

Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Northern Restoration Community of Practice (CoP)

1. Introduction

This document outlines the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the **Northern Restoration Community of Practice**, hereafter referred to as "the CoP."

Vision: A supported community of people interested in the effective delivery of ecosystem restoration actions.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the CoP is to build restoration practitioner efficacy and capacity through improved knowledge sharing, communication, and collaboration. A practitioner is anyone interested in the delivery of a restoration project and may include professionals, academics, authorities, First Nations, stakeholders, funders, partners, governmental and non-governmental groups.

3. Objectives

The CoP aims to facilitate:

- **Knowledge Exchange:** Share best practices, lessons learned, and innovative restoration approaches.
- **Capacity Building:** Enhance the technical skills and knowledge of members through training, workshops, and peer learning. There will also be information shared on potential funding opportunities. We will emphasize overcoming barriers, including especially for Indigenous communities, organizations, and individuals.
- **Collaboration and Partnerships:** Foster cross-sectoral collaboration among governments, NGOs, academia, the private sector and any other restoration focused groups.
- **Informing Policy:** Support evidence-based policy making by providing technical and practical insights and recommendations.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Promote the use of standardized metrics to measure and report on restoration impact.
- **Awareness and Engagement:** Raise public awareness and engage the broader communities in restoration efforts. We will create and curate publicly-accessible

communication on restoration and support education and outreach initiatives as possible.

4. Scope

The CoP will focus on the following areas of **ecosystem restoration**¹:

- **Indigenous-led Stewardship:** Including, but not limited to, Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), Indigenous Fire Systems (IFS), culturally-valued components, food sovereignty, and traditional place-based relationships.
- **Terrestrial ecosystems:** Forests, grasslands, tundra, and riparian areas.
- **Aquatic ecosystems:** Wetlands, rivers, lakes, and foreshore areas.
- **Biodiversity conservation:** Restoration of native species and habitats.
- **Climate resilience:** Nature-based solutions for climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- **Sustainable land management:** Promoting ecosystem-based management and similar holistic models, e.g., CARE (Comprehensive Accounting in Respect of Ecology).

Geographic Scope:

The Northern CoP will operate generally in areas of Northern BC, within the Skeena, Omineca, and Northeast Regions, focusing on areas where ecosystem restoration efforts are most needed or currently active. A wider focus will be engaged when appropriate, e.g., cross-boundary protected areas, hydrology, migration, and collaboration.

5. Delivery Structure

5.1 Organizing Team

The *Organizing Team* is comprised of restoration funders and leaders. Their role is to support the creation and ongoing functions of regional teams or subject matter teams. This ToR guides the *Organizing Team*.

¹ Provisional working definition: “Ecosystem restoration is the process of halting and reversing degradation, resulting in improved ecosystem services and recovered biodiversity.” (UN Environment Programme 2021, Retrieved from <https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/36251/ERPNC.pdf>)

Organizing Team members will actively participate in monthly meetings and contribute to other discussions and initiatives through a portfolio system that supports working groups and activities equitably.

1. Supporting a CoP coordinator as a point of contact for the CoP regional/SME teams or leaders.
2. Supporting regional or subject matter team organizers.
3. Providing structured agendas and coaching opportunities.
4. Providing direction on communication strategies and tools to support the CoP including the concept of a web-hub, newsletters, workshops, educational materials, training, and other items as deemed necessary.
5. Sharing funding responsibilities in a manner that is acceptable to those in the team including their in-kind participation or providing funds in support of CoP common interest deliveries.
6. Setting up semi-regular meetings between the organizing team and the organizers of the regional or SME teams.

The *Organizing Team* members contribute to this process through the support of their organizational affiliations. Organizing Team membership is open to organizations and individuals willing to adhere to this ToR after an interview with an existing team member and with the consensus of existing members.

5.2 CoP Coordinator

Reporting to the Organizing Team, the CoP Coordinator:

1. Assists with the establishment of regional and subject matter expert groups by identifying the people involved, providing connection and facilitation and standing agenda items for regular and meaningful discussion aimed at solving issues;
2. Provides connection and regular updates to and for the Organizing Team;
3. Oversees development of resources designed to support the CoP, including but not limited to leading practice documents, a knowledge hub, circular communications, and opportunities for knowledge transfer and capacity building to support practitioners;
4. Implements suggestions from CoP when possible and as appropriate;
5. Monitors success of CoP initiatives and adjusts delivery as needed.

5.3 Regional or Subject Matter Team(s)

Where objectives identified in this ToR are not being fulfilled by an existing entity, Regional or Subject Matter Teams are encouraged.

The *Regional or Subject Matter team* is mainly autonomous and is comprised of an organizing individual(s) and related practitioners. Practitioners are individuals involved in the logistical aspects of restoration delivery and could include almost anyone.

The role of each team is to communicate regularly on projects, identify successes and learnings, identify gaps and seek support to address the gaps, and address other practical needs as identified by the team.

1. There may be one or more teams. The number depends on the capacity to support and the interest levels of practitioners.
2. Teams can be ad hoc in support of a specific problem-solving initiative (e.g., creating a guidebook) or standing (e.g., regional teams)
3. The organizer is supported by the organizing team, both financially (if required) and logistically.
4. The organizer builds the team to address the role of the team and ultimately the objective of the Community of Practice.
5. The Regional and Subject Matter teams support communications through the Hub.
6. Practitioner delivery issues are discussed and resolved within the team. The team may need to add expertise to resolve issues, including subject matter experts, policy experts, permitting experts, or others. The expectation is that most issues can be resolved regionally with the individuals that are present in the region; or identify pathways to build knowledge base and expertise within the region. The Organizing Team may support resolution of issues upon request.

5.4 CoP Membership

Membership is open to:

- Individuals: Practitioners, researchers, policy makers and any individuals involved in ecosystem restoration.
- Organizations: NGOs, governmental agencies, private and industry sectors, and academic institutions.
- Community Representatives: Indigenous community members and local communities actively engaged in restoration efforts.

Membership Categories

- Core Members: Actively participate in discussions, decision-making, and activities.
- Contributing Members: Share expertise, data, resources, and participate in working groups.
- Observers and Participants: Stay informed about CoP activities, attend workshops/webinars/functions, engage in web-hub or other platforms but do not participate in governance or decision-making.

All members commit to upholding an inclusive culture among practitioners that encourages willingness to share knowledge, trust one another's intentions, support mutual growth, and collaborate respectfully and professionally.

6. Activities

The Northern CoP will engage in the following activities, including but not limited to:

- **Regular Meetings**: Monthly meetings (virtual or in-person) to discuss progress, share insights, and collaborate.
- **Workshops and Webinars**: Capacity-building events on key restoration topics, practices, tools, etc.
- **Collaborative Projects**: Joint research, case studies, and pilot restoration initiatives.
- **Field Visits and Exchange Programs**: Opportunities for members to visit restoration sites and share hands-on experiences.
- **Knowledge Products**: Development of a web-hub for exchange of information and a platform for interaction including but not limited to reports, papers, toolkits, prescriptions, maps, funding opportunities, links, blogs, news, etc. on topics of northern ecosystem restoration.

7. Decision-Making Process

- Decisions will be made through **consensus** wherever possible.
 - In cases where consensus cannot be reached, a **simple majority vote** will apply.
 - The **Organizing Team** will have the final decision-making authority on strategic matters.
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8. Monitoring and Evaluation

The CoP Coordinator will monitor the CoP's impact through:

- **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):** Tracking participation, knowledge sharing, and collaboration outcomes.
- **Impact Assessment:** Evaluating the effectiveness of shared practices and restoration interventions.
- **Annual Review:** The ToR and the CoP's performance will be reviewed annually to ensure relevance and effectiveness.

Appendix 1 – Regional and SM Team Visual

