Techniques and Tools for Designing, Funding, Implementing, and Managing Large-scale, Long-term Ecosystem, Watershed, and/or Fishery Restoration Programs

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When ecosystem and natural resource restoration projects reach certain geographic sizes and/or chronological lengths, challenges can arise that are minor or non-existent at smaller/shorter scales. Some of these factors—such as restoring links among isolated ecosystems—are within the expertise and comfort zone of practitioners.

Other challenges that emerge at large/long scales are outside both the expertise and comfort zone of most ecosystem restoration practitioners, and might require the use of unfamiliar tools that were unnecessary at smaller scales. Most ecosystem restoration practitioners are not equipped—and are often not willing—to address overlapping or conflicting renewal agendas. These include—but are not limited to—heritage restoration, agricultural revitalization, infrastructure renewal. Many of these agendas affect ecosystems, or are affected by them. Some agendas, such as infrastructure renewal, can be key to technical ecosystem restoration success. Other agendas are extrinsic, but can prevent the approval or success of the ecosystem project/program if not effectively addressed.

Such constraints generally fall into two categories: 1) integrating the renewal of the natural, built, and socioeconomic environments, and 2) engaging and partnering with all the stakeholders—private landowners, citizens, businesses, government, non-profit, and academic—needed to design, fund, or implement the restoration program.

A method has been developed that addresses both of these complex challenges at the community, regional, and even (theoretically) national scales. Moreover, a software tool has been developed to make this complexity more manageable.

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