

# Adherence to rigorous peer review ensures high standards for *JEM*

---

**Robert G. D'Eon, Ecological Consultant and FORREX Publications Working Group Member**

**T**his edition of the *BC Journal of Ecosystems and Management (JEM)* marks the sixth issue of this new and burgeoning journal. This is truly a journal born and raised in British Columbia, and with a Web-based publication format, it represents an outlet to the world for our provincial ecological science and management community. That's exciting!

However, along with the daunting task of creating a new journal in this competitive information age comes a huge responsibility—the responsibility to maintain and deliver sound science and information. *JEM* will live or die on the basis of how it is perceived by the scientific and professional community in delivering high-quality science and information.

The most important way of ensuring the delivery of sound science is through a rigorous peer-review process, in which experts evaluate the work of their peers before it appears in print. This process, employed by most scientific journals, begins with a manuscript submission. Once received, the manuscript is sent to two (or more) reviewers selected from the scientific and professional community based on their expertise in the subject matter. The manuscript is then either accepted for publication (usually pending minor or major revision) or rejected on the basis of these unbiased and critical reviews as well as a review from the editor facilitating the review process. By rigorously adhering to high standards, these reviewers and editors ensure that a journal presents first-rate work. Permitting poor work through the process is a disservice to the entire community.

Anyone who has ever submitted a manuscript for publication has no doubt felt the sting of a rejection letter. We all have. For instance, it is not uncommon for journals to have manuscript rejection rates that exceed 50%. However, contributors and authors should accept this news as a mark of quality and adherence to high standards and principles, and then diligently revise their work. Only through this process can we gain the credibility and respect of our peers. Likewise, readers can take comfort in knowing that behind every paper published in *JEM* lies a mountain of hard work on the part of the author(s), equalled only by the hard work and volunteer dedication from those involved in the review process.

As a member of the FORREX Publications Working Group—an advisory panel made up of practitioners, academics, and researchers—I see a very encouraging commitment from FORREX staff to quality control and high publication standards through the use of a thorough peer-review system. Gleaning the collective wisdom of this advisory panel is another step towards excellence in the delivery of high-quality science and information.

Through dedication to a rigorous peer-review system, *JEM* is on its way to making a major contribution to the scientific and professional literature—no small task. The future looks bright for *JEM*. These are indeed exciting times!