



New Faces/Recent Promotions at the ERI

Judy Springer

Research Specialist, Sr.

The Ecological Restoration Institute would like to welcome the following recent hires:

Scott Abella came on board as a Research Specialist, Sr. in

May. His primary role is to synthesize large amounts of research information into more easily accessible products, such as technical reports and research notes. Originally from northwestern Ohio, Scott obtained a BS degree in natural resource management from Grand Valley State University in Michigan, an MS degree in forestry from Clemson University and a PhD in forest science from Northern Arizona University. His dissertation was entitled "Environmental and vegetational gradients on an Arizona ponderosa pine landscape: implications for ecological restoration." His doctoral research focused on studies involving multifactor ecosystem classifications, the soil seed bank, forest floor manipulations and relationships between vegetation and soils. Scott feels that the greatest challenge to restoration in the Southwest is to actually implement restoration over large areas. He also points out that "we need to address specific information needs, such as determining specific ecological responses on different site types to various manipulations for predicting outcomes of management alternatives." In his spare time, Scott can be found biking or hiking through northern Arizona, with a good book in hand. He also spends considerable time traveling throughout the Southwest, and recently spent the holidays searching for ponderosa pines in Big Bend National Park in Texas. Scott's dissertation is available in our library at <https://library.eri.nau.edu:8443/handle/2019/268>.



Walker Chancellor began working for the ERI as a research technician in March. He will be serving as general technical support for a broad spectrum of research projects, but will primarily be focusing on pinyon-juniper projects as well as rapid assessment projects in cooperation with various land management agencies throughout the Southwest. Walker is originally from the state of Georgia, where he spent much time hiking and camping with his family. He majored in forestry at NAU after being recruited by Dr. Wally Covington. As a forestry student, he signed on as a student worker with the very first class of Ecological



Restoration Program students. Upon graduation he worked a number of years, including a stint as a Mormon Lake hotshot and as a research technician for the Centennial Forest, before returning to the ERI. Walker feels that the greatest challenge to restoring



ecosystems in the Southwest will be the integration of restoration-based science into management practice. When not at work, Walker enjoys hiking, climbing, playing on the ERI basketball team, and remodeling his house.

Susan Nyoka, the ERI's newest research technician, moved to Flagstaff in May from Arcata, CA where she received an MA in biology from Humboldt State University. Susan's thesis was entitled "The effects of exotic plants on the diversity and abundance of bees in the Humboldt Bay dune system." Susan has worked previously as a mother, a sculptor and a potter. She has also been employed in such projects as weed and rare plant mapping and formulating plans for restoration with The Nature Conservancy in Ashland, OR; Department of Forest Science, OSU Extension in Medford, OR; Redwood National and State Parks in Orick, CA; and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at Lanphere Dunes in Arcata, CA. She was drawn to ecological restoration because of its hands-on applications in undoing the damage created by humans. Susan feels that the biggest challenge to restoration is that we still are discovering what some of the fundamental ecological questions and solutions are, and thus lack the necessary information to complete the work needed to restore ecosystems. She is particularly interested in the effects of invasive plants and restoration treatments on pollinators and other wildlife. Susan will be focusing mainly on plant keying and collections with the ERI and hopes to assist with rapid assessment projects. She is an accomplished yogini and enjoys hiking, native plant gardening and propagation, biking, and reading.



Randi Walker was hired in August 2005 as a part-time administrative assistant with the ERI. An Arizona native, she attended Northern Arizona University, graduating with a B.S. in advertising and public relations. As an undergraduate, Randi worked as a student office assistant for the ERI. In her current role, she is responsible for a variety of office duties in support of the ERI staff. Building upon her undergraduate coursework, she enjoys occasionally assisting with layout and design of some of the ERI publications. What Randi enjoys most about working at ERI is being behind the scenes helping to deliver the research of the ERI. In addition to working for the ERI, Randi also works part-time for the Centennial Forest in the NAU School of Forestry. What she sees as the biggest challenge to restoration in the Southwest is communicating restoration as a priority to communities and helping them to be active in applying it. Outside of work, Randi may be found on a road-trip, buried in a good book or caught rounding people up for contra dancing.





Victoria Yazzie was born in Monument Valley and grew up on the Navajo Reservation in Tuba City, AZ. She was born to the Salt Clan and born for the Towering House Clan. She attended junior and high school in Farmington, NM and Tuba City, AZ. She later attended NAU, where she received a BS degree in forestry. She was advised by Dr. Wally Covington for her MS degree, which she also obtained through the School of Forestry. Her thesis was entitled "A Navajo Perspective of the Land Ethic and Adaptive Ecosystem Management."



Victoria is also a PhD candidate in Forestry at the University of Montana and will be receiving her degree this spring. Her research at the university focuses on "A Cultural Ethic in Tribal Forest Resource Land Law and Policy: The Human Dimension of Forest Silviculture" on the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Reservation, north of Missoula, MT. Victoria was hired by the ERI in September as an Assistant to the Director for Special Projects. Victoria understands that the greatest challenge in ecological restoration is to bridge the gap between the biophysical viewpoint and the cultural/social viewpoint of land conservation. It is the underlying premise of Native People that we belong to the earth and the earth does not belong to us. Thus, we have a responsibility to pass on healthy land so that people remain healthy through protecting, preserving, and promoting our land, the laws, culture and spirituality. Victoria believes that these guiding principles of reciprocal interdependency that we have with all life are the foundation of an environmental and cultural value system that can be learned and adapted to land management. Victoria enjoys spending time with her family, bead working, basket making, deer hide tanning, hiking, and cross-country skiing – when there is snow.

In other news, **Joe Crouse** successfully completed all requirements for his M.S. degree in Forestry. He will be assuming new responsibilities as a result of his recent promotion to Applications System Analyst. **Karen Gilbreath** was promoted to Administrative Associate in June '05. **Yiqun Lin** received her certificate as a Microsoft Certified Systems Administrator (MCSA) in 2005. **John Paul Roccaforte** also recently completed his M.S. degree in Forestry and was promoted to Research Specialist. Congratulations to all of you!