◆ Each of the SWERI units produces publications that address issues relevant to land management, policy questions, collaboration, climate change, ecological economics and job creation, and monitoring. The SWERI also maintains a web site with access to publications, notes about projects, and announcements of meetings.
- ◆ The SWERI works with its partners across the Intermountain West in a variety of ecosystem types—ponderosa pine, mixed conifer, aspen, pinyon-juniper—to help solve complementary ecological and socio-economic issues (e.g., the Applegate landscape-scale restoration project in Oregon).

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Dr. Wally Covington, Executive Director, Ecological Restoration Institute, 928-523-7182, wally.covington@nau.edu or see <http://www.eri.nau.edu>

Dr. Tony Cheng, Director, Colorado Forest Restoration Institute, 970-491-1900, Tony.cheng@colostate.edu or Dr. Jessica Clement, 970-491-2104, Jessica.Clement@colostate.edu, see <http://welcome.warnercnr.colostate.edu/cfri-home/index.php>

Dr. Andy Egan, Director, New Mexico Forest & Watershed Restoration Institute, 505-426-2080 or see <http://www.nmfwri.org/>