

Habitat Restoration 101

Tips for Streamkeepers

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What is “Habitat Restoration”?

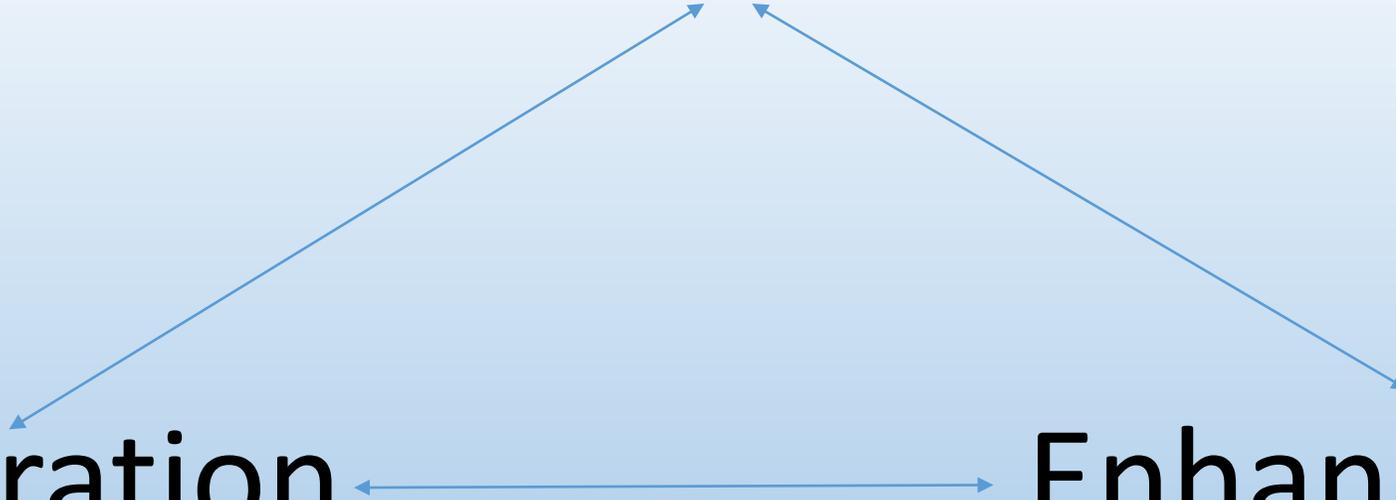
Subset of “Ecological Restoration”

The practice of renewing and **restoring** degraded, damaged, or destroyed ecosystems and habitats in the environment by active human intervention and action

Conservation

Restoration

Enhancement



Why not let nature take care of it?

- **Natural processes may take a loooooong time.**
- **Processes or materials may no longer be available**
- **Natural processes may be incompatible with human needs**
- **Invasive species**

The Delicate Balance

“What is the least amount of intervention to get the maximum effect?”

aka

“Will I give it a nudge or take a sledge hammer to it?”



The answer is determined by many factors:

1. How degraded is the system?
 2. How quickly do you want it restored?
 3. How big is the project budget?
 4. How constrained are you by competing interests?
- and most importantly....

5. Will your plan work with or against natural processes?



Joe Streamkeeper - “ This stream should have pools and there’s no gravel for spawning”

Jane Streamkeeper – “ Let’s apply for a grant and get an excavator to dig some pools and place some gravel.



Later that Year...

Joe Streamkeeper: “The pools are full of sand, let’s dig it out”

Jane Streamkeeper: “OK but lets dig even deeper this time”



The Following Winter...

- Joe Streamkeeper: “I don’t know what happened, our pools have disappeared”
- Jane Streamkeeper: “...and all the eggs in the spawning gravel washed away”



Joe and Jane fell victim to the all too common disease of acute

“Should-osis”

Imposing misplaced expectations and desires upon another – often with disastrous results.

Commonly associated with interpersonal relationships but sometimes encountered in restoration



The Cure for Should-osis

- Understand why the habitat looks like it does,
- Evaluate what processes are present and absent,
- Learn how to influence processes, and most importantly
- WORK WITH NATURE

Questions?

