

A Laboratory for Learning: Large-Scale Ecosystem Restoration and the Legacy of Secretary Babbitt

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From 1993-2001, Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt and his team worked at the cutting edge of developing some of the most unique large-scale restoration programs in the United States. The “big four” programs – the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program; the Trinity River Restoration Program; the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program; and the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Program – became a laboratory for adaptive governance structures and attempts at adaptive management. Still relevant today, the successes and failures of these programs are seen as examples to emulate or avoid, and the lessons learned speak volumes about the future of large-scale restoration programs. Senior agency personnel and managers, decision-makers, science coordinators, and restoration program stakeholders will benefit from this high-level panel discussion about the history and progress of large-scale ecosystem restoration, lessons learned about successfully implementing adaptive governance and adaptive management at large scales, and insight into the future of large-scale species recovery and ecosystem restoration programs in the United States.

Panelist Biographies:

Dr. Smith is the President of Headwaters Corporation and the Science Policy Coordinator for the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program and was recently the Refinements Coordinator for the Trinity River Restoration Program.

Mr. Farnsworth is the Executive Director of the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program.

Mr. Lee is the Implementation Branch Chief at TRRP and is employed by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. His current role focuses on stream habitat restoration projects on a dam-regulated river, with a special emphasis on increasing native runs of Pacific salmon. James has worked for the program since 2012 as the staff Riparian Ecologist (employed by the Hoopa Valley Tribe) and then Science Coordinator.

Mr. Gonzales is the Deputy District Engineer for Programs and Project Management, Programs & Project Management Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Jacksonville District.

Mr. Stewart is U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Adaptive Management Group Chief and Program Manager for the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program.

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