



California Society for Ecological Restoration Quarterly Newsletter Summer 2017 Volume 27, Issue 2



From left: Vic Claassen and John Anderson.

## Claassen and Anderson Awarded at SERCAL 2017

### Vic Claassen is Honored for His Outstanding Contributions

by Harry Oakes<sup>1</sup>

Vic Claassen was the recipient of the 2017 President's Award at SERCAL's 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Davis, California. The President's Award is presented annually to a member of the restoration community in recognition of their contributions to the field of habitat restoration in California. In other words, someone outstanding in the field of restoration. Vic Claassen is not only outstanding in the restoration field, he is often — and at his best — out standing in a field practicing and teaching restoration.

Vic is a Research Soil Scientist in UC Davis' Department of Land, Air, and Water Resources. He obtained a B.S. in Environmental Studies from Bethel College, Kansas, and a M.S. in Biology from Wichita State University. Vic traveled west

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*continued page3*

*This issue was compiled by Region 4 Director, Allegra Bukojemsky.*

*Ecesis* is published quarterly by the California Society for Ecological Restoration, a nonprofit corporation, as a service to its members. Newsletter contributions of all types are welcome and may be submitted to any of the regional directors (see page 7).

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# Looking Back... Leaping Forward: SERCAL 2017 in Davis

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## Claassen and Anderson Awarded *continued*

from the plains of Kansas to the plains of the Great Central Valley where he earned an M.S. and Ph.D. in Soil Science from UC Davis.

Vic's passion — for research in the science of wildlands soil fertility, revegetation of drastically disturbed soils, advancements in the use of endomycorrhizae, and the benefits of soil organic matter — have earned him the admiration and respect of his colleagues, peers, clients, and students, as attested in these excerpts from the award ceremony introduction prepared by Vic's former student and long-time friend, Michael Hogan of Integrated Environmental Restoration Services in Tahoe City:

"I worked with Vic over the years. I got my graduate degree under him, and I will say it was some of the most interesting and fruitful years of my life, not just from what I learned but largely from just getting to hang out with this guy..."

"He has worked to improve not just the theoretical but our working knowledge of the world around us..."

"...and while he's been working on all of that, he also makes the people around him just a little better, a little fuller with his presence, his generous and genuine nature."

Vic has been a long-time member and supporter of SERCAL, CNGA, and other organizations, and has generously given his time to these organizations and their memberships in the form of technical presentations and training seminars, in fielding technical project-specific questions, and in performing live music with the Simpletones at many a SERCAL conference.

Following the band's performance at the 2017 conference, I commented to Vic that I admired his laidback style while playing guitar (he was literally leaning against the wall for most of the sets). I'll always remember the response which I'll now loosely relay. Vic told me that he'd once heard an interview with an old blues musician, who, when asked why he sat through his performances and didn't jump and dance around like some other performers, answered that he worked all day because he had a real job, but music was a *passion* and so he was going to enjoy it. For those of you who have the pleasure to know Vic, this story says it all.

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## John Anderson Receives SERCAL's First-Ever Lifetime Achievement Award *by Patrick Reynolds<sup>2</sup>*

John Anderson recently retired from farming to devote his time to travel, visiting grandchildren, and his "retirement project:" restoring a 700-acre ranch located in the hills behind Hedgerow Farms. He and Marsha will continue to live in their home on the farm.

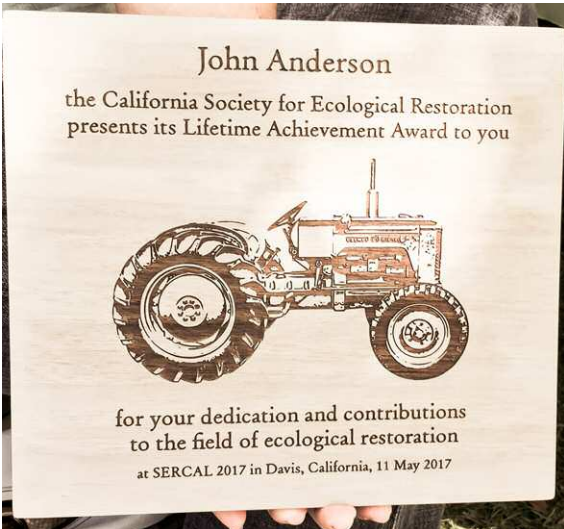
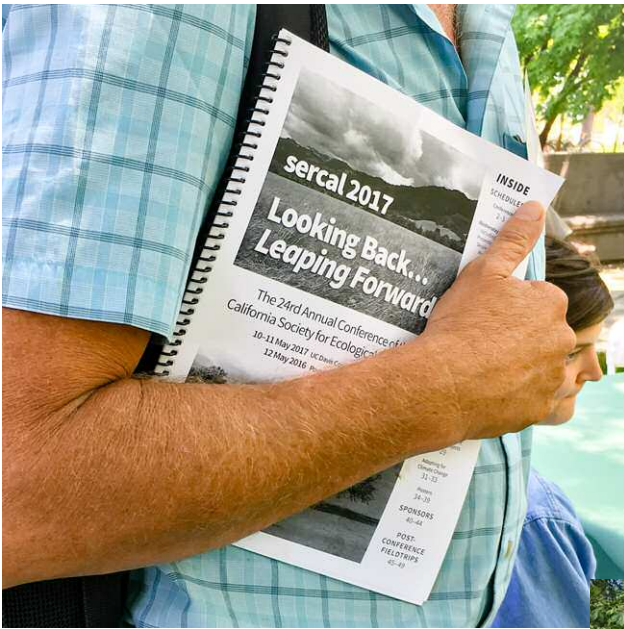
John has a degree in zoology from Oregon State and a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from UC Davis. He practiced small-animal medicine for several years before joining the veterinary staff at the California Primate Research Center at the University of California, Davis.

Starting in the early 1980s, John began planting grasses, shrubs and trees on his farm near Winters to establish wildlife habitat, and realized there were very few native seeds available for habitat restoration work. He retired from UC Davis in the mid-1990s and began farming California grasses. John figured out how to establish stands of native grasses and forbs, and has been sharing this knowledge in lectures, workshops, and tours of the farm, which also serves as a teaching and demonstration resource for

farmland conservation practices and wildlife habitat restoration in the region. John has served on a number of conservation-related boards and is a founding member of the California Native Grasslands Association. He has also served on the boards of the National Audubon Society and Audubon California, the Yolo Basin Foundation, the Wild Farm Alliance, and is a past director of the Yolo County Resource Conservation District. He has received numerous awards for his visionary work. "John Anderson has been, and continues to be, someone that is not only implementing conservation practices on his land, but has energy and drive, and has been innovating in the field of habitat restoration and conservation efforts in an agricultural setting. If you talk about conservation work in California's Central Valley, the conversation will not last five minutes before John's name comes up," says friend and colleague Chris Rose, director of the Solano RCD. Countless conservationists of all ages have been inspired by John's enthusiasm for restoration (and weed control), determination to get things done, and knowledge of the natural world. We cannot thank him enough for his many years of work to create a healthier natural world.

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<sup>2</sup>Hedgerow Farms. [preynolds@hedgerowfarms.com](mailto:preynolds@hedgerowfarms.com)



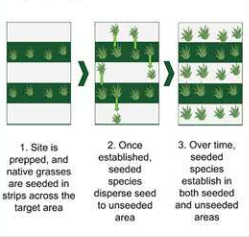
# Strip-seeding: a novel grassland restoration strategy

Julea A. Shaw<sup>1</sup>, Leslie M. Roche<sup>1</sup>, Travis Bean<sup>2</sup>, Emilio A. Laca<sup>3</sup>, Andrew P. Rayburn<sup>4</sup>, and Elise S. Gornish<sup>4</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>Department of Plant Sciences, University of California, Davis, CA, <sup>2</sup>Botany & Plant Sciences, University of California, Riverside, CA, <sup>3</sup>River Partners, Modesto, CA, <sup>4</sup>School of Natural Resources & the Environment, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ

## Background

- California's historic native grasslands have been transformed via combined effects of intensive land use, exotic species introductions, shifts in fire regimes, and droughts.
- Barriers to successful native grassland restoration include invasive annual grasses and high investment and maintenance costs.
- Strip seeding, a spatially-patterned seeding method, has recently been proposed as a cost-effective strategy to establish native communities and reduce cover of invasive species. However, it has not yet been formally tested in western grasslands.

## Strip Seeding Overview



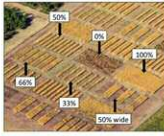
## Questions

1. How does strip seeding affect abundance of native and non-native species and plant diversity as compared to 0% (negative control) and 100% (positive control) seeding?
2. How does the initial strip seeding configuration affect the community?

## Methods

To test the utility of strip seeding we established fields in six configurations in Fall 2011

- 24 m x 4 m treatment plots
- 4 strip seed treatments (33%, 50%, 50% wide, 66%), 2 control (0%, 100%)
- 7 native species: *Elymus glaucus*, *E. multisetus*, *Stipa pulchra*, *Poa secunda*, *Vulpia microstachys*, *Melica californica*, *Hordeum brachyantherum*
- Measured community composition in the center and edge of seeded and unseeded areas in April 2016



## Results

Overall, strip seeded treatments are similar to the 100% seeded treatment in terms of native abundance and species diversity. However, non-native abundance is significantly higher in strip-seeded treatments than in the 100% treatment.

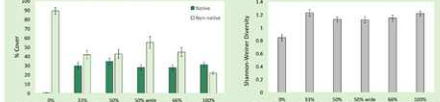


Figure 1 Native cover is similar across all seeded treatments. Non-native cover is significantly higher in the unseeded treatment and significantly lower in the 100% treatment. (PERMANOVA,  $p < 0.05$ )

However, evidence of spatial structuring due to initial strip seeding treatment remains. Differences in the community of seeded and unseeded strips is primarily driven by the higher abundance of non-native species in unseeded strips.



Figure 2 Average species diversity (Shannon-Wiener) is not significantly different across all seeded treatments. Diversity is significantly lower in the unseeded treatment (ANCOVA and Tukey HSD,  $p < 0.05$ )



Figure 3 (above) Communities in seeded (S) and unseeded (U) strips differ (PERMANOVA,  $p < 0.05$ ). Seeded strips are characterized by 5 native and 1 non-native species, while unseeded strips are characterized by 10 native species and 1 non-native species. (below) Native cover is similar across strip-seeded treatments in seeded (A) and unseeded (B) strips at an average of 33% and 27%, respectively. However, non-native cover is nearly double in unseeded strips (60% average) compared to seeded strips (33% average) ( $p < 0.05$ )

## Conclusions

- While strip seeding is an effective method to establish native species, increase diversity, and reduce non-native cover, the initial treatment has long-term effects on the spatial structure of the community
- Among strip seeding treatments, the initial strip configuration did not affect native abundance or species diversity.
- Additional management may be necessary to achieve a spatial structure similar to the 100% treatment.

## Next Steps



In Spring 2017, we are implementing grazing & burning treatments to determine effective methods to:

- 1) Reduce invasive cover in unseeded areas
- 2) Facilitate a more uniform distribution of species across seeded and unseeded strips

## Acknowledgments

This project was partially funded by the Natalie Hopkins Award of the California Native Plant Society. We would like to thank members of the Gornish, Roche, and Tate Labs for helpful feedback and assistance in the field.



- 1 The Simplertones graced Wednesday evening's poster reception with laid-back vocals and instrumentals.
- 2 We love our students! Saddleback College brought up 10 students, 6 of whom presented, and all of whom volunteered on the very busy first morning. Thank you!
- 3 Our Student Scholarship Raffle is a great way to win prizes AND support student presenters at the conference. This year's proceeds added \$1,005 to the scholarship fund.
- 4 Participants had four post-conference fieldtrips from which to choose, three of which were modified to accommodate the still-high waters in the Sacramento region. Shown here are trips to the North Bay Tidal Marsh (left) and Cosumnes Floodplain (right).
- 5 Student Poster Award winner Julea Shaw of UC Davis and her poster (left) on strip-seeding as a novel grassland restoration strategy

Hope to see you 9–11 May 2018 in San Diego for SERCAL's 25th Conference!

# SER Offers SERCAL Members Discounts for its new Certification Program

by Gregory Andrew, SERCAL President-Elect<sup>1</sup>

Earlier this year, the Society for Ecological Restoration (SER) launched its much-anticipated Certified Ecological Restoration Practitioners (CERP) program. As an incentive to SERCAL members to participate in CERP, SER is offering a \$50 reduction in the initial application fee through March 2018 (use the promo code **SERCAL1718** at checkout). The current application period runs through September 15, 2017.

SER's ecological restoration practitioner certification program — encouraging a high professional standard for those who are designing, implementing, overseeing, and monitoring restoration projects — offers two levels of certification, both valid for 5 years:

## Certified Ecological Restoration Practitioners (CERPs) —

For practitioners who have greater than 5 years of full-time experience with restoration, applications fees are \$250 | \$300 | \$350 for SER | SERCAL | Non-SER members with annual maintenance fees of \$75 | \$100 for SER | Non-SER members.

## Certified Ecological Restoration Practitioners-in-Training (CERPITs) —

For graduates and practitioners with less than 5 years of full-time experience with restoration, or for practitioners with sufficient experience who are still working on the educational criteria, applications fees are \$100 | \$150 | \$200 for SER | SERCAL | Non-SER members with annual maintenance fees of \$50 | \$175 for SER | Non-SER members..

Benefits for those who are certified as a CERP or CERPIT include:

Establishing and validating the credentials for ecological restoration practitioners;

Increasing public, client, employer, and peer confidence in ecological restoration practice and practitioners;

Promoting practitioner standards that improve ecological restoration and the associated benefits on the ground;

Encouraging practitioners to practice ecological restoration according to consistent, comprehensive “standards of practice;”

Individuals can improve their professional status through formal recognition of their training and experience;

Academic institutions with ecological restoration degree programs can use the knowledge requirements to evaluate curricula so that graduates will have the core competencies specific to the field; and

Employers, agencies, organizations, and the general public will benefit by easily being able to identify those practitioners who meet the high standard set by the certification.

SERCAL encourages its members to explore and pursue this program. Information on certification, including application requirements, the grandfathering period, and an informative FAQ page, can be found by visiting [www.ser.org/page/Certification](http://www.ser.org/page/Certification).



<sup>1</sup>Marin Municipal Water District. [gandrew@marinwater.org](mailto:gandrew@marinwater.org)

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# News from the SERCAL Board of Directors

SERCAL is working on a slight restructuring of the Board of Directors (Board) to better represent and serve its membership — stay tuned for a vote on a updated bylaws that reflect this, and some general updating. First, we are planning to transition from 9 regions down to 3 — a northern, central, and southern region — we believe this will create more flexible regional representations to better serve our members. Each region would have at least two representatives and ideally three, making the total number of board members the same. The representatives' terms would be extended to three years from the existing two, allowing some overlap of representatives in a region by staggering the elections and re-elections of the representatives. We have also opened the Board to including up to three Directors At Large.

Second, we are separating the Conference Chair and the President positions so that we can have general leadership and energy to serve the members and think about the future in a position that is not consumed by conference organization. The Conference Chair position would be a one-year term, while the term for President is essentially two year — the first year as President Elect, and the second as Acting President. This allows not only for continuity and smooth transitions in leadership, but also new ideas and energy. Third, we are re-organizing our committee structure so that SERCAL members can participate with the Board in organizing with our annual conference, regional events, fieldtrips, communications (Facebook, Ecesis, etc.), and more.

Some of these changes require some bylaw changes, so while we were at it we did a little document review, and proposed clean-up and updating. Stay tuned for an upcoming vote on the changes once we have finalized the language and details, and then the organizational transition. We hope all these changes will ultimately make the organization stronger and better able to represent and serve its members. So, if you are interested in getting involved, or have thoughts or concerns about the proposed changes, please drop us a line.



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