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Ecological Restoration for Insect Conservation within Natural Gas Fields
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Land reclamation and ecological restoration are required to mitigate land surface disturbances associated with natural gas extraction in the western United States. Traditional focus on these lands has been to stabilize soil to prevent erosion, though more recently, there has been an emphasis on restoring ecosystem services. Insects provide numerous ecosystem services and can be considered indicators of success for ecological restoration projects. It has been suggested that creating spatial and temporal mosaics of flowering plants will be necessary for pollinator conservation. This talk will examine two recent studies from the Pinedale Anticline and Jonah Infill natural gas fields in Sublette County, WY suggesting ecological restoration can play a significant role in insect conservation. Implications of this research will be highlighted and suggestions for developing wildlife friendly reclamation and restoration plans will be made. Furthermore, challenges related to seed availability as it relates to wildlife conservation and ecosystem restoration will be discussed.
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