

Ecological Restoration Institute

Strategic Plan

2020 – 2024

NAU NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

Western wildfires killed **160** people and cost more than **\$40 billion** in the past two years alone.

The consequences of unnaturally severe wildfires challenge the very well-being of rural communities, water supplies, and the recreational assets on which rural economies depend.

ERI: Expertise and Leadership in Science-Based Forest Restoration and Fire

The Ecological Restoration Institute (ERI) at Northern Arizona University (NAU) is dedicated to the restoration of fire-adapted forests and woodlands. ERI provides services that support the social and economic vitality of communities that depend on forests and the natural resources and ecosystem services they provide.

ERI is nationally and internationally recognized for expertise and leadership in science-based forest restoration and appropriate fire use, mobilizing the unique assets of the university to help solve the problem of unnaturally severe wildfire and degraded forest health throughout the American West.



ERI is a federally authorized program under the Southwest Forest Health and Wildfire Prevention Act of 2004 (PL 108-317). We deliver evidence-based information without political, ideological, or scientific bias or prejudice.

ERI's Director of Forest Operations and Biomass Utilization Han-Sup Han, shown here with an undergraduate student, working on a project to ship wood chips to a South Korean company who uses them for renewable energy.

ERI's 2020 – 2024 Strategic Plan

Over the next five years, ERI will strategically focus its efforts on areas that build from our core strengths of ecological and social science, land management agency experience, and science translation and transfer capacity to:

- develop knowledge that advances restoration at the local to landscape scale,
- apply ERI expertise across entire landscapes,
- establish a new national Forest Operations Training and Wood Utilization Center within ERI,
- support tribal practitioners and communities who manage western forest ecosystems and rangelands,
- provide all relevant audiences access to ERI information in a format that is most appropriate for their needs, and
- ensure the ongoing success and growing impact of ERI's work.

*ERI has cultivated more than **200** partnerships with representatives of federal, state, and local government agencies and other organizations in Arizona, the Southwest, and beyond.*

Our Vision:

Western forest ecosystems and communities are healthy, resilient, and sustainable.

“It is impossible to have a conversation with any US Forest Service employee about restoration without some reference to ERI's work.”
— A federal agency land manager

ERI researchers have produced more than **350** peer-reviewed papers informing **restoration** treatment design through the West.

ERI Gives Students the Tools They Need to Succeed

The Ecological Restoration Institute provides a robust program for undergraduate and graduate students to acquire diverse skills through field work, primary research, and monitoring.

Our students work alongside experienced ecologists in forests and woodlands across the Southwest, gaining first-hand knowledge of forest health issues and the best available emerging science.