...Good looking magazine. I appreciate the advertising interspersed with the editorials. And I should think your readers would, too. The next forward step, from our viewpoint, would be to add a reader service card and increase rates to pay for the services.

Ted Ellefson  
Electro General Corp.

Letters to the editor, highlighting opinion or responses may be submitted on any topic of interest. Topics may be controversial and may present personal points of view on any subject. Selection of these letters will be based upon their pertinence to current events and interest to the readership.

Send your letters to Editor Paul Opler, Division of Biological Services, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C. 20240, or send them in care of the ESA National Office.

Science and Politics

Stan Beck's article (Science and Politics, Bulletin ESA 29:21-24) brought back some unpleasant memories. In 1982 I served as Program Manager for the USDA Competitive Grants Research Office, Biological Stress on Plants Program. "Stress" was also being applied to the 20 scientists who volunteered to assist me as peer panelists. Many of the men and women who so ably served last year were not "certified" until a few days before the two Biological Stress panels met. Many informed me that because of attempted political interference they would hesitate to accept future appointment to a USDA-CRGO panel. I am hopeful that such interference will never again occur; we will lose the input of many talented scientists to the peer review process.

I remain concerned that political tampering in the scientific arena will continue. When Robert E. Treece learned of the political shenanigans last year, he wrote a letter of protest to Secretary of Agriculture John Block. Treece's letter was answered instead by Reagan's appointee John Schrote, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration. In his May 24, 1982 response, Schrote indicates that when screening candidates for peer review committees "we have also occasionally come across individuals with serious flaws of character in whose hands neither you nor we could want to place any public trust. Obviously, those in the scientific community would like to have complete freedom to discharge and distribute funds among their peers as they see fit. However, Mr. Treece, we had an election in which the electorate strongly suggested they did not want business to continue as it had. Therefore, to make sure the voter's and taxpayer's views are considered and the 'good old boy network' broken up, we are selecting people who embrace the President's values and agendas. To suggest that only those scientists who are recognized by the present scientific establishment can make those determinations, is the height of elitism. We reject that notion and we believe this Administration should be responsible to the taxpayers, not a peer review committee." As far as I know, Mr. Schrote is still in government service.

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