



# Society & Natural Resources

## An International Journal

ISSN: 0894-1920 (Print) 1521-0723 (Online) Journal homepage: <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/usnr20>

## Introduction from the New Editors-in-Chief (2017–2020)

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To cite this article: Tasos Hovardas & Linda Stalker Prokopy (2018) Introduction from the New Editors-in-Chief (2017–2020), *Society & Natural Resources*, 31:1, 1-3, DOI: [10.1080/08941920.2017.1389677](https://doi.org/10.1080/08941920.2017.1389677)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/08941920.2017.1389677>



Published online: 03 Jan 2018.



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## Introduction from the New Editors-in-Chief (2017–2020)

Starting with this issue, we are taking over the role of Editors-in-Chief of *Society & Natural Resources* with Jessica Hill as an Assistant Editor. It will be our privilege and challenge to serve the journal in the next 3-year period, after the inspiring leadership of David A. Sonnenfeld and Peter Leigh Taylor, outgoing Editors-in-Chief. We will build on their work in coordinating the Editorial Board and editorial operations as well as on their initiatives in Supplemental Online Materials, publication ethics, social media engagement, and Best Article Award. We wish to express our gratitude and appreciation to Stacia Ryder, outgoing Assistant Editor, for all her valuable contribution to the journal. We are grateful to David, Pete, and Stacia for their assistance during the editorial transition.

We have assumed the editorship of *Society & Natural Resources* in an era of major controversies across a wide array of environmental issues. Many topics that explicitly relate to the aims and scope of the journal are salient in academic considerations, intergroup relations among involved social actors, and environmental policy agendas. The study of these developments will demarcate the niche of the journal in the coming years, and we have revised the Aims and Scope of the journal accordingly. The new Aims and Scope are as follows:

*Society & Natural Resources* publishes cutting edge social science research that advances understanding of the interaction between society and natural resources. Social science research is extensive and comes from several disciplines, including sociology, psychology, political science, communications, planning, education, and anthropology. We welcome research from all of these disciplines and interdisciplinary social science research that transcends the boundaries of any single social science discipline. We define natural resources broadly to include water, air, wildlife, fisheries, forests, natural lands, urban ecosystems, and intensively managed lands. While we welcome all papers that fit within this broad scope, we especially welcome papers in the following four important and broad areas in the field:

1. Protected area management and governance.
2. Stakeholder analysis, consultation, and engagement; deliberation processes; governance; conflict resolution; social learning; social impact assessment.
3. Theoretical frameworks, epistemological issues, and methodological perspectives.
4. Multiscalar character of social implications of natural resource management.

All these topics are expected to strengthen the interdisciplinary character of research published by *Society & Natural Resources* and help distinguish our journal from the increasingly cluttered landscape of journals. To help facilitate substantive contributions on these important topics, we have increased the length of general research articles from 7500 to 8500 words and the length of comments/rejoinders and research notes to 3000 words.

With regard to editorial operations, we are committed to reducing average review times for papers submitted to the journal. To that end, we are increasing the overall numbers of Associate Editors and creating a new group of scholars in the Editorial Board of the journal. We would like to have the workload for Associate Editors be confined to processing no more than 10 manuscripts annually. We have invited several new Associate Editors, coming from various geographical locations and backgrounds, who will join forces with in-service Associate Editors. At the time of writing this editorial, we do not have the final list but will publish it on the Taylor & Francis website as soon as possible. Associate Editors will be encouraged to act as Ambassadors for *Society & Natural Resources*. This may take the form of various initiatives to promote the journal at universities, international workshops, and conferences. We are grateful to outgoing Associate Editors Jill M. Belsky, Melinda Benson, Steven Brechin, Courtney Flint, Tara McGee, Robert Richardson, and Travis Warziniack. We would like to take this opportunity and thank them for their priceless input in their years of service.

We have also invited a group of distinguished scholars as Editorial Board Members, who will act as frequent reviewers. Editorial Board Members will serve for a three-year period, and they will add international outreach as well as robustness and coherence in manuscript review and editorial operations. We anticipate that Editors-in-Chief, Associate Editors, and Editorial Board Members will comprise a growing community of practice with constructive peer interaction, which will support the journal in the years to come. It is our intention to recruit more new members in this community in conjunction with ISSRM each year, where we will plan workshops for advanced PhD students and postdoctoral scholars to learn how to act as reviewers for *Society & Natural Resources*.

We have prepared a best practice guide to support new Associate Editors in their assignments. To speed up and homogenize the review process, we have developed decision trees for Associate Editors, Editorial Board Members, and Reviewers of *Society & Natural Resources*. In our first few communications with Taylor & Francis, we have discussed changes and updates in ScholarOne so that it can accommodate the decision trees we have introduced. In addition, we are discussing a closer relation of *Society & Natural Resources* with Publons.com so that the contribution of reviewers will be readily recognized.

Moreover, we will take further action in three directions. First, in terms of book reviews, book review co-editors Kerry Ard and Kishi Animashaun Ducre provide their valuable services in securing outstanding reviews of key publications. Here, we wish to add an option for soliciting reviews for two different books on a subject. This would provide the opportunity of an “interactionist” book review, highlighting convergences and divergences between different approaches or methodological perspectives and allowing for a critical dialogue between them. Second, a communication strategy for *Society & Natural Resources* will be developed in coordination with IASNR. In this direction, we would like to acknowledge the effort put by Jessica Hill and Stacia Ryder, incoming and outgoing Assistant Editors. Third, we have already published a call for a special issue on innovative research methods to be guest-edited by Kristin Floress and Sonya Sachdeva and we have also announced an open call for additional special issues. We would like to increase the number of special issues in the journal targeting innovative topics and paying particular attention to ISSRM sessions and other annual conferences.

We are committed to put all our efforts to serve and support the community of practice around the journal and to promote the reputation and positioning of *Society & Natural Resources* as a leading, international journal of environmental social science. In doing so, we will always need and appreciate the comments and remarks of all contributors and readers.

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