JSWC EDITORIAL POLICY

Last updated June 2025

The *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation* (JSWC) is a multidisciplinary journal of natural resource conservation research, practice, policy, and perspectives. The JSWC has two sections: the A Section containing case studies, editorials, and discussions on conservation news, practice, and policy, and the Research Section containing peer-reviewed research articles, research briefs, review articles, and data notes. Manuscripts must represent original work and address a topic related to soil and water conservation, which includes, but is not limited to, erosion control, watershed management, forestry, agroecology, hydrology, soil science, wetland conservation, ecological restoration, water quality improvement, sustainable agriculture systems, and climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies. The JSWC is published by the Soil and Water Conservation Society through Taylor & Francis.

The purpose of this document is to serve as a guide for authors who would like to submit their manuscripts to the JSWC and for editors who review the manuscripts.

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A SECTION

A Section articles encompass case studies, editorials, and discussions on policy, new ideas and innovations in the profession, conservation in practice, and conservation news. A Section articles are not peer-reviewed and should not contain original research. A Section articles are between 600 and 4,000 words (including References section) and include high-quality supporting photographs. Authors may query the Managing Editor (pubs@swcs.org) regarding A Section article ideas before submitting. The decision to publish A Section submissions is made by the Managing Editor based on how well a manuscript addresses a topic of current and ongoing concern to the readership and on the accessibility of the writing for a broad audience.

The articles should follow the "Instructions for Authors" and be submitted via Taylor & Francis's online submissions portal, both of which can be found via the journal's website (www.tandfonline.com/uswc).

- Articles submitted to the JSWC cannot have been published previously.
- Authors may choose to include up to five figures, images, or tables in their articles. All figures, images, and tables should have descriptive captions and be referenced in the article.
- The headings in the A Section articles should not follow the format of the Research Section articles (Materials and Methods, Research and Discussion, etc.). However, like the Research Section articles, A Section articles should have no more than two levels of headings and should include a References section if applicable.
- There are no page charges for the articles published in the A Section. However, fees will apply if authors choose to include color images in the print edition and all authors are encouraged to pay a fee for open access, in which case their articles become available in the online journal to all readers—not only to subscribers. SWCS members receive a 25% discount on open access charges and a 20% discount on color fees.

RESEARCH SECTION

Manuscript Suitability

The following factors are considered in determining the suitability of a research manuscript:

- Manuscripts submitted to the JSWC cannot have been published previously.
- The manuscript should contribute to a new or better understanding of natural resource conservation.
- Studies must make a unique contribution to the advancement of scientific knowledge and contain sufficient detail of research methods to be replicated or verified by other investigators.
- The research objectives and/or hypotheses must be clearly stated.
- Appropriate investigative techniques (including controls, if applicable) must be used.
- Manuscripts should demonstrate that the research design and methods for data analysis (quantitative and/or qualitative) are scientifically rigorous and appropriate for the

research topic. They must explain research methods in sufficient detail that they may be verified and/or replicated by other investigators. Quantitative research deriving inferences about differences, trends, or other patterns must be accompanied by appropriate statistics.

- Data must be clearly presented.
- Interpretations must be supported with the data presented.
- All data sources, models, and other information must be fully documented.
- Implications of the results must be discussed.

Manuscript Preparation and Submissions

To prepare submissions, follow the "Instructions for Authors" and submit via Taylor & Francis's online submissions portal, both of which can be found via the journal's website (www.tandfonline.com/uswc). Manuscripts are submitted via Taylor & Francis's online submissions portal and will be analyzed using iThenticate plagiarism software.

Style Guide

Authors should consult the JSWC Style Guide for manuscript preparation guidance before making a submission. QUICK TIPS: All units of measurement should be expressed in the International System of Units (SI). If authors desire, English or local unit equivalents may be provided as well. English or local unit values should follow the SI units and appear in parentheses. For non-English local units, conversion factors should be included at the first instance of inclusion. All references must be complete, with journal and publisher names spelled out.

Manuscript Review Process

The journal's Research Section has a rigorous peer-review process. Each manuscript is peer reviewed by experts in the manuscript's particular field under the direction of the Research Editors and Associate Editors. Authors may suggest potential reviewers for their manuscripts; however, it is not guaranteed that these reviewers will be asked to review their manuscripts.

Quick Release

In order to ensure rapid, high-caliber reviews of research submissions, the Research Editors will review each manuscript, and the journal will "quick release" the following types of manuscripts without assignment to an Associate Editor for full review:

- Manuscripts with substantial language, typographic, or formatting errors.
- Manuscripts that lack appropriate quantitative analysis (explicit research methods and statistical analysis) or appropriate qualitative analysis. Literature review papers, project reports, or opinion pieces will be quick released unless invited.
- Monitoring studies that lack critical assessment of conservation practices or processes.
- Manuscripts that do not provide a new contribution to soil and water conservation or have other deficiencies that make them ill-suited for the review process.

Released papers will not be reconsidered by the journal.

Turnaround Time

Authors are usually notified of the initial manuscript review decision within 10 weeks. Accepted manuscripts are typically published within 6 to 9 months from the date final files are submitted.

RESEARCH SECTION ARTICLE TYPES

Research Articles

Research Articles present original, unpublished findings from a scientific study related to natural resource conservation with research methods sufficiently described and interpretations supported by data. No more than 9,000 words, Research Articles use the following first-level headings: Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results and Discussion, Summary and Conclusions, and References. Second-level headings may vary; third-level headings are not used. Articles should contain an unstructured abstract of up to 400 words. The Summary and Conclusions section should include at least a couple of sentences describing the conservation implications of the research findings. Supplementary materials may also be submitted.

Research Briefs

Research Briefs are short manuscripts that report upon research of high relevance, novelty, or emerging concern. Research Briefs discuss promising, unique findings, such as new technologies, analytical methods, research of narrow scope, or new modeling routines. Research Briefs have a maximum of 3,500 words (not including references) and contain no more than 3 graphics or tables, but otherwise are subject to all the requirements of peer review for a standard manuscript. Manuscripts may be submitted as a Research Brief, or the Editorial Board may recommend that a manuscript be condensed from standard length to Research Brief as part of the review process.

Review Articles

On occasion, the Research Editors may invite an author to submit a manuscript as a Review Article or may suggest that a manuscript submitted for consideration as a Research Article be resubmitted (with or without revision) as a Review Article. Unsolicited review manuscripts will be released. Authors should contact one of the Research Editors (pubs@swcs.org) prior to submitting a Review Article. In general, Review Articles summarize and critically analyze existing research on a specific topic, highlighting key findings, gaps in research, and potential future directions. These papers are comprehensive in nature or sufficiently authoritative to represent some aspect of the state of the science and must synthesize existing knowledge in such a way as to make a substantial new contribution to the science of conservation. Review Articles require a Materials and Methods section or meta-analysis of methods from existing publications and undergo peer review.

Data Notes

Data Notes are stand-alone, peer-reviewed papers of no more than 7,000 words that describe a dataset(s) (uploaded to a permanent repository and peer-reviewed alongside the Data Note) by giving details about the purpose and objectives for collecting the data, the scope of the dataset, the collection methods, and the data QA/QC process, processing, format, accessibility, and availability. Data Notes document the data and provide information on its availability so that

other researchers can use and analyze the data for purposes that go beyond the original purpose for which the data were collected. Data Notes do not interpret the data. Main characteristics and examples of how the data were or can be used should be included.

- The dataset and the supporting metadata must be uploaded and formally archived in a data repository, so that any qualified scientist is able to obtain the data, free of charge. An appropriate data repository is one that is commonly used by the scientific community it supports and will be active for a very long time.
- The content of the Data Note should address the following: (1) the Introduction describes the content and original purpose of the dataset, including sources of funding and research program, and cites or links to the dataset; (2) the Methods section describes the structure of the dataset, experimental setup, and data collection and processing methods, noting the equipment used, temporal and spatial range of the data, calibration, code and suitable controls, relevant chemical analyses, quality control, and post-collection processing of the data; (3) the Major Characteristics section explains the quality of the dataset (e.g., error limits, spatial and temporal variability, missing data, and potential sources of error), limited statistical analysis of the data (e.g., means, standard deviations, simple comparisons), and how the dataset may have already been used with short descriptions of these studies, and (4) the Summary and Conclusions describes the scientific value and potential uses of the dataset.

PAGE CHARGES

Authors are supplied page proofs from Taylor & Francis for final review and correction. Authors have the option to either pay for page charges or purchase open access.

- Page charges are assessed based on the number of pages in the final page layout. Authors are charged US$190 per page (SWCS members receive 20% discount). For figures requiring color, a US$400 color fee will be added per figure, up to four figures. Additional color figures will be charged at US$75 per figure, starting with figure five. SWCS members receive a 20% discount on the color fee.
- If authors choose to purchase open access, then page charges will not apply. The rate for purchasing open access for articles in the online journal is US$2,630 (SWCS members receive 25% discount). (Note that color fees still apply to open access articles.)
- Page charges do not apply to A Section articles. Authors have the option to purchase open access to their articles in the online journal for US$1,315 (SWCS members receive 25% discount). (Note that color fees still apply to A Section articles.)

AI POLICY

JSWC follows Taylor & Francis's policy for use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools, found at https://taylorandfrancis.com/our-policies/ai-policy. While there are a few acceptable uses, such as use in editing and language improvement, use must be clearly acknowledged and described in the Acknowledgments section. AI cannot be used for any content or graphic generation nor be listed as an author.

JOURNAL SPECIAL ISSUES/SPECIAL SECTIONS RULES

Acceptance or Release of Special Issues/Special Sections Proposals

- A proposal for a JSWC special issue must be submitted to the Chairs of the Editorial Board (Research Editors). The proposal must have a contact author and must include at least one SWCS member among the list of organizers.
- The JSWC reserves all rights to accept or release special issue proposals.
    - **First Step.** The Chairs (Research Editors) of the JSWC Editorial Board will evaluate the proposal. The proposal will be evaluated based on how well it fits into the proposed special issue theme and its relation to soil and water conservation. Other factors that will be considered are the impact to basic and applied research and to new advances in soil and water conservation, the number of published manuscripts, and the expertise of the authors. Special issues may also stem from symposiums sponsored by professional societies or organizations. The status of the professional societies/organizations will be considered, particularly how the organizations' activities relate to soil and water conservation. The decision for the first step will be completed by the Chairs within a week of proposal submission.
    - **Second Step.** If the proposal is accepted by the Chairs of the Editorial Board, the proposal will be forwarded to the Managing Editor of the JSWC. The Managing Editor will evaluate the viability of the proposal with regard to resources and staff needed to handle the extra load of manuscripts. The cost of editing, publishing, and manuscript submission will also be considered. The decision for the second step will be completed by the Managing Editor within a week.
    - **Third Step.** If the proposal is approved by the Managing Editor, the Research Editors will email the proposal to the entire Editorial Board for their vote. The members will have one week to reply "yes" or "no." The Research Editors will count the votes by the end of the week. Only the emailed reply votes will be counted, and the majority's vote will stand as the final decision. Alternatively, the proposal may be discussed and voted upon during a virtual meeting of the Editorial Board.
- The Research Editors will share the final decision with the Editorial Board within a week.
- The final decision will also be emailed to the contact author within four weeks of the proposal submission. The Research Editors and Managing Editor will have the right to modify the deadlines to fit the JSWC schedule. The contact author will be notified if any deadlines are changed.

Information to Be Included in the Proposal for Special Issue/Special Section

- The one-page proposals should include the contact author, postal address, organization, and email address as well as the names of other organizers, one of whom must be a SWCS member.
- The proposal should include a title for the special issue (indicative of the theme).
- Any sponsoring organization or professional organization(s) that sponsored the symposium or research should be included.

- A paragraph (or more) that describes how this special issue advances the area of soil and water conservation should appear in the proposal. Contributions to advances in basic and applied research in soil and water conservation also need to be included.
- Proposals may seek to do an open call for submissions or list potential article titles and authors—or a combination of both.
    - Proposals with an open call for submissions should include the language that will be posted for the call and a description of how or where the organizers will distribute this call.
    - Proposals with potential contributors should list article titles along with the names and affiliations of potential authors. Organizers should aim to solicit at least 12-20 research articles for special issues and 6-10 research articles for special sections, as not all submissions may be accepted. Issue organizers should confirm with the authors' their intentions to submit to the special issue prior to submitting the proposal.

- Each proposal should include the date by which all papers will be submitted. The date by which all the papers will complete the peer-review process and date of publication of the special journal issue will be determined by the Managing Editor and Research Editors, who will keep the contact author informed about the preliminary and final dates.
    - Although our peer-review process for individual papers averages three months or less, for special journal issues, it historically takes one year or more from submission of proposal to publication. Although some papers may be accepted after they pass the peer-review process (within three months), others may need substantial revisions and therefore will take longer. Only papers that pass the peer-review process by the established paper acceptance deadlines will be published in the special issue.
    - Any paper that is accepted earlier than the others will be held until published on the established special issue publication date. These papers may be published early online.
    - Any paper still pending that has not been accepted by the special issue deadline will be moved to the regular review process within the online system to be considered for publication in a regular journal issue. If the paper that is pending is accepted and published at a later date, a footnote can be included at the request of the authors explaining that the paper was to be part of the special journal issue.
    - Papers released during the special issue review process will not be reconsidered by the journal.
    - Example of deadlines: Papers will be submitted to peer review by January 1. Only papers that are accepted by July 1 will be published in the special issue. Special issue will be published in the November/December issue.

General Information About Special Issues/Special Sections

- There is no limit on the number of proposals that the JSWC will consider. However, only a maximum of one special research issue and one special research section will be published per year. If the journal's funds allow, or if a proposal includes funding to help cover the publication cost of the proposed special issue/section, the publication of a

second special research issue and/or a second special research section in the same year may be considered.

- The JSWC reserves the right to stop accepting proposals or to cancel special research issues/special research sections for a given year.
- Special issues are expected to be primarily composed of research articles. However, each special issue should have an overview paper discussing the selected papers, the current status of science, and a literature review to establish the special issue theme. In some cases, additional review articles may be warranted for special journal issues, but substantial justification is required to demonstrate that the additional reviews offer information that cannot be provided via the special issue overview paper. However, in all cases, no more than two review articles (overview paper plus two additional review articles for the peer-review section) will be allowed in a proposal. In addition to the papers that pass the peer review for the special issue, the authors could coordinate with the Managing Editor to potentially publish one, two, or three case studies or discussions in the A Section of the journal to accompany the special issue.
- Papers need to be formatted according to the requirements of the JSWC.
- Manuscripts for all accepted proposals should be submitted via Taylor & Francis's online submissions portal, noting in the cover letter that it is intended for the special issue.
- A maximum of 20 research manuscripts and 1 overview manuscript will be submitted for peer review. A minimum of 12 research papers and 1 overview manuscript will be required in order to have a viable proposal for a special issue. A special section may have an overview paper that includes a glance at the published papers, the current status of science, and a literature review to establish the special issue theme, but a minimum of 6 papers needs to accompany a proposal for a special section (7 papers including the overview paper) so that the overview paper could synthesize a sufficient number of papers. Only those manuscripts that pass the review process will be accepted for publication.
- There is no minimum of papers to be included in a special issue/special section if the majority of the papers are released.
- Only the papers that are submitted by the deadline will be considered for the special journal issues. There can be no substitutions with different papers after the peer-review process has been started.
- Authors are welcome to submit other papers to the traditional peer-review process that will be handled by the journal. However, these papers will be processed and published according to the traditional process and schedule of the journal.
- It should be clear to authors that their papers will undergo peer review and that the decision of whether or not their paper will be accepted will be made through the peer-review process.
- Each author is responsible for the publication cost of his/her article if the article is accepted.

Peer-Review Process for Papers Submitted to Special Issue/Special Section

- If the proposal is accepted, the contact author will contact all other authors to ensure that all papers are submitted as special issue/section papers to the JSWC to undergo its peer-review process.
- The authors of each paper need to submit the manuscript to the JSWC with a cover letter informing the Managing Editor that the manuscript is being submitted for consideration as part of the special issue (include name of special issue).
- All manuscripts will be submitted through Taylor & Francis's online submissions portal for peer review.
- The manuscripts will then be forwarded to the Research Editors using the online peer review system.
- **Quick Release.** The Research Editors will review each manuscript. If the manuscript is not a new contribution to soil and water conservation or has other deficiencies that make it ill-suited for the review process, the paper will be quick released. In this case, the Research Editors will contact an Associate Editor from the journal so that each manuscript receives at least two initial reviews. If the Research Editor and Associate Editor are in agreement, the paper will be quick released. However, in the case of a disagreement, the paper will be forwarded for peer review and assigned to a journal Associate Editor.
- Released papers will not be reconsidered by the journal.
- If the paper appears to be ready for the peer-review process, the paper will be assigned to an Associate Editor.
- The Research Editors have the right to assign any manuscript to any of the journal's Associate Editors.
- The Associate Editors will forward the reviews and their recommendations to the Research Editors following the journal's traditional peer-review process. The Research Editors make the final decision to accept or release assigned manuscripts.

DOUBLE-BLIND PEER-REVIEW PROCESS

The JSWC has a double-blind peer-review process, which means that all manuscripts go through an unbiased peer-review process. The reviewers are not able to see the authors' names. The Research Editors and Associate Editors are able to see the authors' names because they need to be able to ensure that the manuscript is not assigned to an author or someone with a conflict of interest. Manuscripts where one Research Editor is an author or coauthor are handled by the other Research Editor or Managing Editor to maintain the double-blind peer-review process. Associate Editors who submit manuscripts for consideration will not see the names of reviewers or Associate Editors handling their submission.

The manuscripts are stripped of all author information, which is automatically done by the Editorial Manager system when the PDF file is created at the manuscript submission stage. In

addition, the journal staff checks the files before the manuscripts are sent to reviewers to make sure no author names are accidentally left in the files.

The authors are not able to see who reviews their papers. If the name of the reviewer is accidentally disclosed to the author, then that reviewer can no longer be part of the blind review for that paper, and another reviewer will be appointed to avoid any potential problems of disclosure.

MANUSCRIPT APPEAL PROCEDURE

JSWC is responsible for publishing high-quality material related to soil and water conservation. The persons responsible for this task are volunteers invited to serve on the Editorial Board and reviewers based on their professional qualifications. Members of the Editorial Board and reviewers are expected to perform their duties with diligence and in an unbiased manner.

Authors who disagree with the decision to reject their paper may appeal by communicating with the Research Editors/Chairs of the Editorial Board. Appeal requests should be made in writing and the word "appeal" in the subject line along with the assigned paper number. Authors should provide detailed reasons for the appeal and point-by-point responses to reviewer comments and/or comments from the Associate Editor. The Research Editors will investigate and judge the merit of the appeal and perform one of the following: (1) reverse the decision to reject; (2) request a reconsideration of the original recommendation from the assigned Associate Editor, which may include a re-review with a new set of reviewers; (3) assign a new Associate Editor to the manuscript with a new set of reviewers; or (4) accept the original decision to reject and end the appeal. The Research Editors are the final adjudicators in these matters, but may form a panel composed of members of the Editorial Board to address especially difficult or contentious issues.

EDITORIAL ETHICS FOR AUTHORS, REVIEWERS, AND EDITORS

Author Ethics/Responsibilities

- Ensure that submitted papers are based on original research that has not been published elsewhere. It is unacceptable for an author to submit a manuscript (or a manuscript with very similar subject matter) to more than one journal at a time. At the time of submission, the authors should disclose any details of related papers or similar papers in press.
- Maintain full transparency and objectivity through disclosure of all financial/personal conflicts of interest that could undermine the credibility of the journal.
- Gather and interpret data in an honest way without fabrication (making up research data and results) or falsification (changing or omitting data or results in such a way that the research is inaccurately represented). Journal editors, referees, readers, and the publisher have the right to demand that submitted (and published) manuscripts do not contain scientific dishonesty, deceitfulness, and/or fraud.
- Avoid plagiarism, the deliberate use of other work without permission, credit, or acknowledgment. In order to ensure that the material published in the journal is the author's original intellectual property, the journal uses sophisticated software to locate and mark suspected plagiarism in submitted manuscripts. It is the policy of the journal

that all submitted manuscripts are checked with iThenticate software before proceeding to an Associate Editor for handling in the review process. It is incumbent upon the Research Editor to determine if the passages marked by iThenticate are simply commonly used phrases or are of sufficient length and similarity to constitute plagiarism and/or improper citations. At the present time, manuscripts with extensive suspected plagiarism and/or improper citations are released to the author, and those with much less suspected plagiarism and/or improper citations are passed along to the Associate Editor with a caveat from the Research Editor to receive further review and a second opinion as to fitness for sending to anonymous reviewers.

- Many university departments, government research agencies, and even private consulting firms publish the results of current research online to increase visibility and credibility with their stakeholders. These preliminary publications are rarely peer reviewed and do not constitute publication in a refereed journal; however, if the iThenticate software identified this material posted online as potential sources of plagiarism or improper citation, the authors will have to edit the submission to avoid this conflict with material already available or remove the online material before resubmission.
- The only material that can be identified by iThenticate software and be approved for publication is parts of a master's thesis and/or PhD dissertation that the main author is submitting for publication from his/her own thesis or dissertation.
- In addition to these online documents, many conferences encourage submission of short proceedings articles that are published in book or CD format for attendees. These may or may not be peer reviewed, but again they do not constitute publication in a refereed journal. The iThenticate software has many of these documents in the database against which a manuscript submitted to the journal is compared. Thus, it is quite possible for a submitted manuscript to be marked as plagiarized or having an improper citation, and the author will have to edit the material to avoid conflict with the iThenticate software.

For the material identified as previously published to be considered for publication in the journal, the following conditions should be met:

- The marked passages are the author's own intellectual property published in the author's master's thesis.
- The marked passages are the author's own intellectual property published in the author's PhD dissertation.
- The material that has not been published in a peer-reviewed journal (for example, university departments, government research agencies, and even private consulting firms that publish the results of their current research online to increase visibility and credibility with their stakeholders) can be published in the journal as long as the material is the author's own intellectual property and has not been previously published in a refereed journal. However, the text will still have to be edited.
- The marked text is a short common description of materials, methods, and procedures (e.g., "samples were collected and oven dried").

In the case where the submitted manuscript does not contain all the authors of the previous online document or conference/symposium proceeding, the corresponding author is responsible for obtaining a release and permission to publish from all the previous authors who are not listed on the submitted manuscript.

- Recognize previously published work relating to submitted manuscripts by way of accurate citation and reference. All sources should be disclosed, and an author should not use information obtained through manuscript review (or other private sources) without permission from the source (i.e., person, company, organization, etc.).
- Avoid unwarranted fragmentation of work into multiple manuscripts, otherwise known as "salami slicing." Editors have the right to reject submitted articles that share the same hypothesis, data, discussion points, conclusions, and so on as another submitted or published article.
- Ensure that submitted articles contain no personal criticism or denunciation of other scientists. An article may not contain any disparaging or otherwise actionable material.
- Accurate acknowledgment of all workers contributing to the research. Correctly naming authors who have contributed significantly to the research (i.e., made substantial intellectual contribution) ensures that the appropriate individuals get credit (and are accountable) for the research.

Reviewer Ethics/Responsibilities

To Authors

- Treat the author and the manuscript with respect: avoid personal comments or ad hominem criticism. Reviewers must recuse themselves if they have a bias against the research.
- Provide an impartial, honest, and constructive assessment of the value of the work based strictly upon scholarly merits and scientific efficacy.
- Maintain the confidentiality of the review process and not use the review process as a means to achieve personal or professional gain.

To Editors

- Decline the review invitation if the review cannot be completed within the specified time period or a clear conflict of interest exists.
- Note any ethical issues such as substantial similarity between the reviewed manuscript and any published paper or any manuscript concomitantly submitted to another journal of which the reviewer may be aware.

Editor Ethics/Responsibilities

To Authors

- Clearly communicate all journal editorial policies and standards.
- Treat all authors with respect, transparency, objectivity, and integrity.
- Follow established journal guidelines to ensure timely and efficient peer reviews.
- Maintain complete confidentiality of the peer-review process.

- Make editorial decisions in a timely fashion and communicate them in a clear, concise, and professional manner.
- Willingly cooperate with established journal appeal procedures for reevaluating editorial decisions.
- Recuse themselves if they have a bias against the authors or the research.

To Reviewers

- Assign papers for review at a reasonable rate without overburdening any single reviewer; provide an appropriate amount of time for reviewers to complete reviews.
- Assign papers for review based on an accurate assessment of reviewer expertise, knowledge, and area of interest.
- Inform reviewers that they cannot borrow, use, or distribute any work presented in the manuscript or directly benefit from knowledge gained through manuscript review before final publication.
- Follow established journal guidelines to ensure that reviewers complete reviews within specified timelines and treat all manuscripts as completely confidential.
- Request that reviewers identify any potential conflicts of interest and recuse themselves if they cannot provide an impartial review.

EDITORIAL TERMS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Managing Editor

The Managing Editor directs all aspects of the development, production, and marketing of the JSWC. Responsibilities include managing SWCS's publishing partnership with Taylor & Francis, coordinating the scientific peer review of research submissions, soliciting and editing journal content, supervising contract service providers, ensuring quality control, and developing and implementing marketing plans.

The Managing Editor oversees the copyediting of accepted manuscripts, authors' review of page proofs, and approval of final files for publication. The Managing Editor works closely with the Research Editors and Editorial Assistant to maintain the quality of the journal. This is a part-time position with the Soil and Water Conservation Society.

Journal Editorial Office

The Journal Editorial Office (JEO) is a position with Taylor & Francis assigned to the journal. The JEO is responsible for tracking manuscripts through submission, peer review, and final disposition using the online Editorial Manager system, guiding tasks for the Managing Editor, Research Editors, Associate Editors, reviewers, and authors as needed. The JEO runs a technical check for each manuscript and checks and requests for all manuscript items. The JEO can be reached at USWC-peerreview@journals.tandf.co.uk.

Editorial Assistant

The Editorial Assistant copyedits each manuscript to remove grammatical errors and to make sure every manuscript is consistent with the JSWC style guide; modifies images as necessary to ensure that they are of publishable quality; reviews proofs, and works with the Managing Editor to create marketing materials for the journal. The Editorial Assistant may also research and provide data to inform decision-making for the journal. This full-time position with the Soil and Water Conservation Society has part-time hours allocated for work on JSWC.

Research Editors

Two Research Editors, specializing in either conservation physical sciences or social sciences, are selected by a SWCS Research Editor Selection Committee following a nomination and application process. Research Editors serve a term of three years with the possibility of renewal up to three terms (i.e., nine years). Research Editors are responsible for assigning Research Section manuscripts in their respective track to Associate Editors for peer review and making the final decision on whether the manuscripts should be accepted or released based on the recommendations from the Associate Editors. In collaboration with SWCS staff, Research Editors set a vision for the journal's direction, develop opportunities to attract high-quality submissions, and increase the impact and reputation of the journal. Research Editors also serve as Co-Chairs of the Editorial Board, which consists of Associate Editors, and invite SWCS members to serve on the Editorial Board. One of their important tasks is to ensure that the members of the Editorial Board represent a mix of specializations, based on the current needs of the journal. In case of an appeal of the manuscript release decision, the Research Editor overseeing the review investigates the issue and makes the final decision in the appeal process, but may form a committee consisting of Editorial Board members to address difficult issues.

Associate Editors

Each Associate Editor serves for a period of three years, with the potential for renewal(s), starting on August 1 and ending on July 31 at the end of the three-year term. (The term can start and end on a different date occasionally, depending on the needs of the journal.) It is expected that they join and maintain membership with the SWCS during their service.

The Associate Editors are responsible for providing a timely and ethical evaluation of manuscripts assigned to them by the Research Editor. It is their duty to assure scientific validity and suitability for publication of assigned manuscripts. As such, it is their responsibility to identify and invite qualified reviewers. The Associate Editors may select reviewers from the existing reviewer database or may invite new reviewers. Three reviews, or a minimum of two, should be returned to the Associate Editor prior to making a recommendation to the Research Editor. The Associate Editor has an option of providing additional detailed comments to the peer review. It is the Associate Editor's prerogative whether or not they will invite reviewers suggested by the submitting author. The peer-review comments should be examined to assure that comments are professionally appropriate and that reviewer identity remains confidential. The Associate Editor provides a recommendation with a brief rationale to the Research Editor. For manuscripts requiring revision, a clear list of constructive improvements should be provided to the authors.

Additionally, Associate Editors comprise the journal's Editorial Board, which meets virtually twice a year. Editorial Board members may form ad hoc committees for reviewing annual

awards, selecting new research editors, drafting journal policy changes, and other journal-related activities as needed.