

# Review of: "Comparison of Vegetation Community Diversity, Biomass, and Sediment Properties among Constructed and Reference Salt Marshes at Deer Island, Mississippi, U.S.A."

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The article presents a well-done study to assess the development of two restored marshes, one ca. 10 years old and the other 2 years old. The results are consistent with previous studies on salt marsh restoration, and new relevant findings are presented. The results indicate that the restored marshes are more species-rich than the reference site, which is dominated by *Juncus roemerianus*. The difference in species richness is attributed to several factors, including the fact that the restored sites have higher elevation ranges than the reference sites. Below-ground biomass differences and other parameters are consistent with previous studies.

From my perspective, the most relevant point of this study relates to the issue of what constitutes "restoration success". Clearly, if the goal was to restore *Juncus roemerianus*-dominated marshes, then the success was limited, mostly because the restored sites lacked the elevation range needed for creating habitat for this species. But because of the heterogeneity of the restored sites, they have high species richness, which can also be positive. It seems to me that "success" depends on many criteria, some derived from the restored site itself and others from ecosystem and landscape considerations. I would really appreciate the opinion of the authors about the difficulties of defining success, given that their study is a good example of its complexities.