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Permalink

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Journal

Electronic Green Journal, 1(26)

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Publication Date

2008

DOI

10.5070/G312610746

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Review: Restoring the Pacific Northwest: The Art and Science of Ecological Restoration in Cascadia

By Dean Apostol and Marcia Sinclair (Eds.)

Reviewed by Elery Hamilton-Smith
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Apostol, Dean and Marcia Sinclair (Eds). *Restoring the Pacific Northwest: The Art and Science of Ecological Restoration in Cascadia*. Washington, DC: Island Press, 2006. 475pp. ISBN 1-55963-078-7 pbk. US \$49.95.

This is a book in which the reader should not simply pass over the Foreword. Eric Higgs provides a profoundly poetic vision yet very practical opening discussion that sets the scene for all that follows. The many authors demonstrate a wisdom and competence that do justice to Higgs' vision. In short, it is a remarkable and very valuable book.

The opening chapters provide a concise and incisive account of the region and of the authors' perspective on ecological restoration. Next, part two has a series of nine chapters, each dealing with one of the major ecosystems of the region and providing detailed case studies of restoration projects within each. In part three, six chapters each deal with special environmental issues that are shared across ecosystem boundaries, including urbanization, waterways, large-scale landscapes and watersheds, wildlife, invasive vegetation and the traditional knowledge of indigenous people.

The result is one of the most practical texts of which I am aware. It deals in depth with restoration in a diversity of temperate climate ecosystems. The simple fact that the whole book is based upon a single relatively large geographical region means that the chapters are related to each other to an extent which rarely occurs in a volume of papers written by various authors. They bring to life the interaction of any one system with others and the integrative character of the over-arching special issues.

The presentation of the book itself makes it extremely easy to comprehend and use. The chapters are structured in a comparable way so that it is easy to turn from one ecosystem to another. There are some very valuable diagrams of ecosystem structure and of processes in restoration. The latter each convey, very effectively, concepts that would take considerable text to explain in the traditional way. It is also illustrated throughout with relevant and helpful photographs.

There is a considerable diversity of intellectual input that is not only reflected in the quality of the text but also made evident by the lists of multiple authors for each chapter. I can only commend it very strongly for both teaching and for use by land managers as practice guidelines.

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