



SERN BC | NORTHERN RESTORATION LAUNCH FACILITATION

Community of Practice Workshop 2024 Report

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Executive Summary

This workshop summary report provides an overview of the “Growing a Restoration Community of Practice in B.C.” workshop held in Prince George, B.C. on June 4th and 5th, 2024. The workshop aimed to accomplish several key objectives, including:

- Providing an opportunity for leaders in restoration to share knowledge and experiences with new practitioners.
- Expanding practitioners’ capabilities to achieve strategic and effective restoration in B.C.
- Enabling participants to learn and network.
- Identifying key leaders and ideas to foster a restoration community of practice in B.C.

Throughout the workshop, a variety of presentations and interactive facilitated activities were conducted. Day one featured presentations from key speakers sharing their experiences and insights on strategic planning, designing restoration programs, securing funding and obtaining project approvals. The second day focused on interactive breakout groups and collaborative discussions, providing networking opportunities for participants to share learnings.

The workshop yielded valuable learnings and outcomes that will guide future restoration efforts and contribute to the ongoing development of a community of practice in B.C. During an activity called the Pro Action Café, participants self-selected topics of relevance they are currently navigating to receive coaching on from their peers. This activity allowed participants to experience a community of practice through knowledge sharing and guiding each other towards solutions. The 25-10 activity was then used to identify the **top ten next steps** for the community of practice to sustain momentum. These included:

1. Create a centralized hub and directory for resources
2. Create a contact list and directory of practitioners
3. Host regular meetings with guest speakers
4. Follow-up with virtual/in-person monthly/bimonthly meetings
5. Identify ways to access subject specific coaching
6. Organize small subgroups
7. Advocate for policy specific to restoration
8. Create organization streams
9. Develop an organized community of practice society
10. Formalize the planning committee and confirm who leads

By the end of the workshop, participants expressed appreciation for the connections built and recognized the importance of developing a strong sense of community moving forward. Participants were motivated to continue collaborating and sharing knowledge beyond the workshop and there was a resounding commitment to further develop and nurture the restoration community of practice, driven by a shared enthusiasm to see it thrive and evolve in the future.



Introduction and Context for this Workshop - Growing a Restoration Community of Practice for Restoration in B.C.

The restoration of degraded landscapes is becoming increasingly important in B.C. and establishing a community of practice is key for sharing experiences and advancing future work. The “Growing a Restoration Community of Practice for Restoration in B.C.” workshop brought together restoration practitioners from northern B.C., including both newcomers to the field and seasoned professionals, for a two-day event in Prince George, B.C., on June 4th and 5th, 2024.

This workshop aimed to build a community of practice, fostering collaboration among participants to share knowledge, advance restoration efforts and shape a positive future for restoration in northern B.C.

In its simplest form:

“**Communities of Practice** are groups of people who share a concern or passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.” – Etienne Wenger

Hosted by the Society for Ecosystem Restoration in Northern B.C. (SERNbc) and the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation (HCTF), with support from the Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program’s Peace Region and the Pacific Salmon Foundation, the workshop’s first day focused on presentations and absorbing information. The second day emphasized interactive breakout groups and collaborative discussions. Participants shared and heard experiences related to **strategic planning, designing restoration programs, securing funding and obtaining approvals for restoration projects**, allowing them to network, share insights and collectively advance restoration practices in northern B.C.





Key Goals and Desired Outcomes from the Workshop

This workshop aimed to achieve several key goals and outcomes. Goals were identified to enhance the capabilities of restoration practitioners in northern B.C. and develop a motivated community of practice. The primary goals of the workshop include:

Key Goals:

- Provide an opportunity for leaders in the field of restoration to share their knowledge and experiences with practitioners who may be newer to the field.
- Expand the capability within practitioners to achieve more strategic, impactful and effective restoration in B.C.
- Provide a forum where practitioners can experience a community of practice and begin to grow this community to advance efficient and effective restoration.

Desired Outcomes:

- Enable participants to learn, network and discuss experiences related to strategic planning, designing restoration programs, securing funding and obtaining approvals for restoration projects.
- Engage in small group discussions to experience and grow a community of practice.
- Identify key leaders and ideas to carry forward active communities of practice for restoration in northern B.C.

By achieving these goals and outcomes, the workshop aimed to build a strong foundation for ongoing collaboration and advancement in the field of restoration in northern B.C.



Figure 1. Participants engage in discussions during a workshop session.



Thinking Strategically about Restoration: Why and Where

The first day of the workshop focused on learning and building our collective knowledge. Several speakers were invited to speak to different themes related to restoration throughout three sessions.

The first series of presentations focused on the theme of strategy. Specifically, presentations focused on thinking strategically about restoration, emphasizing the importance of clarifying the purpose behind restoration efforts and planning where to do it. Speakers delivered 15-minute presentations to share their experiences and insights, followed by a short question-answer period. This section highlights the key takeaways from each presentation.

PRESENTATIONS: STRATEGY

Thinking Strategically About Restoration: Clarifying the “Why” behind Restoration and Planning Where to Do It - A lens through Wetland Ecosystems

Neil Fletcher - Director of Conservation Stewardship, B.C. Wildlife Federation

Neil presented strategies for thinking strategically about restoration, focusing particularly on wetland ecosystems. Strategies included a framework to guide wetland conservation goals and a checklist for strategically planning restoration efforts, supported by practical examples from personal experience.

Key Takeaways:

- Restoration efforts operate within a cyclical framework involving information gathering, awareness building, legislative support (i.e., action plans and frameworks), land securement, restoration and coordination and capacity (i.e., funding and adaptive management).
- Following a checklist when planning restoration efforts ensures key objectives are met:
 - Ensure **alignment with watershed level plans and objectives** by leveraging existing action plans and frameworks (i.e., Peace Region Riparian & Wetlands Action Plan).
 - Support **ecological lift** through actions such as road impact assessments to identify restoration opportunities to repair or prevent damage.
 - Develop a **strong rationale** for restoration supported by tools like the Wetland Ecosystem Services Protocol to guide decision making.
 - Consider the **probability of success, cost-effectiveness** and **ongoing maintenance** required to ensure sustainable outcomes.

Questions regarding the provincial restoration standard were raised, focusing on how to navigate true versus perceived risks in the next decade. The importance of stream connectivity in restoration projects like the Beaver Analog project were also raised. Emphasis was placed on finding the right location for these projects. Ongoing research and monitoring were also noted as being important however it can be tricky to find funding for site maintenance following restoration work.



Launching A Restoration Community, Sharing Learnings, Building our Future

Naomi Owens-Beek & Teena Demeulemeester - Saulteau First Nations

Naomi and Teena shared insights into their collaborative efforts and experiences in habitat restoration, focusing on overcoming barriers in relation to caribou conservation. Their presentation highlighted strategic partnership funding that led to the establishment of a caribou restoration working group resulting in a Strategic Caribou Restoration Implementation Plan (SCRIP).

During restoration planning, it is important to:

- Considering cultural practices and areas of high community value.
- Consider longevity including the potential of an area to be disturbed again in the future.
- Consider cost effectiveness including budget, time to recovery, availability of prescriptions and other practical indicators when prioritizing areas for restoration efforts.
- Develop an adaptive approach that incorporates assessing and adjusting restoration priorities when new information becomes available or ecological conditions change.

Key takeaways:

- Barriers to restoration include permitting, snowmobilers and vandalism.
- Having a roadmap for multi year planning and a process that works on an area-based approach is important (SCRIP) through collaboration.
- Conducting restoration in protected areas reduces the likelihood of future disturbances.
- Model results show that habitat restoration efforts need to ramp up quickly and build year over year through a sustained funding model
- Consideration is needed on how to grow capacity in the region, while building support pieces (i.e., restoration tracking system, site-level and landscape-level monitoring frameworks)
- Learning from both restoration successes and failures and then being able to collaborate and share learnings is vital for improving restoration practices.

Bringing It All Together

Following the presentations on strategy, participants were asked to reflect on the following questions: “What have you learned”? And “How can you apply it to your work?”. Participants emphasized the importance of applying restoration efforts to landscapes that remain, improving permitting processes and fostering relationships with the provincial government to advance restoration work. They recognized the openness to conversation and risk-taking. Individuals identified that similar initiatives, like SCRIP, exist with many working towards common goals. The discussions highlighted the importance of communities of practice for addressing barriers and sharing knowledge, and the need for ongoing effectiveness monitoring to ensure restoration objectives are met. Participants also expressed a desire for more informal methods of sharing successes and failures, such as success programs and networking opportunities.



Project Concept Development: Getting the Right People and Partners in the Room

The second series of presentations focused on the theme of partnership. Specifically, presentations focused on project concept development and getting the right people and partners together. Speakers delivered 15-minute presentations to share their experiences and insights, followed by a short question-answer period. This section highlights the key takeaways from each presentation.

PRESENTATIONS: PARTNERSHIP

Aquatic and Terrestrial Restoration - The Opportunity for Partnerships

Jim D'Andrea - Cheslatta Nation Operators

Jim presented on the concept of partnerships, delving into the human elements that drive successful collaborations. He discussed the importance of community and teamwork, sharing his own origin story and experiences in fostering partnerships. Jim also outlined the recipe for success in building partnerships and provided insights on how to effectively navigate and sustain these relationships.

Key takeaways:

- Effective partnerships require mutual agreement and effort from both sides.
- Listening and finding commonalities are essential components of partnerships that involve active communication and mutual understanding.
- It's important to listen to Elders and local communities, recognizing Traditional Ecological Knowledge and citizen science.
- It's equally valuable to make mistakes, ask questions, commit to continuous learning and connect with the land through active engagement.
- There is no substitute for getting out on the land and building real, genuine conversations with people.
- Partnerships should be recognized as a verb (action) rather than a noun.

Following the presentation, a question was raised regarding the availability and capacity of machine operators in the restoration economy. Jim addressed the challenges, noting that the engineering behind restoration machinery often focuses on smooth, perfect implementation whereas restoration often requires the use of rough attachments to replicate more natural landscapes. There are enough machine operators available, but many are accustomed to conventional techniques. The key is to find operators that are willing to adapt to new methods, as they are crucial for effective restoration efforts.



Forest Restoration Partnerships B.C. - The Goshawk Story

Frank Doyle and Amanita Coosemans - Wildlife Dynamics

Frank and Amanita emphasized the importance of partnership through the story of Goshawks, a species that is an integral part of the ecosystem but is disappearing due to habitat loss. They highlighted that current partnerships are centered around advancing restoration efforts and emphasized the need for collaboration between various partners including the B.C. and federal governments, academia, license holders, First Nations, non-profit organizations and community forests. They also stressed the importance of conducting research concurrently with restoration activities and the necessity of supportive policies to facilitate restoration. They emphasized that the success of community forests exemplifies the effectiveness of collaboration.

Key Takeaways:

- It's important to share lessons learned, both successes and failures, in managing species like goshawks in northern B.C.
- Current systems have not adequately addressed the needs of goshawk populations in northern B.C., resulting in significant challenges for their survival and recovery.
- Current rules and guidelines must be revised to support stewardship without penalties.
- There is a need to implement systemic changes to facilitate easier restoration efforts and secure funding for research and action simultaneously.
- There is a need to advocate for provincial policy that effectively protects ecosystems and provides adequate funding for endangered species and their habitats.

Following the presentation, a question was raised regarding strategic restoration of larger land areas and the integration of fragmented landscapes. Frank and Amanita emphasized the importance of identifying focal areas where restoration efforts are already underway in protected areas. This allows for expansion and connectivity by linking parks and other protected areas together, thereby creating larger, more cohesive landscapes for conservation and restoration efforts.



NEWSS and the Agriculture Community - Project Concept Development and Partnerships

Wayne Salewski - Nechako Environment and Water Stewardship Society

Wayne's presentation focussed on partnerships forged through his experience with the Nechako Environment and Water Stewardship Society. He highlighted collaborations with private landowners in the agricultural sector and emphasized the importance of trust-building. Wayne shared his journey through various roles, illustrating successful advocacy for environmental issues that led to the development of important projects, including educational initiatives both in schools outdoors. He underscored the transformative impact of partnerships between academia at the University of Northern British Columbia, government and the private sector in promoting stewardship and fostering community engagement.

Key Takeaways:

- Trust is crucial for navigating political challenges and advancing restoration efforts.
- Learning on the land programs are inspiring students to pursue roles in science, stewardship and restoration biology.
- Strong partnerships are relationships, and they are essential for sustaining restoration efforts, especially during challenging times.

Following the presentation, questions focussed on the impact of outdoor education programs and Wayne's experience with corporate restoration in the agriculture landscape. He emphasized the importance of finding trustworthy stewards among private landowners and expressed optimism about future collaborations.

Participants were encouraged to reflect on key takeaways amongst themselves following the presentations on partnership.



Building A Strong Restoration Plan: Connecting Outcomes to Actions

The third series of presentations focused on the theme of outcomes. Specifically, presentations focused on building strong restoration plans and connecting actions to desired outcomes. Speakers delivered 15-minute presentations to share their experiences and insights, followed by a short question-answer period. This section highlights the key takeaways from each presentation.

PRESENTATIONS: OUTCOMES

Jeff Morgan - Pacific Salmon Foundation

Building a Strong Post-Wildfire Recovery Plan for Salmon: Connecting Actions to Outcomes

Jeff's presentation focussed on developing a robust post-fire recovery plan for Pacific salmon, emphasizing the critical role of freshwater habitats. Highlighting the compounding impacts of climate change and wildfires on these habitats, the presentation addressed watershed-scale challenges and the complexities involved in post-wildfire management. It underscored the need to clarify risks, engage partners and leverage available resources and expertise to navigate recovery efforts effectively. The presentation walked through a structured planning cycle, stressing community collaboration and the importance of scoping challenges, organizing resources and implementing adaptive management strategies to achieve sustainable outcomes for salmon recovery.

Key Takeaways:

- Massive wildfires pose watershed-scale challenges and compound pre-existing or cumulative effects.
- Identifying vulnerabilities among species is crucial, recognizing that they can vary significantly among species.
- Restoration efforts may not always be feasible; focus on achievable and positive actions.
- Assessing risks associated with treatments is essential, ensuring that the scale of treatment matches the scale of risk.

Following the presentation, a question was raised regarding how economic benefits of fish and ecosystem benefits are considered in cost-benefit analysis. Jeff explained that numerous benefits can be measured in a variety of ways and that it is possible to design a decision matrix that addresses and organizes these benefits. The discussion also explored the flexibility in designing risk assessment frameworks to address various benefits in diverse ways while accommodating diverse measurement methods and criteria. The presentation highlighted the complexities involved in evaluating restoration impacts.



Adaptive Management, Watershed Status Evaluation Reports (WSER) & Restoration/Recovery

Lars Reese-Hansen, Government of B.C.

Lars' presentation discussed the nuances between management and restoration, emphasizing adaptive management and recovery planning strategies. He walked the group through the benefits of adaptive management in navigating the activity and disturbance cycle within watersheds. Lars introduced the Watershed Status Evaluation Protocol (WSEP), which facilitates monitoring and supports decision-making through comprehensive watershed status reports. The presentation also delved into the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities associated with these methodologies, incorporating risk and condition assessments. Watershed management practice recommendations were also presented.

Key Takeaways:

- Management and restoration combined lead to recovery and sustainability.
- Restoration can't be effective without a landscape/watershed use plan (LUP) that is able to (legally) compel activities in the watershed to be conducted in a way that conserves the values requiring protection and improved management.
- The WSEP program evaluates ecosystem status by assessing risk and condition, aiding policy development.
- Projects like the fish passage demonstrate the importance of data collection and understanding the land for recovery plans.

Linear Feature Restoration

Sophia Cuthbert, Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation

Sophia provided observations from a funder perspective on linear feature restoration and caribou habitat. She highlighted the impacts of extensive road networks and the complex mechanisms behind caribou decline, emphasizing two types of habitat disturbance and restoration approaches: ecological and functional. The presentation underscored the importance of setting clear objectives for restoration projects, as these shape everything from prescription development to monitoring. Sophia also discussed the challenges of funding, high costs associated with road restoration, especially in difficult terrain, and the need for effective communication and monitoring. She identified various resources available to support road restoration projects including a treatment prescription guideline document and a project monitoring guidance document produced by the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation (HCTF).

Key Takeaways:

- Restoration projects will always face differing opinions and values on land use.
- Initial stages of restoration require significant time and financial investment therefore it's important to determine if restoration objectives align with provincial plans.
- Both short-term and long-term monitoring are necessary, despite funding limitations.



- Consider the balance between long-term site access for post-restoration monitoring with the concept that sites should be difficult to access after restoration to maintain their integrity.
- Limited training and mentorship opportunities exist, especially for caribou habitat restoration, highlighting the need for support.
- Potential for nation-to-nation and non-profit-to-non-profit mentorship to enhance restoration.
- Sharing data is crucial for understanding and coordinating restoration efforts.
- Projects should be anchored to existing restored areas and plans, considering wildfire and climate change impacts.
- First-hand observation of restoration sites is invaluable for understanding and planning.

Following the presentation, a question was raised regarding the security of large-scale restoration projects from being redeveloped or disturbed by industry. While there are no known specific instances, it is possible for adjacent developments, such as roads, to impact restored areas. It's important to place restoration projects in areas less likely to be reopened for development, recognizing that these projects are significant investments.

Bringing It All Together

Following the presentations on outcomes, participants were asked to reflect on the following questions: “What have you learned?” And “How can you apply it to your work?”. The callback discussions highlighted several key outcomes and insights. Participants emphasized the ongoing challenge of balancing restoration with historical activities and the need for government legislation to reduce the necessity for restoration projects.

There was a strong call for partnerships with industry, particularly with large corporations that have significant environmental impacts. Suggestions included leveraging existing Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) strategies and potentially implementing an environmental tax to fund restoration efforts. Participants also discussed the importance of incentivizing big companies to support restoration activities, potentially by offering priority opportunities to companies that demonstrate due diligence in restoration. The idea of holding decision-makers accountable for environmental harm was also raised. Planning emerged as a crucial element, with participants noting the importance of clear strategies and the courage to implement restoration even before plans are fully completed.



What Makes a Great Project? Perspectives from Funders

The final session of day one involved a panel discussion focussed on insights from funders about what makes a great restoration project. Panelists from key funding organizations included Duncan McColl, Vice President of the Society for Ecosystem Restoration in Northern B.C. (SERNbc), Sophia Cuthbert, Wildlife Program Manager of the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation (HCTF) and Chelsea Regina, Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program Manager. The panelists introduced themselves and shared their perspectives on successful projects. They also answered audience questions about restoration projects, funding, and what differentiates good projects from great ones in terms of outcomes.



Figure 2. Panelists discussing what makes a great restoration project during the Restoration Community of Practice workshop.

Targeted Panelist Questions

The panel discussion was kicked-off by each of the three panelists being asked a specific question, summarized below.

“What types of projects do you fund?”

On behalf of the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program and B.C. Hydro, Chelsea highlighted a variety of projects with a forward-looking approach, focusing on opportunities within entire watersheds. From a B.C. hydro perspective, a priority is monitoring the effectiveness of habitat restoration projects, especially those impacted by hydro dams. They have priority species lists and primarily conduct projects through grant intakes.

“Which programs are relevant to restoration?”

The Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation (HCTF) supports various programs with different objectives and funding streams, focussing mainly on caribou, fish and wildlife. Provincial funds are also available for caribou restoration projects.



“Tell us about SERNbc funding dynamics”.

On behalf of SERNbc, Duncan explained that as SERNbc grew, it attracted more funding and professionals who could secure grants independently, with SERN helping to bring these projects to fruition. They provide seed funding for small projects, allowing these projects to seek further funding from other organizations like HCTF.

Open Panelist Questions

Following the specific questions, questions were then asked that were open for all the panelists to weigh in on and are summarized below.

“What makes a great project?”

- **Clear Vision and Path:** Projects should articulate a well-defined future vision and a clear path to achieve it. Simplicity often proves more effective than complexity.
- **Risk Assessment and Mitigation:** it’s crucial to identify potential barriers and failure points, with contingency plans outlined to mitigate risks effectively.
- **Measurable Outcomes:** Emphasizing measurable outcomes helps in demonstrating project effectiveness and securing funding support.
- **Team and Expertise:** Projects benefit from a strong team of subject matter experts, community volunteers and diverse funding partners.
- **Scalability:** Both smaller-scale and larger multi-million-dollar initiatives are valued, particularly when integrated into broader strategic plans.
- **Clear Objectives:** Clearly outlining project goals and the rationale behind them strengthens proposals and aligns project partners towards a common purpose.

“What differentiates a good versus great project in terms of outcomes?”

- **Achievement of Outcomes:** A great project clearly achieves its stated objectives by the end of the project. Whether it’s research or restoration, the ability to demonstrate measurable success is key.
- **Learning from Setbacks:** Equally important is the ability to explain why certain objectives weren’t met and to share valuable learnings from these setbacks.
- **Adaptability:** Great projects demonstrate the ability to pivot when necessary and maintain momentum towards goals. This includes using visual aids like pictures to enhance results as well as producing concise reports that effectively communicate progress.

Participant Questions to Panelists

Next, participants were invited to ask questions for each of the panelists to weigh in on. Key questions and important points raised during the discussion are summarized below. One idea highlighted was the importance of diversifying funding sources, acknowledging that relying on a single funder may not suffice for comprehensive project funding. Additionally, there was a suggestion for establishing a centralized hub or information center where reports, conclusions and recommendations from various projects can be accessed and utilized for shared learning.



“What is the role of your organizations to support restoration projects that can be taken on by industry? How does research and projects that you fund translate to industry work?”

Organizations like SERNbc play a role in supporting restoration projects involving industry by making reports accessible for learning and regulatory purposes. Moving forward, industry participation in communities of practice should be encouraged, as well as the use of project findings through knowledge hubs. Action plans exist to educate those with significant impact, recognizing that policy barriers exist when it comes to driving policy change and that there is room to push policy further.

“How flexible are your organizations regarding the carryover or extension of funding beyond one fiscal year, considering that a one-year term may not always be ideal?”

Funding for caribou projects is designed to be more flexible, often spanning up to three years and structured into distinct funding buckets with reporting requirements. Funders also acknowledged that one-year budgeting terms are a constraint to restoration. However, funders face challenges in committing beyond one year due to uncertainties in annual funding allocations. Agreements in principle allow for budgeting three to five years ahead, but annual approval is necessary.

“What would an effective multi-species ecosystem restoration project look like, if we’re moving away from a singular species focus towards holistic ecosystem restoration?”

Learning from organizations like the Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute (ABMI), emphasizes the value of multi-species projects for their broader ecological benefits. Considering umbrella species is crucial, as they can represent the health of entire ecosystems. Effective projects focus on asking pertinent questions and strive for holistic biodiversity management with measurable outcomes, although achieving this balance can be challenging.

Following the panel discussion, day one concluded with a closing circle where participants shared their high-level closing thoughts.



Refining Our Work Through Learning from Others

The first breakout activity of day two featured table conversations, where participants chose topics of interest and engaged in guided discussions. Each table was guided through the following questions:

- What experiences do you have related to this topic?
- What are some of the greatest learnings?
- What can we do moving forward to advance our work?

Table Conversation Outcomes

Table 1. Summary of key takeaways from the table conversation activity on capacity and workforce in restoration.

Table 1: Capacity/Workforce	
What experiences do you have related to this topic?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a need for project managers as well as skilled field work crews.• High staff turnover (especially in government) means projects are left unfinished.• There has been a culture shift post COVID, and location related workforce issues are more prominent.
What are some of the greatest learnings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employers need to support training and foster longevity through mentorship.• There has been a culture shift among generations, which creates recruitment challenges and a “brain drain” as seasoned employees retire.• A lack of connection and shared learnings has led to silos. There is a need to work together, integrate diverse values, and have influence at the planning tables.
What can we do moving forward to advance our work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work together and specialize expertise.• Move away from full-time commitments and into contracted work.• Support education and training across partners through skills training, education and workshops, HR support, etc.

Table 2. Summary of key takeaways from the table conversation activity on approvals in restoration.

Table 2: Approvals	
What experiences do you have related to this topic?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The flexibility in the approval process can lead to confusion and uncertainty.• There can be confusion on what permits or authorizations are needed due to a lack of restoration-specific approvals, and a lack of restoration knowledge by approval staff.• Timelines for approvals can be frustrating in terms of length.



Table 2: Approvals

<p>What are some of the greatest learnings?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Nations are beginning to do self-approvals, which can make consultants and others uncomfortable. • It is important that authorizers and licensors are engaged early in the project. • Finding the right person in the approval department is critical, and it is important to communicate with them. • Both areas based permitting and community advisors are strategies that have been used to great effect.
<p>What can we do moving forward to advance our work?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create streamlined tools for restoration and a standardized permitting process. • Create codes of practice/ standards of process to inform practitioners of their approval applications. Additionally, address project failures so as not to halt future application approvals in reaction to the failure. • Create more gatherings of restoration practitioners and approval staff. • Support the process of larger area-based permitting/ approval. Create approvals/ permits for specific restorative activities, not specific to the sector.

Table 3. Summary of key takeaways from the table conversation activity on achieving operational delivery success.

Table 3: Achieving Operational Delivery Success

<p>What experiences do you have related to this topic?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing smaller-scale projects is relatively easy, larger-scale projects are difficult.
<p>What are some of the greatest learnings?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public buy in is important. • Succession planning for projects is key. • Collaboration from all stakeholders is needed.
<p>What can we do moving forward to advance our work?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Involvement. • Engaging younger generations.



Table 4. Summary of key takeaways from the table conversation activity on making monitoring manageable and effective.

Table 4: Making Monitoring Manageable & Effective	
What experiences do you have related to this topic?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges defining individual site success metrics. First Nations have defined success metrics based on culturally significant values. • Defining cumulative effects within monitoring. • Challenges with industry accountability through investment and post-construction. Accountability is further undermined by minor/ insignificant penalties. • First Nations' involvement is often an afterthought (tokenism). • Must align values across involved parties and define a motivation behind monitoring.
What are some of the greatest learnings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We must value both qualitative and quantitative success metrics. Not everything can be measured by a number. Succession planning for projects. • Public buy-in is important, and bureaucracy can stall progress. • Find ways to communicate reports with new and traditional delivery methods. Social media can be leveraged for some of this communication. • There is a need to incorporate traditional ecological knowledge. • Every group defines "cumulative/ effects/ impact" differently.
What can we do moving forward to advance our work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to reinforce the need for continued monitoring. • Communicate in more usable/ available methods. • Use a third-party quality assurance and control to verify results. Implement guardians/ monitors in field programs. • Find ways to utilize and fund citizen science. • Create cumulative monitoring programs.

Table 5. Summary of key takeaways from the table conversation activity on turning barriers into opportunities.

Table 5: Turning Barriers into Opportunities	
What experiences do you have related to this topic?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racism is a barrier. • In restoration, the workload normally falls to industry and First Nations. • There is a lack of provincial support for mining compliance and enforcement. • How to involve grassroots community organizations? • Could the water sustainability fund assist in funding monitoring? • There is a focus on only funding large industrial projects.
What are some of the greatest learnings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation does not change fast enough. • There is currently no legislation to support effective compliance and enforcement. • There are many government and public barriers to restoration.



Table 5: Turning Barriers into Opportunities

What can we do moving forward to advance our work?

- Create a public education campaign on the restoration economy and involve community organizations.
- Increase fines for improper land use.
- Create restoration policy.
- Showcase restoration success and opportunities.

Table 6. Summary of key takeaways from the table conversation activity on accessing funding.

Table 6: Accessing Funding

What experiences do you have related to this topic?

- There has already been lots of knowledge and effort put into this.

What are some of the greatest learnings?

- There is a need to streamline the funds - reduce redundancy and overlap.
- Collaboration between funding agencies.
- Not enough support to assist organizations in accessing funds and grant writing.

What can we do moving forward to advance our work?

- Create a compiled list for funding opportunities and timelines.
- Utilize your community/ network for funding opportunities.



Figure 3. Participants engaged in table conversations during the workshop, discussing various restoration topics.



Tools for Building a Community of Practice

The second activity of day two centered on utilizing the Pro Action Café technique to begin to foster a strong community of practice. This activity involves participants rotating through small group discussions focussed on specific topics, where they share insights, brainstorm ideas and seek collaborative solutions. The session highlighted various key topics and participants were encouraged to participate in the conversations of interest to them. Following the activity, individuals engaged in an open call for discussion topics and sought coaching within the community of practice. Participants had the opportunity to pose questions, challenges or projects to receive coaching and mentorship from their colleagues.

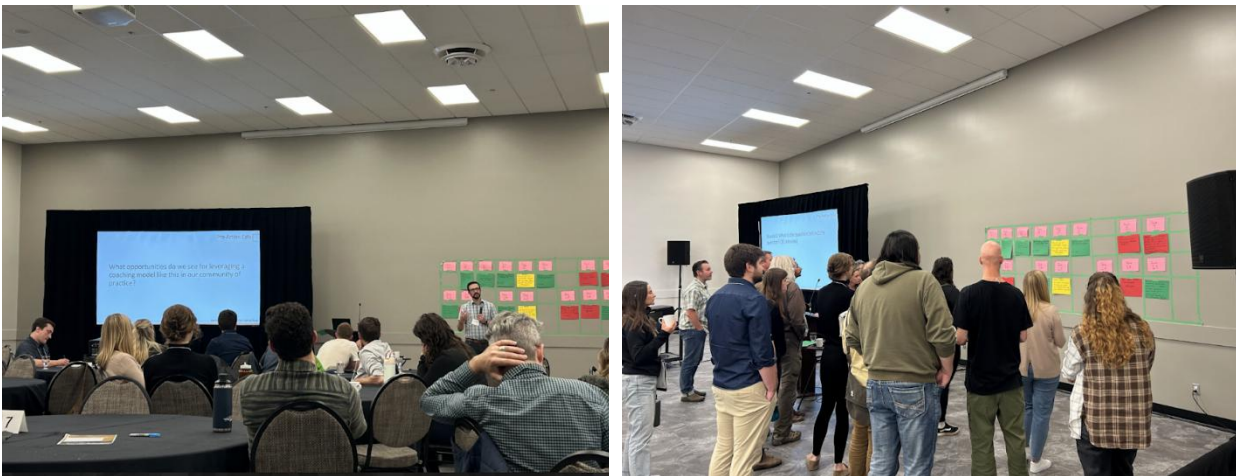


Figure 4. Participants actively participated in the ProAction Café activity during the workshop.

The following table identifies the topics that participants selected to be coached on by their peers during the Pro Action Café coaching portion of the activity.

Table 7. List of coaching topics developed by participants during the Pro Action Café coaching session.

Coaching Topics

Table 1: We all agree we must use native seed in restoration, does seed need to be locally sourced? What is local?

Table 2: Becoming a point person on mega projects on the fringe of scope.

Table 3: Landscape level restoration/reforestation planning post-wildfire.

Table 4: Developing a strategic Moose and caribou habitat management restoration plan.

Table 5: How do you set restoration targets for systems without baseline condition information?

Table 6: How do I efficiently and effectively assess 1000 kms of linear disturbance for caribou restoration projects?

Table 8: How can we go big (silo breaking, collaborate in unison?)

Table 9: Berry patch restoration in an area impacted by the CGL right-of-way. What can we learn from their reclamation/restoration community?



Coaching Topics

Table 11: How do we move a collective COP forward?

Table 12: Funding - scaling the solution to the size of the problem. Where does money come from?

Table 14: How to prioritize restoration/enhancement action for Arctic Grayling in parsnip watershed, leveraging the years/millions of dollars spent already on research?

Table 15: How do I get funding to restore habitat for species that have no protection (biodiversity)?

Table 17: How can effective monitoring of restoration activities for bull trout be designed when the population level effects may not appear for 6-10 years or more? How can we design them to be experimental?

Table 18: Entitlement attitudes

Table 19: How do we collaborate to create a native plant seed bank and network to share resources? Seed transfer zones? Quality control? Match supply and demand? Meet project timelines?



Carrying the Momentum Forward - 25/10 Activity

Following a morning of deep breakout group discussions aimed at solidifying the community of practice, the group transitioned into small breakout groups for another facilitated activity to explore further avenues for establishing a community of practice. To generate actionable ideas for moving the community of practice forward, a group brainstorming process called 25/10 was used to help identify key ideas for further exploration and action. Participants were asked:

What is your top idea for advancing this restoration community of practice?

First, participants individually brainstormed ideas in response to the proposed question. Next, participants wrote down their answers on index cards and took turns sharing with the group. Lastly, participants ranked the ideas as a group to determine the most important ideas that emerged.

The following tables identify the top ideas that emerged from the 25/10 activity.

25/10 Activity Top Ideas

- Develop a centralized knowledge hub or web portal to connect the community, share resources and facilitate communication among practitioners involved in restoration projects.
- Establish a biannual meeting schedule to formalize the community of practice, appoint a coordinator or champion for consistent communication and arrange regular virtual or in-person monthly meetings with guest speakers to provide learning and expand knowledge.
- Form an organized community of practice with a membership directory including photos and areas of interest to ensure consistent connectivity and collaboration among members.
- Follow up with three individuals you met at the workshop to continue the conversation.
- Invite industry to the next workshop.
- Within the workshop package/report delivered by Fuse, there is a date for the next conference/webinar/event.
- Organize smaller “family subgroups” either by location or by speciality/area of interest
- Confirm who leads and secure funding for continuation.
- A way to access subject (or not-subject) related coaching.
- Host a community workshop on some of the themes touched on during this event.
- Identify 4 or 5 main information streams that the COP will organize around - staying within the bounds of ecosystem restoration practice
- Report out on a 2-day workshop identifying next steps.
- Individual commitment to participation in the COP.
- The next step: supporting policy that is specific to restoration.
- Formalize the planning (or steering) committee and give each member one specific next task to do in the next six months (who? What? Where? When?)



Figure 5. Participants engage in the 25/10 activity, exchanging cue cards to rank ideas for advancing the community of practice.

The top scoring ideas were identified, and participants went into breakout groups to discuss the following three questions for each idea: Why a next step? How to keep it moving? What is needed? Who should keep this moving? When should it be done?

Table 8. Summary of key takeaways from the top 10 actions identified in the 25/10 activity.

Idea: Creating a Centralized Hub and Directory for Resources

Why a next step?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Something tangible/concrete.• Remove barriers and silos.• Carry momentum.• Many individuals are siloed and lack mentorship.
How to keep it moving? What is needed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keeping it simple to create it before momentum is lost.• Adding functionality to already existing websites.• Communicators/web designers.• Include names, short biography and contact information.• Public facing community of practice (COP) page and internal portal.
Who should keep this moving? When should it be done?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hosted by centralized body (i.e., SERNbc, HCTF).• COP members to contribute and follow through.• Soon and simple and/or apply for funding/capacity to build, grow and maintain a hub.



Idea: Creating a Contact List and Directory of Practitioners

- Why a next step?**
- Break down the silos within the COP.
 - Increase access to learning and lessons from others.
 - Increase connectivity within industry.
 - Increase capacity.

- How to keep it moving? What is needed?**
- Web-based space within an existing platform to host a downloadable PDF directory.
 - A timeline and objectives.
 - Permission to include names, emails, location and an annual update.
 - Communicators/web designers.
 - Include names, short biography and contact information.
 - Public facing community of practice (COP) page and internal portal.

- Who should keep this moving?
When should it be done?**
- SERNbc.
 - Volunteer or industry funded position.
 - Within 6 months to allow for connection before next season funding applications close.

Idea: Host Regular Meetings with Guest Speakers

- Why a next step?**
- Maintain momentum through connection.
 - Information sharing (e.g., new technologies, standards/guidelines, approaches, methodologies, outreach/education, etc.).

- How to keep it moving? What is needed?**
- Maintain funding partnerships.
 - Establish organization committee and communications “hub”.
 - Extend the invitation to the larger restoration community and public.
 - Include restoration site visit tours, if possible/feasible.

- Who should keep this moving?
When should it be done?**
- Inviting key area-based speakers with regular monthly meetings.
 - Ensure appropriate time of year (i.e., May).

Idea: Follow-up Virtual/In-Person Monthly/Bimonthly Meetings

- Why a next step?**
- Staying informed who is doing what and where.
 - Building new relationships to enable new opportunities to arise.



Idea: Follow-up Virtual/In-Person Monthly/Bimonthly Meetings

How to keep it moving? What is needed?

- Define the scope of attendees (e.g., region specific, experienced and new practitioners).
- Rotating chairs with opportunities for breakout sessions.
- A facilitator to organize new topics and speakers.
- Poll the community to determine topics of interest.

**Who should keep this moving?
When should it be done?**

- A facilitator or coordinator who organizes meetings and draws out ideas.
- Meetings should be held regularly (monthly) except within field season.

Idea: Ways to Access Subject Specific Coaching

Why a next step?

- Coaching builds capacity, soft skill development and trust within community.
- Teaching provides values and allows for understanding of different perspectives.

How to keep it moving? What is needed?

- Understand the difference between mentorship and coaching (i.e., mentorship is how you develop skills and relationships to effectively coach).
- Relationships: overlap of area's expertise and skills in mentorship coaching.
- Agreement of confidentiality.

**Who should keep this moving?
When should it be done?**

- A distribution list with people who self identify as a coach/mentor.
- Individual responsibility to reach out and ask for help from those with knowledge.
- It should be done tomorrow (individuals) and the distribution list should be created over the next few weeks.

Idea: Organize Small Subgroups

Why a next step?

- A large group event only brushes the surface.
- Need for deepened relationships and discussions.
- Less overwhelming.
- Many individuals are siloed and lack mentorship.

How to keep it moving? What is needed?

- Two types of groups: physically local that can meet in person and topic/practice based.
- Creation of a "hub" where individuals can join a list based on topic of interest.
- Create an app.
- Consideration of competition and confidentiality.

**Who should keep this moving?
When should it be done?**

- SERNbc or a local leader/ambassador.
- Groups should be formed now and aim to begin meeting in October or January.



Idea: Advocate for Policy Specific to Restoration

- Why a next step?**
- Existing policy creates need for restoration and doesn't enable it as a streamlined activity (e.g., free grow policy, existing stocking standards, forest appraisal manual).
 - Forestry is landscape level, whereas mining is site based.

- How to keep it moving? What is needed?**
- Need to prioritize policy work by creating a formalized policy working group.
 - Public education to ensure understanding of changing management.

- Who should keep this moving?**
- The policy working group with collective experience (not just forestry, also need fish and wildlife, etc. at the table).
- When should it be done?**
- Provincial role in enabling policy recommendations/creation.
 - The sooner the better as new governments form new mandates.

Idea: Creating Organization Streams

- Why a next step?**
- Need for organizational structure.
 - Practitioner-specific knowledge.
 - Environments have different needs.
 - Standards and protocols differ but already exist.
 - First Nations input.

- How to keep it moving? What is needed?**
- Identify what a stream is: technical resources, high-level tools/needs, geographic, ecosystem types, BMPs/standards.
 - Subcommittee or working groups.
 - Use existing resources, organizations and structures.
 - Regionally based protocols.

- Who should keep this moving?**
- Contracted person in advance of upcoming meeting.
- When should it be done?**

Idea: Develop an Organized COP Society

- Why a next step?**
- Demand exists to broaden the reach of the COP, improve communication and access to information.

- How to keep it moving? What is needed?**
- Developing a centralized "hub".
 - Identify champions within the COP community to move things forward.
 - Financial support for hub creation.



Idea: Develop an Organized COP Society

Who should keep this moving?

- Shared leadership from the COP.
- Support from funders (HCTF, FWCP, SERNbc, PSF, BCCF, etc).

When should it be done?

Conclusions and Next Steps for the Community of Practice

The workshop yielded several key insights and actionable outcomes for advancing the restoration community of practice. Participants emphasized the need for a centralized knowledge hub or web portal to foster connectivity, resource sharing and collaboration among restoration practitioners. Establishing a regular meeting schedule, whether in-person or virtual, was highlighted as crucial for formalizing the community of practice and ensuring consistent communication. The idea of developing a membership directory to facilitate networking and follow-up emerged.

What was also readily apparent during the workshop is the distinct need to bring practitioners together, and the desire among those participants to learn from their peers. Several participants noted they don't have a forum like this to learn and exchange ideas, and it is important. Other participants also noted the value of the 'cross pollination' of ideas across different disciplines. Moving forward, it is clear there is enthusiastic support for continuing to expand knowledge through ongoing learning opportunities and organizing future community workshops and activities within the community of practice.

The Pro-Action Café also provided a forum for open discussion and coaching among peers. While some participants noted they initially felt uncomfortable posing a challenge to be coached on, they then noted the outcomes were extremely valuable and they saw the relevance of the approach to guiding their future work.

The top ten next steps that emerged from the 25/10 exercise also provide clarity on steps that could be taken by the community of practice to ensure the momentum continues. These included:

1. Create a centralized hub and directory for resources
2. Create a contact list and directory of practitioners
3. Host regular meetings with guest speakers
4. Follow-up with virtual/in-person monthly/bimonthly meetings
5. Identify ways to access subject specific coaching
6. Organize small subgroups
7. Advocate for policy specific to restoration
8. Create organization streams
9. Develop an organized community of practice society
10. Formalize the planning committee and confirm who leads



During the closing circle that concluded the workshop, several key themes emerged. Participants emphasized the importance of building connections and fostering a sense of community, while also recognizing the challenges of navigating conflicting values and the need for open dialogue. There was a strong sense of gratitude, passion and commitment to restoration, as well as a recognition of the critical role of funding and the involvement of Indigenous communities in these efforts. Participants highlighted the importance of continued collaboration and knowledge sharing beyond the workshop and concluded with a strong commitment to further developing and sustaining this restoration community of practice. In short, there was energy and a strong desire to see the Community of Practice grow and evolve into the future.

Following the workshop, a survey was sent out to all participants to collect feedback on the event. The results of this survey are summarized in APPENDIX 2: Post-Workshop Survey Feedback.



APPENDIX 1: Workshop Agenda

DAY 1 AGENDA: BUILDING OUR COLLECTIVE KNOWLEDGE

Time	Agenda Item
8:00	Registration
8:30	Welcome and Opening Remarks
9:00	Growing a Community of Practice for Restoration in B.C. – Why us and why now?
9:30	<p>Thinking strategically about restoration: clarifying the ‘why’ behind restoration and planning where to do it</p> <p>Confirmed speakers: Neil Fletcher, B.C. <i>Wildlife Federation</i> Naomi Owens-Beek, <i>Saulteau First Nations</i> Teena Demeulemeester, <i>Saulteau First Nations</i></p> <p><i>Presentations from practitioners followed by group activity</i></p>
10:45	Coffee Break
11:00	<p>Project concept development – getting the right people and the right partners together</p> <p>Confirmed speakers: Jim D’Andrea, <i>Cheslatta Nation Operators</i> Frank Doyle, <i>Wildlife Dynamics</i> Wayne Salewski, <i>Nechako Environment and Water Stewardship Society</i></p> <p><i>Presentations from practitioners followed by group activity</i></p>
12:30	Lunch Provided
1:30	<p>Building a strong restoration plan – connecting actions to desired outcomes</p> <p>Confirmed speakers: Jeff Morgan, <i>Pacific Salmon Foundation</i> Lars Reese-Hansen, <i>Government of B.C.</i></p> <p><i>Presentations from practitioners followed by Q+A</i></p>
2:45	Coffee / Tea / Snacks
3:15	<p>Perspectives from funders – what makes a great project?</p> <p>Panel discussion with representatives from the Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program, Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, Society for Ecosystem Restoration Northern BC.</p>
4:15 – 4:30	Group Discussion and Observations on the Day’s Work
4:30	ADJOURN



DAY 2 AGENDA: LEARNING FROM OUR PEERS

Time	Agenda Item
8:00	Networking
8:30	Reflections on Day 1 and our goals for today
8:45	<p>Refining our work through learning from others – Table conversations on key topics of importance to practitioners</p> <p>Proposed example topics could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity/Workforce • Getting approvals • Overcoming barriers • Making monitoring manageable and effective • Operational Success – Key tips, tricks, and tools • Access to funds (and long-term support) • Other topics TBD
10:00	Coffee Break and Review of Discussion Questions
10:30	Tools for building a community of practice – The Pro Action Café technique: How it can help and why it’s so powerful
10:50	<p>Open call and discussion/coaching topics within the community of practice</p> <p>Opportunities for individuals to pose a question/challenge/project to the community and receive coaching and mentorship using the Pro Action Café tool</p>
12:00	Lunch Provided
1:00	<i>Continued:</i> Group discussion and coaching via Pro Action Café tool
2:00	Coffee Break
2:30	<p>Carrying the momentum forward – Designing communities of practice to take the sharing out of the room</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants will identify what needs to be done to support practitioners and how the COPs can support these needs. • Participants will determine how they wish to keep the community and energy moving forward and will learn of funding opportunities to support this work. • Participants will leave with clear commitments and opportunities to join communities of practice to advance restoration in Northern B.C.
4:00	Group Discussion and Closing Observations
4:30	ADJOURN



APPENDIX 2: Post-Workshop Survey Feedback

Post-event, a short survey was sent to participants to gauge their experience of the event, and whether the workshop obtained the goals it was designed to achieve. 37 responses were collected from the survey with the key takeaways being:

- 100% of respondents indicated they were interested in remaining a part of a restoration community of practice.
- The average rating of quality for the presentation and breakout discussions is 4.2 and 4.5, respectively, on a scale from 1-5.
- On average, participants rated their learnings from the presentations as 3.7, and their learnings from the breakout discussions as 4.3, on a scale of 1-5.
- The overall rating for the workshop was 4.6 out of 5.
- Most attendees made between 6-15 new connections at the event (see figure below).

How many new connections would you say you made at this event?
37 responses

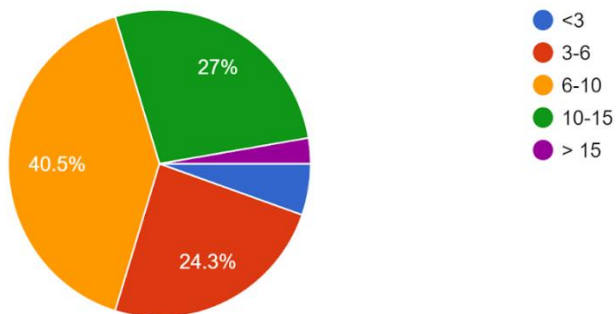


Figure 6. Number of new connections made by workshop attendees.

In addition to the quantitative measures collected above, participants were also asked two open ended questions to provide qualitative feedback and make suggestions to further the community of practice. Key highlights are included below.

Q: How can funders better help you achieve your goals?

- Many responses indicated the value they saw in creating a community of practice and attending workshops/ events to network and learn from each other.
 - “Keep providing funding for free workshops and new events.”
 - “Share resources and host annual events like this one to keep people connected.”
 - “Open communication hub to provide ability to communicate within COP and share info, as discussed.”



- Many answers touched on the need for continued funding, to streamline approaches to it, and other suggestions for where it should be prioritized.
 - “There is a need for funding that doesn’t necessarily fit the mandate of the funders present. Finding ways to share that information with [the] government is important.”
 - “Multi-year funding with flexible fiscal carry over options because restoration is environmental condition dependent and sometimes the conditions are not right to implement a project with maximal success.”
 - “More clarity surrounding the funding of projects with single-species objectives vs holistic projects. With increased communication surrounding the evaluation post-restoration surrounding holistic projects.”