First, you may have noticed that the Journal has a new editor. Sue Ballantine comes to us with a solid journalistic background in agricultural extension and natural resources programs. Some of you may recognize her as the former managing editor of the American Journal of Agricultural Economics and CHOICES.

Your new editor, working with myself and the Editorial Board, will introduce a number of changes in the Journal to streamline it and make it more accessible to our diverse membership and readership. The first change you’ll see is on this page. In future issues, often organized around a common theme, a guest editor will provide summaries, analyze common points and challenge readers to examine both the pros and cons of the feature articles. This will be followed up by research articles that will provide a more detailed examination of these same topics.

We also plan to give each research article an abstract in terms a lay person can understand as well as the traditional academic format. We want to emphasize to you, the reader, that research in the Journal is relevant to more than the academic. It can serve as the foundation of policy development and program implementation processes. Understanding the latest research can make your profession more meaningful and understandable. Our job is to help you understand.

Researchers will be pleased to note that we are committed to shortening the turnaround time between submission and publication. Future articles will be labeled with dates indicating when it was received and when the acceptance decision was made. Moreover, a number of new associate editors will join Warren Busscher to help insure each submission receives a rigorous review. Warren is meeting a difficult challenge in succeeding James Power as Research Editor, and has earned this needed assistance.

Other changes will include an expanded book review section, mailing the Journal in the U.S. without the polythene wrapper, and aiml service to our overseas members. We will also experiment with a short summary of salient topics found in other publications. This section of annotations will include a full reference allowing you to seek out other materials if interested. Your success as a conservationist, researcher, or policy maker depends on people skills as well as technical knowledge. We will be expanding the "Professional Development" column to meet this need.

As you can see, we are committed to continuing the award-winning tradition of the JSWC. Yet we really can’t meet your needs unless you assume ownership for your Journal. This means we need to hear from you. Why aren’t the many issues I hear discussed in conference corridors and at the edge of farm fields being discussed openly in the “Commentary” section of the Journal? Write us a letter telling about your hopes, frustrations, and insights on the resource management issues you deal with on a daily basis. Have you read a good book, article or used an innovative piece of software lately? Then write us a note or give us a call. Is there a topic in a recent issue of the JSWC that needs further analysis or where you possess unique insights? Why not share these perspectives with your fellow members of the SWCS?

In conclusion, we are trying to make the JSWC better. Yet “better” is a relative term. I don’t want this relation defined by comparing future issues to past issues. That will not be very productive. What I want to do is to improve the Journal relative to its ability to meet your needs. I know many of you don’t have much time, and reading all or even part of the Journal presents a conflict for your time. I also know that some recipients “collect” rather than read the Journal. Yet I’m asking you to take the time and work with us to create a situation where you look forward to the next issue of the JSWC because there is something meaningful to you in each and every issue. At that point, where you look forward to reading some or all of the Journal, it will have gotten better.

—Peter Nowak
Chair, Editorial Board
FEATURES

312 Cleaning up urban stormwater: The storm drain stenciling approach
John Cobourn

317 The dirt in the hole: A review of sedimentation basin for urban areas and construction sites
L.A.J. Fennessey and A.R. Jarrett

324 Consideration of the environment: An approach for rural planning and development
Wayne J. Caldwell

333 Public education for growth management: Lessons from Wisconsin's Farmland Preservation Program
Sara E. Johnson and Harvey M. Jacobs

RESEARCH

367 Changes in land quality accompanying urbanization in U.S. fast-growth counties
Ralph E. Heimlich and Kenneth S. Krupa

375 NLEAP simulation of residual soil nitrate for irrigated and nonirrigated corn

382 Effect of forest cover on the stream flow from small watersheds
S.C. Kostadinov and S.S. Mitrovic

387 An agronomic evaluation of conservation-tillage systems and continuous cropping in East Central Saskatchewan
G.P. Lafond, D.A. Derksen, H.A. Loeppky, and D. Struthers

394 Impacts of alternative tillage methods for continuous wheat on grain yield and economies: Implications for conservation compliance
Francis M. Eppin, Ghazi A. Al-Sakleen, and Thomas F. Peyper

400 Software utilizing Imhoff cone volumes to estimate furrow-irrigation erosion
R.E. Sojka, R.D. Lenz, and J.A. Foerster

407 The effect of CRP enrollment on sediment loads in two southern Illinois streams
D. Kevin Davie and Christopher L. Lant

DEPARTMENTS

Cover
Truckee River outside Reno, Nevada.
Photo by John Cobourn

308 Editorial
310 SWCS View
348 Product News
356 Books
362 Upcoming
339 Commentary
343 Professional Development
Integrating Sustainable Agriculture, Ecology, and Environmental Policy.

Integrating Sustainable Agriculture, Ecology, and Environmental Policy is the product of a 1991 conference sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Institute for Alternative Agriculture. The book offers 11 viewpoints from a varied group of thinkers in the fields of ecology, agricultural economics, rural sociology, and policy analysis. While much of the language is too academic to appeal to the general reader, the collection includes much valuable food for thought on how ecological knowledge can be used to design a sustainable and environmentally sound agriculture.

The first section by Editor Richard K. Olson reviews the conference and sets the stage for the papers. He concludes that while ecology has much to offer in developing sustainable agriculture, its promise has gone largely untapped. His reasons include that successfully applying ecology to agriculture requires uniquely multidisciplinary efforts and attention to socioeconomic contexts that ecologists may not feel comfortable with.

Not surprisingly, recurring themes in this volume include the need for stronger emphases within the discipline of ecology on applied science and new institutional arrangements to accommodate multidisciplinary approaches. The need for information, and different ways to structure information gathering—for example, by using nutrient cycling or landscape ecology approaches—are also strong themes here.

Clayton W. Ogg makes a good case that policy innovations in the field of sustainable agriculture can be accelerated by strategic use of information to help policy makers anticipate the major consequences of their decisions. As if in response, two sections, one on definition and measurement by Deborah Neher and the other on current EPA programs and research activities by Gail M. Robarge and Jay Beneford, discuss the Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program (EMAP) now underway to monitor and evaluate the long-term status and trends of the nation's agricultural resources from an ecological perspective.

Cornelia Butler Flora offers a well-developed argument for a "transdisciplinary" team approach to research and extension and discusses the benefits and barriers to involving farmer members on such teams. Acknowledging that farming systems research and extension (FSR/E) has traditionally included multidisciplinary elements, she nevertheless concludes that the composition and process of FSR/E must be altered to better account for the multiple dimensions of sustainable agriculture, including the ultimate welfare of the users, which include farmers, farm workers, and consumers.

A primary question that this book seeks to answer is, "can ecology aid in developing sustainable agriculture?" The authors argue that the answer is affirmative. In various ways, they reflect the words of George W. Bird, who, at the end of his section on the Sustainable Research and Education Program, maintains that the language and science of ecology has much to offer as a framework for thinking about sustainable agriculture. Using the fundamental concepts of ecosystems, such as food chains, food webs, carrying capacity, and behavior of energy, he says, "would go a long way towards increasing the probability of achieving the goals of sustainable agriculture."—Ann Robinson, Decorah, Iowa, works with agricultural policy issues for the Izaak Walton League of America.

General


Agriculture


Ecology


Economics
