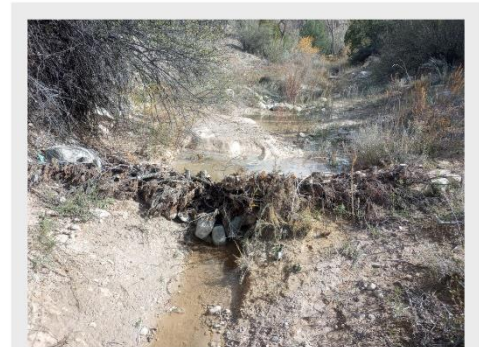


2025 Agroecology/ Ecosystem Restoration Weekend Workshop Series

Special Guest Teacher: Jan-Willem Jansens (Ecotone Landscape Planning LLC)

Description

Throughout this series of five workshops, we will collectively design a site restoration plan and construct low-tech erosion control structures using wood and on-site farm materials (Jansens, 2022a), with guidance and feedback from Jan-Willem Jansens. We will broaden our comprehension of water cycles, climate, and agroecology within this fragile environment (Jansens, 2022b; radiocafe, 2023). We will explore political structures through lenses of decentralized governance using examples from various cultural and biological systems. Altogether, through this work we will enhance our shared knowledge of how modest and precise actions taken today can affect soil health, biodiversity, cultural and social well-being, and resilience of food resources. Now and for future generations.



Example of an erosion control structure made with Pinon-Juniper materials. Wicker weir built from juniper pickets. Woven with juniper boughs, and supported with large stones. (Photo: Jan-Willem Jansens)

Where and When

Synergia Ranch, 87508 Santa Fe NM.

March 21-23
April 11 - 13
April 25-27
May 16-18
June 13-15



For whom

Everyone is welcome. Suitable for anyone who enjoys good food and outdoor activities in friendly company. Interested individuals can explore resilience in soil health, local food, cultural, and political systems. Great for networking or simply being present. Register here.

Registration and Costs

Sign up to join. (Waivers to be signed for liability purposes). Engage in the entire workshop or select sessions. Free of charge. You contribute by cooking, cleaning, and fulfilling your portion of tasks. Coming only for meals, political studies and/or social sessions? Great: contribute with food preparation and perhaps offer to bring items for a dish.

Accommodation and food

Come for (part of) the day or camp at the orchard with options for RV or van parking. Prepare for New Mexico's weather with suitable sleeping/ tenting gear. Farm-fresh and/or local ingredients for meals are provided. You participate in cooking and cleaning. You leave the land and the spaces better than you find them. Bring necessary food for specific diets or allergies. Meals are prepared and tidied up collectively, with duties shared among everyone involved. Non-alcoholic refreshments and ingredients are provided. Water, coffee and tea will be consistently available in the dining area.

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Friday			X
Saturday	X	X	X
Sunday	x	X	

Schedule

Friday:

12:45 Arrivals

1:00 – 5:00 Afternoon crew

5:00 – 6:00 Personal time/ setting up for camping

6:00 – 7:30 Cooking and Preparing dinner, lighting sauna if available

7:30 – 9:30 Social & Political studies dinner, Sauna, Clean-up

Saturday:

8:00 meet up at Common Dining room

8:00 – 8:45 Breakfast

9:00 – 12:00 Morning Crew

12:00 – 12:45 Lunch with political studies

1:00 – 5:00 Afternoon crew

5:00 – 6:00 personal time

6:00 – 7:30 Cooking and Preparing dinner, lighting sauna if available

7:30 – 9:30 Social & Political studies dinner, Sauna, Clean-up

Sunday:

8:00 – 8:30 Meditation

9:00 – 9:45: Breakfast

10:00 – 12:00 morning crew

12:00 – 12:45 Lunch with political studies

1:00 – 2:30 afternoon crew

2:30 – 3:00: tea coffee with comments and observations

3:00 departure

Two examples of erosion control structures built with local materials



A log rack (or trash rack) from local juniper posts (on right side in image) that has captured sediment and sends flows off to the "right-bank" of the channel (on left side in image) where logs create a sill that holds the grade.



Example how logs on contour, slash on slopes, and wicker weirs together help stabilize sediment and cover bare soil. (photos: Jan-Willem Jansens).



Invited teacher: Jan-Willem Jansens

The objective of this workshop series is to learn by doing. Theory blends with practice over the course of 4 months (March to June). Ranch coordinators lead crews between the sessions where Jan-Willem teaches. He first dedicates a day to planning and design (March 22nd). He subsequently intervenes three times over the course of the workshop to review, evaluate, and direct corrections for work done in his absence. (see time-table below). The nature, quantity and location of the structures to be built over the course of the workshop series are determined by the end of February 2025. Workshop crews will be defined based on decisions made Feb 21st by the workshop coordinators.

Below are the days and time-slots Jan-Willem teaches¹. This workshop series offers those with the time to benefit from up to three cycles of building structures and learning from the feedback of the teacher what could be done differently or better. This type of hands-on education program,

where the instructor is available for questions and to give direct in person feedback on one's actual work, is applicable to many conditions in New Mexico. Offered here free-of-charge, such rare learning opportunities in other settings may cost paying clients more than \$3,000 in fees to a consulting expert.

Saturday March 22nd : 9 am – 5 pm “Reading the landscape, planning and design of the application of the techniques for soil health and erosion control”. Walk in pairs, observation study, 20 minutes writing, sketches, poems, etc. - express and feel the landscape, and from there get into planning and flagging out of work to be built. Guided practice in the construction of a few demo erosion control structures.

Friday April 11th : 1:00 – 5:00 pm review of the work done March 23 (Sunday): tweaking what was built, flagging and building more structures to be replicated in subsequent workshop crews

Friday April 25th : 1:00 – 5:00 pm review of the work done April 12 and 13: tweaking what was built, flagging and building more structures to be replicated in subsequent workshop crews

Saturday June 14th : 9:00am – 5:00 pm review and corrections of the work done over the course of this workshop series. Group discussions.



Example of erosion control structures using locally available materials. Lop and scatter of juniper slash slows and spreads flows at the toe of a gully and helps stabilize sediment after peak flows are reduced by a small log rack higher up in the gully's canyon. (Photo: Jan-Willem Jansens)

¹ While it is possible to participate only during the times Jan-Willem teaches, the most effective means to integrate and learn are to practice the work without the teacher present and subsequently be present for the evaluation of that work.



Political studies

The ultimate aims of our work on the ranch are to cultivate regenerative agricultural, cultural and social living frameworks. The workshop coordinators and participants are currently compiling a selection of reading materials which can be read beforehand and during the workshop cycle. These can form the basis for discussions. There will be several organic seminar type discussions. In June, there will be a 30 min guest lecture on Ancestral knowledge of Boriken “Pyramidal structures as perceived by Spaniards vs the actual circular/horizontal structure of the Taino society”, integrating topics of ‘Synergizing community’ and ‘Synergizing of matriarchal land-based community’ courtesy of Karim Gonzalez-Torres, Archeology Student (San Juan, Puerto Rico). Other talks and activities are being organized and will be integrated in the schedule. List of authors, ideas and reading materials under construction can be accessed [here](#). (Contact starrlight@ecotechnics.edu in order to add to this list.)

Reading/Listening Materials

Jansens, J.-W. (2022a) ‘A Field Guide on Using Piñon-Juniper (PJ) Materials in Erosion Control Structures’. Ecotone Landscape Planning LLC. Available at:

https://www.ecotonelandscapeplanning.com/_files/ugd/15722f_55056ab0a20e4d46a99c25d2d53777d0.pdf

Jansens, J.-W. (2022b) ‘Piñon-Juniper (PJ) Spot Thinning Field Guide’. Ecotone Landscape Planning LLC. Available at: https://www.ecotonelandscapeplanning.com/_files/ugd/15722f_cb517b89190f4b1ab3e0e22a8020bf36.pdf

Radiocafe (2023) *From mountaintops to farm fields: Landscape scale restoration, Radio Cafe*. Available at: <https://radiocafe.media/downtearth-jansens/> (Accessed: 27 November 2024).

Acknowledgments

The teachings in the workshop are sponsored by an anonymous donation to the Institute of Ecotechnics, which develops technologies in harmony with ecology since 1973. We thank Synergia Ranch (residents and enterprises) who graciously offer us their spaces. Erosion control structures are techniques which integrate many thousands of years of traditional ecological knowledge. We acknowledge the peoples and cultures past and present who collectively develop these techniques. The Institute of Ecotechnics and Synergia Ranch Organic acknowledge that we are on unceded sovereign lands of the Pueblo Nations. They and the other New Mexico Indigenous peoples have suffered oppression and death, land loss and attempted cultural erasure. We honor the ancestral stewards of this land and celebrate their past, present, and future. We deeply appreciate that we are on sacred land, close to the Cerrillos Hills where for over a millennia Pueblo nations have sourced their turquoise and other valuable minerals.

