

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE SECTION

Following the yet-again active presence of Environmental Justice (EJ) activities at the 2007 ESA Annual Meeting in San Jose, the application to establish an Environmental Justice (EJ) Section was officially approved in November 2007. EJ activities at ESA have now been featured at annual meetings for eight years and we anticipate a very active section. Despite being unable to enroll members in the EJ section until the 2008 renewal cycle, a variety of individuals continued EJ activities. Based on sign-in sheets at past EJ-ESA meeting events, an EJ mailing list was created. Responses to an announcement of section establishment on ECOLOG yielded additional names, bringing the total mailing list over 200.

For the 2007-08 year, the following individuals served as interim officers:

George Middendorf, Howard University, Interim Chair

Leanne Jablonski, Marianist Environmental Education Center/University of Dayton
Interim Vice-Chair

Charlie Nilon, University of Missouri, Interim Vice-Chair

Purpose

The purpose of the EJ Section is to 1) promote environmental justice, i.e. the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of people of all races, cultures, incomes and educational levels with respect to the development and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies, 2) to encourage the development, application and use of ecological research to address environmental issues, particularly those that disproportionately impact underrepresented or low income groups, 3) to stimulate education and outreach efforts that will provide better use and understanding of ecological concepts and research by non-scientists, 4) to increase participation by individuals from underrepresented groups in the Ecological Society of America and 5) to take leadership in advancing environmental justice concerns within ESA, and in the work of ESA members with other organizations engaged in EJ issues.

Activities

In Fall 2007 representatives of the EJ Section, Middendorf and Jablonski were named to the EHRC (Education and Human Resources Committee) and attended the weekend meeting. We discussed issues common to environmental justice, education, the student section and diversity initiatives and examined how the long-term plans could be jointly fostered.

This spring, webpages for the EJ Section website were mounted on the ESA server in the ESA Sections and Chapters section (http://www.esa.org/chapters_sections/).

Members are looking for opportunities to bring the ecological perspective to other EJ initiatives, and so attended the June 2007 University of Michigan Research Symposium, Faculty Diversity and Environmental Justice where we presented: Ecology and Environmental Justice: Engaging

Ecologists. We are also planning to attend the EJ strand/sessions at the North American Association for Environmental Education in November.

2008 Annual Meeting

EJ Section activities planned for the 2008 Annual Meeting in Milwaukee include: a 3-hr Sunday workshop session on *"Ecology Education in Religious Organizations: Advancing Ecological Literacy and Environmental Justice,"* a community outreach event with Dr. Preston Cole, a luncheon session (co-sponsored by the Student Section) on *"Extending Your Research into Policy and Adult Education: Two for the Price of One,"* a talk in a organized oral session *"Are there missing links? Delivering ecological concepts for environmental justice,"* an organized oral half-day session on *"Ecological Education Furthering Environmental Justice,"* and an EJ field trip *"Urban Forestry, Ecosystem Services and Environmental Justice."* In addition, the section will hold its first-ever EJ Section Business Meeting & Nomination of Slate for 2009 Election.

Submitted by:

George Middendorf

Leanne Jablonski

Charles Nilon