

RESTORATION FOR THE FUTURE: SETTING ENDPOINTS AND TARGETS AND SELECTING INDICATORS OF PROGRESS AND SUCCESS

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Abstract

Setting endpoints and targets in forest restoration is a complicated task that is best accomplished in cooperative partnerships that account for the ecology of the system, production of desired ecosystem goods and services, economics and well-being of society, and future environments. Clearly written and quantitative endpoints and intermediary targets need to be defined to manage restoration of ecosystem structure, composition, function, and production. Selecting indicators of key ecosystem attributes that are linked to endpoint and target condition, function, sustainability, health, integrity, resilience, and production is important to monitoring restoration success. Indicators are used to track ecosystem trajectory, assess progress toward achieving endpoints and targets, adapt management, and communicate with external publics. Reference sites can be used to help set endpoints and targets with caution. Other science-based ecosystem models or management tools are available to help quantify intermediate targets and endpoints. Continued work to better understand historic ecosystem conditions is fundamental to assessing change, extent of damage, and restoration potential. A hierarchy of forest plans, from regional and landscape to site specific, are useful for defining endpoints, targets, and indicators at appropriate ecological scales and to consider populations, ecosystem function, and socio-economic factors that operate at a variety of scales. The endpoint of restoration is the transition to ecosystem management and sustainability of the desired outcomes and states. This will require continued active management in most cases. Full details of this concept can be found in Dey and Schweitzer 2014.

Literature Cited

Dey, D.C.; Schweitzer, C.J. 2014. **Restoration for the future: endpoints, targets, and indicators of progress and success.** *Journal of Sustainable Forestry*. 33: S43-S65.

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