



Ecological Society of America
1990 M Street, NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20036

February 1, 2012

The Honorable Darrell Issa
Chairman
Oversight and Government Reform Committee
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Carolyn Maloney
2332 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Issa and Congresswoman Maloney:

As a non-profit professional membership organization of 10,000, the Ecological Society of America (ESA) is a relatively small publisher of five peer reviewed journals. Our publications are the lifeblood of our professional Society which enable us to disseminate important research findings, conduct an annual scientific conference, provide educational opportunities and engage in policy issues of concern to the ecological community. We are writing to provide you with additional information that may be helpful as the Research Works Act advances through the legislative process.

ESA has refrained from endorsing the Research Works Act in its current form due to concerns from our membership that the bill may be as indiscriminately far-reaching as the proposed government mandates it seeks to counter. Nevertheless, ESA supports the intent of the bill to ensure scholarly publications maintain the capacity to disseminate scientific research and that scientific societies have the opportunity to experiment with new publishing models.

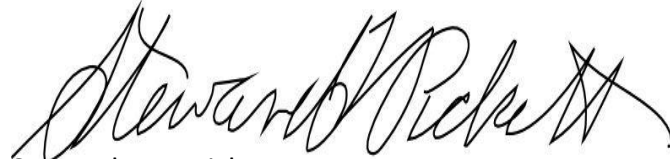
For a non-profit scientific society like ESA, our scientific journals constitute the primary source of our revenue and are essential in maintaining our basic functionality. This is in stark contrast to publications or organizations with larger multi-faceted revenue streams that may include substantial advertising, donations or other revenue sources. Our revenue goes directly toward efforts that not only sustain our core operations, but help disseminate scientific information through a wide array of public forums, including briefings with policymakers.

ESA supports practical efforts that further expand public access without significantly compromising the revenue we depend upon for our Society. For example, ESA offers its journals to smaller institutions at lower rates than to larger ones and has been successful with its first open access journal *Ecosphere*, which is supported by author fees (\$1250 for members). The Society also participates in OARE (Online Access to Research in the Environment), which distributes all ESA journals free of cost to developing countries and includes some open access content in every issue of its journals.

As you know, there is a significant difference between federally funded research results and research that is published in a journal. The process of publishing a scientific work involves an extensive collaboration process between authors, publishers and editors. The end product of this collaboration is a peer reviewed scientific publication that can inform decision-making and communicate reliable information concisely and effectively within the scientific community.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to the Society if we can be of further assistance.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Steward T. A. Pickett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "S" and a stylized "P".

Steward T. A. Pickett

President

Ecological Society of America