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The mission of the Soil and Water Conservation Society is to advocate the conservation of soil, water, and related natural resources.

As a multidisciplinary organization, SWCS synthesizes the results of research, experience, and custom in developing a knowledge base that is communicated worldwide. Through education and example, SWCS promotes a stewardship ethic that recognizes the interdependence of people and natural resources.

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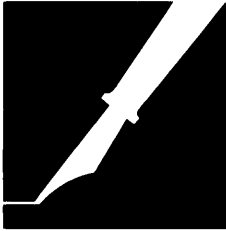
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## PEN POINTS

### Keep tooting that horn

Just a note from one of the Society's "ole time" members to compliment all those involved in producing the May-June 1991 issue of the *JSWC*. When we are accustomed to "excellence" from our Society staff, we get complacent and just don't take time to send notes when "good things" happen. This issue, including the "SWCS View" by Tony Vrana about "tooting our horn," brings this note.

The *JSWC* arrived today and before putting it aside to "finish reading it at a later date," I read it from cover to cover. For me, that's a record. I hope all members felt the same way after reading this issue. It was top-notch, with a good mix of interesting articles.

My question is: How do we get more conservationists—from the farmer to the

professor—introduced to reading the *JSWC*? In all my years with SCS [Soil Conservation Service] and now on detail to the Extension Service, I've never been aware of co-workers lacking for reading material—at least I have never lacked for "something to read." Yet, in less than an hour, one can usually read the *JSWC* and find something of interest to challenge the mind and to improve oneself as a "professional."

I also wish to offer a note of encouragement about the "flap" that occurred earlier this summer over the release of SWCS's interim report on its evaluation of implementation of the Conservation Title of the Food Security Act of 1985. I was disappointed in the letter writing that was taking place between persons on the project's steering committee. I attended the

breakfast meeting representing the Extension Service when SWCS staff members met with the Project Steering Committee. We discussed the findings and I found it difficult to understand why the letter writing ensued. In fact, during the meeting, we [committee members] agreed that some corrective actions were needed for improving administration of the Food Security Act, and we discussed some of those actions.

I know the letter writing has upset a number of Society members. However, here on the banks of the Potomac River, the coverage about the study in *The Washington Post* on the very morning of an SCS budget hearing was, in my opinion, timely and most positive for all concerned. That is the type of news about the Society that *all* of our members need to know and understand.

Again, my compliments. Keep "tooting the horn!"

Gerald R. Calhoun  
Bowie, Maryland

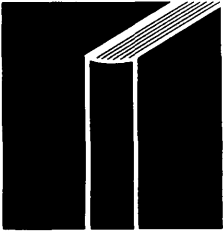
### No fairy ring

In the January-February issue of *JSWC* [volume 46, number 1, page 3], I postulated that aborigines formed a ring on a nearby mountain by soil compaction. In the July-August issue, J. F. Dormar, Leathbridge, Alberta, postulates this could be a "fairy ring." I am convinced this is not a fungal phenomenon because the ring is static, no fruiting bodies have been observed, and a mycologist found no mycelium of *Marasmius oreades* in the soil.

William S. Brenneman  
Jelm, Wyoming

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*"Pen Points" is a forum for comment on published material or land and water management issues in general. Readers are invited to express their views in a letter to the editor. Letters are judged on their clarity and pertinence. Long letters may be shortened.—Editor.*



## BOOKS, ETC.

### ***When Aid is No Help: How Projects Fail, and How They Could Succeed.***

By John Madeley with contributions from other authors. 132 pp., 1991. I.T. Publications, London, Eng. \$8.95.

This is a hard-hitting, critical analysis of development projects in the third world, with the theme that, after giving credit to a number of successful projects and well-meaning agencies, the final result is that aid is not having the impact that it should on the poorest of the poor in developing countries.

The first part of the book looks at the problems of poverty, malnutrition, and ill health and offers a critical analysis of a number of the multinational aid agencies, particularly World Bank, IFAD, ILO, and UNIFEM. The second part takes a very critical look at projects classed as failures in Mali, India, Bangladesh, Nepal, and the Philippines. In part three, the other side of the coin is presented, with a small selection of successful projects. Part four is a list of 12 guidelines that will help projects to reach the poorest of the poor.

The author argues his case well and accurately records the failures and the successes; his guidelines for improvement are all sound. The weakness is the assumption that all aid and development projects should be directed particularly toward the poorest people, which overlooks the right of aid agencies to set their own objectives and then target their resources towards these objectives. There are other legitimate and laudable objectives of development assistance that need to be put into the equation as well as the target of improving the lot of the rural poor.

—N. W. HUDSON, *International Centre for Soil Conservation Information, Bedford, United Kingdom.*

### ***Out of the Earth—Civilization and the Life of the Soil.*** By Daniel Hillel.

321 pp., notes, refs., index, 1991. The Free Press, New York, N.Y. \$22.50.

In the prologue describing his background and motivation for writing the book, the author states that his aim is "to explain rather than to advocate...to strike a balance between the lamenting or castigating tone now

fashionable with some environmentalists, and the complacent view of those inveterate optimists who trust blindly that our problems will somehow be solved by a scientific or technological *deus ex machina*...to explore the lessons of our past and present relation to the earth from whence we came, and to which we must return—in spirit as well as in body." He is extremely successful in fulfilling this intention by producing a well-documented and thought-provoking manuscript that is interesting and enlightening to read.

The author's extensive experience in more than 20 countries and his global perspective enable him to analyze past and present worldwide problems with keen insight. After tracing the advances and declines of human civilization in relation to soil and water management (or mismanagement), the author addresses current environmental problems. Individual chapters are devoted to issues such as erosion; deforestation; desertification; mismanaged irrigation and drainage; shrinking wetlands; depletion of water supplies; deterioration of water quality; and careless waste management.

The book is distinctive from other historical accounts of global natural resource degradation in its emphasis on the spiritual dimension of mankind's linkage with the earth. There are strong theological undertones that reflect the author's appreciation and understanding of the Judeo-Christian heritage as well as that of other religions and cultures. The author anticipates the question that some readers may ask: Why should a book devoted to the science of the environment digress into matters of religion? He responds that "...precepts of faith underlie human individual and collective actions in the environmental as well as in other arenas. Moreover, science and religion (at least, monotheistic religion) share a fundamental tenet, namely the essential unity and interconnectedness of the universe."

In addition to its merit based on its own contents, the book is a valuable resource for those who desire further study of any of the various topics discussed in it. Informative author's notes on each chapter are compiled at

the back of the book. A 'selected' bibliography lists more than 175 references, most of which have been published within the last decade.

*Out of the Earth* should appeal to a broad range of reader interests. The author's masterful blending of the historical, theological, social, cultural, and technical contexts of soil and water management should make the book popular with teachers and students in many disciplines. Policymakers would benefit from reading the book by studying past successes and failures and applying the experience to current and future decision-making. The accurate assessment of past and present global natural resource degradation provides many opportunities for contemporary studies and applications. For example, the author's discussion of water management in Israel illustrates how a nation confronted with water scarcity developed ways to improve efficiency of water use. He pleads for more effective cooperation among disciplines and institutions and better communication across arbitrary professional boundaries to resolve critical international development problems.

The book presents an authentic call to earth stewardship. In the final chapter, "A Case for Conditional Optimism," Hillel states his conviction that human resources are available and adequate to meet the basic needs of all humanity. There must be the personal and societal commitment to accompany the science and technology that are known to be applicable. He challenges the reader to live and act responsibly *with* the earth in order to survive—and progress.

The book will increase immensely our understanding of the human dilemma in today's society. I recommend it highly.—MAURICE COOK, *College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, North Carolina State University, Raleigh.*

### **General**

*Steady State Economics.* (second edition with new essays). By Herman Daly. 1991. Island Press, Washington, D.C. 20009. Paperback, \$19.95. Hardcover, \$34.95.

*Nature Conservation: Cost Effective Biological Surveys and Data Analysis.* Edited by C. R. Margules

and M. P. Austin. 207 pp., illus., tpls, index, apps., refs., 1991. CSIRO, Lyneham, ACT 2602, Australia. \$50.00.

*Drowning the National Heritage: Climate Change and U.S. Coastal Biodiversity.* By Walter V. Reid and Mark C. Trexler. 49 pp., tpls., illus., refs., 1991. World Resources Institute, Washington, D.C. 20006.

*Natural Science Centers Discovery.* 1,262 entries, illus., app., 1991. Natural Science for Youth Foundation, National Headquarters, Roswell, Georgia 30075-9850. \$45.00 plus \$3.50 packaging and shipping.

*The Rising Tide: Global Warming and World Sea Levels.* By Lynne T. Edgerton. 140 p., apps., notes, bibliog., index, 1991. Island Press, Washington, D.C. 20009. Paperback, \$17.95. Hardcover, \$29.95.

### **Agriculture**

*Towards Sustainable Agricultural Development.* Edited by Michael D. Young. 400 pp., index, 1991. CSIRO, Lyneham, ACT 2602, Australia.

*Planning for Agroforestry.* Edited by W. W. Budd, I. Duchhart, L. H. Hardesty, F. Steiner. 348 pp., refs., index, 1990. Elsevier Science Publishers, New York, N.Y. 10159. \$89.95.

### **Education**

*Environmental Education Resources Directory-1990.* 24 pp., 1990. EPA 910/9-90-014. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Seattle, Wash. 98101.

### **Fish and Wildlife**

*Wildlife and Habitats in Managed Landscapes.* By Jon Rodiek. Island Press, Washington, D.C. 20009. Cloth, \$45.00; paper, \$24.94.

*Balancing on the Brink of Extinction: The Endangered Species Act and Lessons for the Future.* Edited by Kathryn A. Kohm. 319 pp., refs., tpls., index, 1991. Island Press, Washington, D.C. 20009. Cloth, \$34.95, paper \$22.95.

*Better Trout Habitat: A Guide to Stream Restoration and Management.* By Christopher J. Hunter. 1991. Island Press, Washington, D.C. 20009. Paper, \$24.95. Hardcover, \$39.95.

### **Forests**

*Contractual Modification Requirements of the Tongass Timber Reform Act.* 29 pp., tpls., glossary. 1991. U.S. General Accounting Office, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877. First five copies free; additional are \$2.00 each.

*Forestry and Mississippi's Forest Resources: Their Economic*

*Importance.* By Mark R. Dubois, Thomas J. Straka, and Larry Doolittle. 41 pp., refs., gloss., illus., tpls., app., 1991. Department of Information Services, Division of Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine, Mississippi State University, Mississippi State.

*The Flathead National Forest Cannot Meet Its Timber Goals.* 25 pp., illus., apps., map, 1991. U.S. General Accounting Office, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877. First five copies free; additional are \$2.00 each.

*Better Reporting Needed on Reforestation and Timber Stand Improvement.* 16 pp., tpls., apps., map, 1991. U.S. General Accounting Office, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877. First five copies free; additional are \$2.00.

*A Forest Journey: The Role of Wood in the Development of Civilization.* By John Perlin. 445 pp., illus., refs., index, 1991. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts. \$14.95.

### **Grasslands**

*Prairie Plants and Their Environment.* By J. E. Weaver. 276 pp., illus., tpls., bibliog., index. 1991. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln 68588-0520. \$12.50.

### **Land Use**

*Growth Management in Countryfied Cities. Volume III, Six Perspectives on a Decade of Change.* By J. C. Dougherty. Bibliog., app., 1991. Vert Milon Press, Alexandria, Virginia 22313. \$110.00 plus \$2.00 shipping.

*The Urban General Plan.* By T. J. Kent. 1964 (reprint 1990). American Planning Association, Washington, D.C. 20036. Paperback, \$24.95. Hardcover, \$31.95.

*Neighborhood Planning: A Guide for Citizens and Planners.* By Bernie Jones. 138 pp., 1990. American Planning Association, Washington, D.C. 20036. Paperback, \$14.95. Hardcover, \$28.95.

*Planning America's Communities: Paradise Found? Paradise Lost?* By Herbert H. Smith. 262 pp., 1991. American Planning Association, Washington, D.C. 20036. Paperback, \$24.95. Hardcover, \$35.00.

*Planning Small Town America.* By Kristina Ford, James Lopach, and Dennis O'Donnell. 179 pp., 1991. American Planning Association, Washington, D.C. 20036. Paperback, \$29.95. Hardcover, \$45.95.

*Everyone Wins! A Citizen's Guide to Development.* By Richard D. Klein. 142 pp., 1990. American Planning Association, Washington, D.C. 20036. Paper, \$12.95. Hardcover, \$24.95.