

# Rising to the Challenge

## Annual Report 2009



# From the Executive Director

*ESA remains financially sound and programmatically strong.*

In spite of the difficult economic times the country is facing, ESA remains financially sound and programmatically strong. Our loyal membership stands near 10,000 and the annual meeting—this year in Albuquerque—attracted 3,599 participants with its excellent program offerings. More than 2,000 institutions worldwide subscribe to one or more of our journals, which continue to be among the most highly cited in our field. *Ecology*, which is 90 years old this year, was named by the Special Libraries Association (SLA) as one of the top 100 most influential journals in science and medicine in the past 100 years.

ESA is engaged in a range of activities that are a testament to the breadth of interests of our members. From congressional briefings on “hot” issues to an energized blog; from specialized conferences and workshops to galvanizing the community behind data sharing; from the continued evolution of our prized diversity program to helping faculty use large scale data sets; and from the ever-increasing influence of our journals, ESA continues to be a vibrant and energized society.

ESA is also looking to the future. This year, the Governing Board initiated a long range planning process that will examine the existing activities of the Society and anticipate programs and activities that may be needed in the future. We expect that many of our members will be involved in this effort and be asked to help us ensure that ESA stays relevant far into the future.

All of our accomplishments would not be possible without the excellent staff and leadership of the Society. I thank the professional staff for their hard work and dedication to the goals of ESA and the leadership and members for inspiring and guiding our efforts.

On a personal note, it is my honor to be named President of the Council of Engineering and Scientific Society Executives (CESSE) –a volunteer position I assumed in July. CESSE is an organization of over 170 scientific and engineering societies. My participation in CESSE provides me with an important network of executives from a diverse group of professional organizations and enhances ESA’s visibility in the scientific and engineering community.



Credit: ESA file photo

*Katherine S. McCarter*

# From the President

This past year has been an exciting time for the science community and for the Ecological Society of America – and I am honored to have served as ESA President this year. Despite the uncertainties the economic turmoil presents, the Society has remained strong and very active. In August, our 94th Annual Meeting in Albuquerque was well-attended as members engaged in the theme of *Ecological Knowledge and a Global Sustainable Society*. In the wake of the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen in December, it is clear that the science of ecology will play an important role as society struggles to achieve sustainable practices in the face of global change.



In November, the first ESA Millennium Conference was held in Athens, Georgia, and focused on the theme *Water – Ecosystem Services, Drought, and Environmental Justice*. The conference brought together ecological and social scientists and students to explore the development of scientifically and socially sound solutions to water allocation in times of drought. An added benefit was the production of educational materials for ESA's EcoEdNet.

This year we also witnessed a new administration in Washington, one that welcomed the involvement of ecologists and environmental scientists. This has been a year of opportunity for informing policy. Our members – who work in academia, research institutes, government agencies, and NGOs – have been actively propagating the use of sound ecological science in decision-making. These activities are consistent with principles developed in the early days of the ESA. As ecologists, we all spend a lot of our time thinking about our science, much as ESA members did at the turn of the century. But in addition, since its founding in 1915, one of ESA's core missions has been to ensure the application of ecological science to environmental challenges by engaging decision makers and influencing environmental policy.

For the past two decades, ESA has issued policy statements on topics such as biodiversity, endangered species regulation, and land management. This year was no exception. We issued statements about sustainable economic activities, the Nonnative Wildlife Invasions Prevention Act, and endorsed the proper treatment of evolution in the Texas curriculum. And we began the year by sending a letter to President Obama, outlining the environmental science issues that we hoped the administration would focus on over the next four years.

Finally, this year we embarked on a process of long range planning by examining the core mission of the Society and evaluating its current programs. In the context of economic constraints and changes in scholarly publishing, we will seek new directions and activities that will support our members as we move forward. With that in mind, we have re-affirmed our commitment to the award-winning SEEDS program, our educational program designed to diversify and advance the profession of ecology through nurturing the interests of underrepresented students in ecology. This year, ESA's Fund for the Future (formerly the Millennium Fund) will focus on the next generation of ecologists, by supporting SEEDS and the Real Brown Student Travel Fund for students to attend ESA's annual meeting. Please give as generously as you can to support the future of ecology!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Alex Flecker'.

# Rising to the Challenge

## Science Education

❖ ESA's SEEDS (Strategies for Ecology Education, Diversity and Sustainability) program awarded three new undergraduate fellowships, welcomed seven new campus chapters, and sponsored 97 students on two ecological field trips, its third leadership meeting, and the ESA annual meeting. The award-winning program also received funding to pilot a SEEDS social network to engage current students, alumni, mentors, and university partners.



SEEDS students Songling Du, Anam Mian, Jose Trujillo, Jarrett Wansley, and Brenda Gerald.



❖ Webinars and workshops over the year focused on the opportunities continental-scale data offer for teaching and learning at undergraduate institutions.

Mary Ann Vinton, Christine Laney, Patricia Medvick, and Alex Acholonu at a workshop breakout session.

## Water

❖ ESA's inaugural Millennium Conference on water-ecosystem services, drought, and environmental justice brought together ecologists and social scientists to address water and its relationship to human social constructs.

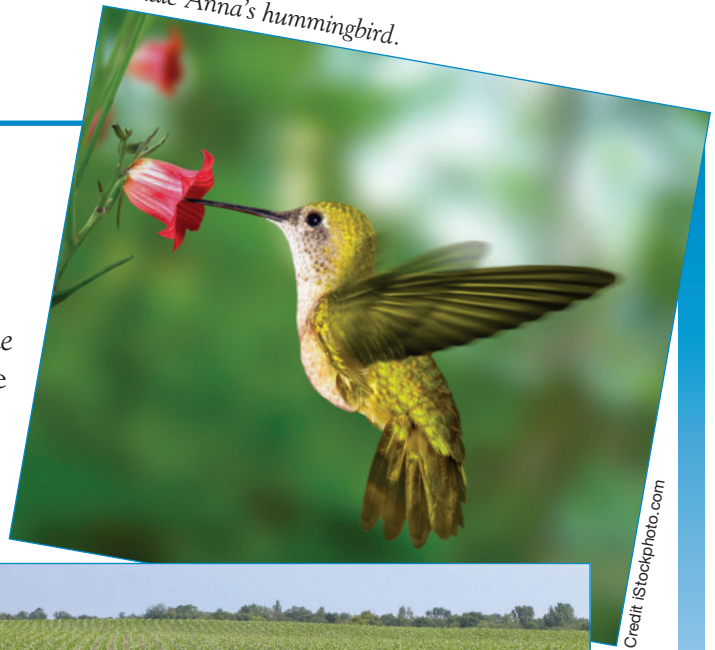


Paul Barr, an education specialist of a Georgia waste water treatment center, explains the process of purifying waste water to Millennium Conference attendees.

❖ The Society's EcoEd Digital Library premiered a special collection of education resources related to drought and water ecosystem services.

❖ Congressional and federal agency staff attended ESA's briefings on the ecological trade-offs of managing water in the American West.

*Female Anna's hummingbird.*



Credit: iStockphoto.com

## Sustainable Ecosystems

❖ The Society's journal, *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, published a special, open access issue on the role of ecosystem services in conservation and management and a corresponding podcast, 'Ecosystems at Your Service.'

❖ ESA issued a position statement focused on the ecological impacts of economic activities and called for the inclusion of natural capital in economic decision making.

❖ The Society worked with the US Department of Agriculture to develop a nontechnical summary of peer-reviewed articles about ecosystem services provided by agricultural wetlands.



Credit: iStockphoto.com

*Iowa agricultural wetland.*

## Climate

❖ In partnership with The Wildlife Society and the Meridian Institute, ESA helped the US Geological Survey plan the new National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center.

❖ An *Ecological Monographs* review paper looked at the effects of climate change on the Arctic carbon cycle.

❖ Together with the National Ecological Observatory Network Inc. and the Smithsonian Institution, ESA held a congressional field trip that showcased tools at the Conservation Research Center used to assess ecosystem responses to climate change.



Credit: ESA file photo

*Bill McShea, with the Conservation Research Center, tells field trip participants about on-going forest monitoring projects.*

# Communicating Research

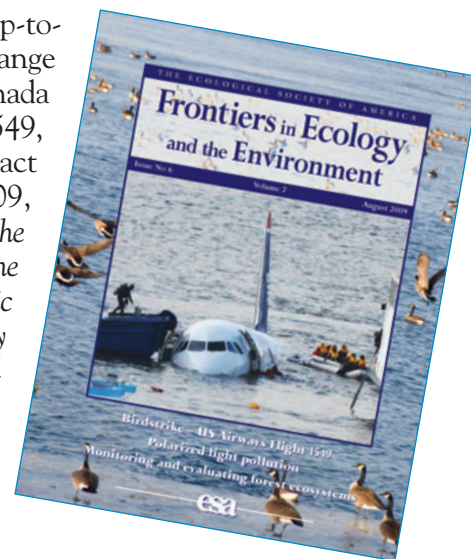
Ecologists, land managers, educators, and other scientists from around the world communicate the latest research in the field of ecology through ESA's scientific, peer-reviewed journals. ESA journals enjoy high impact factors and are widely cited. All the journals are printed on paper stocks that meet the Forest Stewardship Council's rigorous standards.

*Ecology*, the Society's flagship journal, and *Ecological Monographs*, offer superb research studies and are some of the most highly cited journals in their field. In 2009, *Ecology* was named among the top 100 most influential journals in biology and medicine by the Special Libraries Association.

*Ecological Applications* is a popular outlet for research at the interface of ecology and management.

*Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* is full-color, has a broad, interdisciplinary appeal, and is designed to be accessible to those reading outside their area of expertise.

Research featured in ESA's journals in 2009 included articles on marine habitat, crop-to-wild flow of transgenes, climate change effects on fire regimes, and the migratory Canada geese-caused crash of US Airways Flight 1549, among many other topics. ESA journals attract global media attention which, in 2009, included coverage by the *Associated Press*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *Nature*, *National Public Radio*, *Scientific American*, *Discovery Channel News*, *New Scientist*, *National Geographic News*, *US News and World Report*, *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*, and many other local, national, and international news outlets.



Over 1,000 listeners tune in each month to *Beyond the Frontier* and *Field Talk*. These ESA podcasts feature interviews with authors published in the Society's journals.



ESA's blog *Ecotone* showcases ecology and ecologists, focusing on ecological science in the news and its use in policy and education. *Ecotone* attracts nearly 500 visitors daily.

# Annual Meeting

The Ecological Society of America's 94th Annual Meeting, held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, drew 3,599 attendees and kicked off with Opening Plenary speaker Sandra Postel, Director of the Global Water Policy Project. ESA's 2009 Regional Policy Award winner, New Mexico Senator Tom Udall, expressed his gratitude for the award via a video message to meeting attendees. Monica Turner gave the MacArthur lecture, focusing on her long-term research on fire's role in Yellowstone National Park. Seventeen field trips, hundreds of posters, 29 workshops, over a hundred oral sessions, and 24 symposia, with topics ranging from urban water ecology to the biodiversity of the human body, gave attendees much from which to choose.



Credit: Christine Buckley

ESA's exhibit hall featured poster sessions and exhibitors.



Credit: Nadine Lynn

Opening Plenary speaker Sandra Postel.

## 2009 Award Winners

**Eminent Ecologist:** Steven Hubbell

**E. Lucy Braun Award (2008):** Emily Farrer

**Odum Education Award:** Christine Flanagan

**Murray F. Buell Award (2008):** Elizabeth Wolkovich

**Mercer Award:** Richard Lankau and Sharon Strauss

**Sustainability Science Award:** B.L. Turner

**Cooper Award:** Jerry Jenkins, Glenn Motzkin, and Kirsten Ward



Credit: Nadine Lynn

President Sunny Power with Buell awardee Elizabeth Wolkovich.



Credit: Nadine Lynn

Mercer awardees Richard Lankau and Sharon Strauss.



Credit: Nadine Lynn

Program Chair Scott Franklin.

# Finances

Fiscal Year ending 6/30/2009

“Even in these uncertain times, ESA’s finances remain strong. Revenue from our journal program, membership and annual meeting are all stable. We continue to grow our ‘Unrestricted Net Assets’ which will help to ensure ESA’s financial stability into the future.”

*Bill Parton, VP Finance, ESA Governing Board*

## Revenues

Grants & Contributions	479,287
Membership Dues	635,782
Subscriptions	2,671,967
Manuscript Charges	415,157
Annual Meeting	916,901
Investment Income	(8,275)
Other Revenues	298,349
Net Assets released from restrictions	774,347
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>6,183,515</b>

## Expenses

Public Affairs	252,868
Science Programs	460,519
Annual Meeting	776,107
Chapters & Sections	21,310
Journal Publications	2,638,690
Education Programs	485,062
Member & Administrative Services	1,428,981
Fundraising	73,702
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>6,137,239</b>

## Change in Net Assets 46,276

Unrestricted Net Assets as of June 30, 2008	1,874,066
Unrestricted Net Assets as of June 30, 2009	1,920,342

## Assets

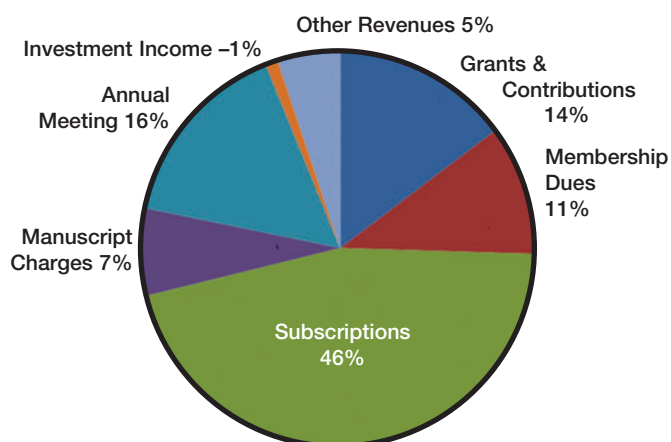
Cash and cash equivalents	1,287,178
Investments	4,742,278
Accounts receivable	194,121
Grants receivable	254,366
Prepaid expenses	158,063
Furniture & Equipment (less depreciation)	22,315
Deposits	24,616
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>6,682,937</b>

## Liabilities and Net Assets

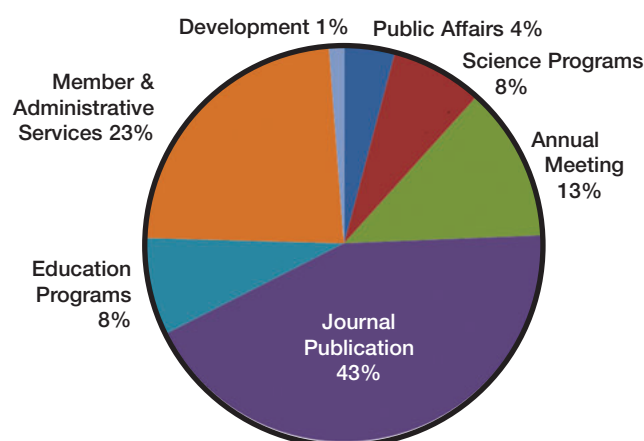
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	373,732
Deferred revenue	2,712,698
Unrestricted Net Assets	1,920,342
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	1,626,165
Permanently Restricted Net Assets	50,000
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>6,682,937</b>

Audited by Gelman, Rosenberg, Freedman.  
For a complete audit report please contact ESA’s Washington DC office.

### 2009 REVENUES



### 2009 EXPENSES





# 2009 Fund for the Millennium\*

ESA thanks its generous donors who help support Society initiatives. If you would like to help the Society advance the science and profession of ecology, please consider making a donation at [www.esa.org/donate](http://www.esa.org/donate).

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\* In 2010 the Millennium Fund was renamed “Fund for the Future”

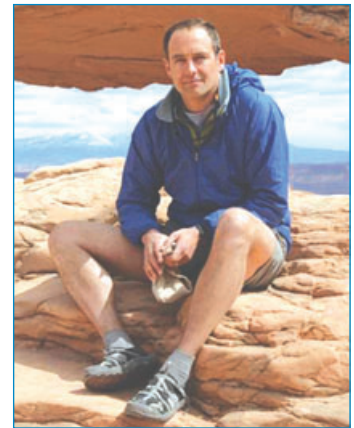
## Grants, Contributions, and Sponsorships

ESA is grateful to the following organizations that provided funds to ESA activities and programs, ranging from the Millennium Conference to the SEEDS program, to *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*:

American Association for the Advancement of Science  
American Institute of Biological Sciences  
American Forest Foundation  
Appalachian State University  
Chevron Corporation  
David and Lucile Packard Foundation  
Energy Foundation  
Environmental Defense Fund  
Environmental Protection Agency  
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National Science Foundation  
RTI International  
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The Nature Conservancy  
US Geological Survey  
US Forest Service  
USACE (SERDP)  
University of California, Berkeley  
University of North Texas  
USDA Cooperative State Research, Education and  
Extension Service  
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

# About the ESA

Founded in 1915, and today the world's largest professional organization of ecological scientists, the Ecological Society of America represents 10,000 researchers, educators, natural resource managers, and students in North America and over 90 countries around the world. Members share a passion for understanding and furthering our knowledge about the world in which we live. Their collective research covers an increasingly wide range, from the ecosystem of the human body to the biosphere. The Society's six regional chapters and 23 topical sections are engaged in numerous activities, including providing student travel awards and organizing symposia and social events at the annual meeting.



Credit: ESA file photo

Jason Neff.

The Society's publications include four highly ranked, peer-reviewed journals, as well as the online *Bulletin*, and a range of free, online publications which serve as outreach and teaching tools. ESA's annual scientific conference draws ecologists from around the globe to share research and ideas.

Through its Headquarters Office in Washington, DC, the Society also gives voice to ecological concerns ranging from integrating ecological science into resource management, enhancing student diversity and improving ecological education, and informing the media and policymakers with ecological science.



Credit: ESA file photo

Jorge Ramos, Christina Wong, Joe Smith.



Credit: ESA file photo

Travis Huxman (right) speaks with Congressman Holt during a science exhibition.



Credit: ESA file photo

Gabrielle Jackson, Brenda Gerald, and Songling Du.

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Cover: Background photo: Conservation Research Center, Front Royal, Virginia. *Credit: ESA file photo.* Carlos Zayas Santiago with salamander. *Credit: Rita Caceres.* SEEDS Field Trip Art Workshop led by Jane Zander, a floral artist. Asian lady beetle (*Harmonia axyridis*) feeding on soybean aphid. *Credit: Kurt Stepnitz.* Teenage corals growing on a dead tabulate *Acropora* skeleton. *Credit: Australian Institute of Marine Science Long-term Monitoring Program.* SEEDS students Alisha Woodson, Tsetan Lobsang, Diana Guzman, Amanda Balarezo, Dinorah Chacin with Eric Nagy, Mountain Lake Biological Station Assistant Director. *Credit: Charlee Glenn.* Jennifer Moslemi, Ari Novy, and Peter Groffman on Capitol Hill. *Credit: ESA file photo.*

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Design/Layout:  
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