

LETTER FROM THE EDITORIAL OFFICE

Letter from the Editorial Office

As of this writing, the National Association of Environmental Professionals (NAEP) has wrapped up another successful annual conference in sunny Honolulu, Hawaii. DePaul University is privileged to serve as the Editorial Office (EO) for *Environmental Practice (ENP)*. We enjoy a wonderful and productive relationship with the NAEP, and we admire the passion, commitment, and wise counsel of the NAEP Board, Association Manager Tim Bower, and the Publications Committee. We have a dedicated Editorial Advisory Board (EAB), whom we call upon to review manuscripts, and they are most faithful in their service. Indeed, the quality of the journal in large part reflects the quality of the in-depth and constructive manuscript reviews provided by our EAB. Unfortunately, one unpleasant aspect of our job is informing some authors that their manuscripts do not meet the bar for publication. Since we began serving as the EO in 2008, the number of rejected manuscripts has increased. We take no delight or satisfaction in this fact, but the truth is that we hold contributing authors to a high standard of quality, something that NAEP members and *ENP* readers demand and deserve.

One of the main tasks of the Editorial Office (EO) is to work with the NAEP Publications Committee to identify topics and issues that we feel are of interest to the *ENP* readership, and then present these topics to our readership in the form of thematic issues. Past thematic issues of *ENP* have been devoted to sustainability, fracking, environmental issues in China, the Great Lakes, and professional ethics. *ENP* readers suggested all of these themes to the EO! This thematic approach is vital to maintaining and sustaining the three 'ships' of the NAEP: membership, authorship, and readership. Moreover, this tactic has been quite effective in bringing in new perspectives and topics on environmental

issues to achieve greater interdisciplinarity, as well as maintaining the mission of NAEP by providing quality articles that balance the interests of both the practitioner and the scholar in the environmental professions. We have a wonderful lineup of thematic issues in 2015, including a partnership with scientists at Argonne National Laboratory on the environmental applications of unmanned aerial systems (September) and an issue devoted to transportation (December). Indeed, NAEP member Ralph Bove suggested the transportation theme to Dan Carroll by at last year's NAEP annual conference. Thanks Ralph!

We are already engaged in developing the thematic issues of *ENP* for 2016 and beyond. We are using the results of a survey administered in 2014 to *ENP* readers by Cambridge University Press. Survey recipients were asked, among other things, to list the types of topics they would like to see covered in the journal. Some commonly identified themes include the National Environmental Policy Act or NEPA (naturally!), renewable energy, endangered species, community engagement, nuclear/hazardous waste management, brownfields, and water security. We are also working with NAEP Education Committee Chair Marie Campbell and members of the Education Committee to align our thematic issues with NAEP webinars. This is a double "bang for the buck" opportunity for NAEP members and *ENP* readers who participate in the webinars. They get to interact in real time with experts on the webinar topic and then follow up with more comprehensive coverage of the topic by reading the thematic issue of *ENP*.

It takes a lot of effort to produce a thematic issue of *ENP*, and we need your assistance. Send us your ideas for interesting and relevant thematic topics. You do not need to wait for a survey to do so. If you are particularly passionate about a topic, then consider signing on as a guest editor.

For example, the December 2014 *ENP* issue was devoted to practical improvements for better implementation of NEPA. The guest editors were longtime NAEP members Ray Clark and Owen Schmidt. Thanks to Owen and Ray for their initiative in making this thematic issue a success. Dan Carroll has produced a set of guidelines for guest editors with the goal of making this process an easy one for the guest editor. Contact Dan if you are interested in serving as a guest editor.

ENP currently contains five manuscript categories:

Peer Reviewed:

Research Articles
Environmental Reviews and Case Studies

Non Peer Reviewed:

Perspectives from the Field
Reviews
Dialogue

Beginning with the March 2016 issue, the journal will add the following categories:

Counterpoint

Some of us are old geezers will remember the "Point-Counterpoint" segment of the CBS program *60 Minutes*, featuring journalists Shana Alexander and James K. Kilpatrick. When the EO receives a potentially discussion-generating manuscript, we would like to recruit authors to write a response piece. These manuscripts will be similar in length to Perspectives from the Field, in the range of 1,000–1,500 words. They will, however, need to be grounded in literature citations in a way that Perspectives from the Field is not, since the goal is to respond to cited, peer-reviewed articles. These manuscripts will not be peer reviewed. So if you wish to emulate Shana or James,

then contact Dan Carroll! Let's engage in a rousing debate on hot topic issues.

Working Group

We will give NAEP working groups an outlet to report findings in the pages of *ENP*. These manuscripts will vary in length, according to the specific projects being reported by the working group, but will run in similar length to our peer-reviewed manuscripts, roughly 5,000–6,000 words. These manuscripts will be peer reviewed.

Student Perspective

Students are the future of NAEP. As such, we will work with the NAEP student chapters to provide students with an outlet for their first publication and/or peer review. Functionally, these manuscripts will be the same as our existing peer-reviewed manuscripts, but identified as a student work. Ideally this will highlight the work of up-and-coming student practitioners, aiding them in their future careers, and also identify the NAEP as an

organization that is beneficial to student practitioners, thus creating future members.

Career Development

This manuscript category will act as a topic-focused version of our Perspectives from the Field section. The NAEP has members from a wide variety of fields, all of whom have particular insights into the future of careers in their industry. We would like to recruit these professionals to write short opinion pieces, in the range of 1,000–1,500 words, on career development, with advice to other working professionals. These manuscripts will not be peer reviewed.

If you have ideas for other categories, please let us know!

This issue of *ENP* contains an eclectic mix of research articles and perspectives from the field. First, **Johan Liebens and Carl Mohrherr** analyze the ongoing fallout of organochlorine pollutants in northwest Florida's Escambia Bay and River. **Dorceta Taylor** provides an extensive overview

of food availability in Detroit, while also devising a new approach for analyzing food availability in an urban setting. Taylor's paper takes the position that traditional food desert research focuses too much on the presence or absence of grocery stores, while ignoring other ways of acquiring foods in urban environments. **Suzanne von der Porten, Rob de Loë, and Ryan Plummer** discuss ways to involve colonized indigenous cultures in the environmental decision-making process; the paper offers many recommendations for practice related to the need for self-determination in indigenous nations. Finally, **John Dorney, LeiLani Paugh, Sandy Smith, Brad Allen, Matthew Cusack, Rick Savage, Emily Hughes, and Breda Muñoz** review the North Carolina Wetland Assessment Method and provide examples of use in the field. The issue also has a Perspective piece from **Zachary Smith** on Collaborative Management and **John Munro's** book review of "Ecofeminism and Rhetoric, Critical Perspectives on Sex, Technology, and Discourse" by Douglas Vokoch.

James Montgomery, Dan Carroll