

Guide to Authors:

Preparing and submitting your article for publication in the IEP Newsletter

September 2021

What is the IEP Newsletter?

The Newsletter is a triannual product of the Interagency Ecological Program (IEP) that publishes perspectives on our Program and community, reviews, data reports, research articles, and research notes. The Newsletter is a forum for resource managers, scientists, and the public to learn about recent important programmatic and scientific topics from across the San Francisco Estuary. Articles in the IEP newsletter are intended for rapid communication and are not peer reviewed. Primary research results reported in the Newsletter should, therefore, be considered preliminary and interpreted with caution.

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

Please note that to post documents on the IEP website, all submissions must meet web content accessibility guidelines (WCAG) by the submitting authors. Guidance on how to create WCAG compliant documents can be found in the “Quick Guide for Creating WCAG Compliant Documents”, which is located on the [IEP Publication Guidelines](#) page of the IEP website.

Types of Submissions

Opinion, Letter, or Essay

An opinion driven article that expresses the author’s perspective on thought-provoking topics in science, management, research, conservation, or other issues. Recommended length is <3,000 words. Includes:

- Background
- Statement of author’s perspective
- Supporting data and references to literature
- Works cited

Data Report

Short report on information or data that is likely to be of interest or use to others or used to meet reporting mandates. Recommended length is <3,000 words. Includes:

- Brief introduction and statement of the study question
- Sufficiently detailed methods to understand the results; includes raw data processing for presentation in the report

- Brief description of major data trends; includes at least one visualization (e.g., graph, table, figure) that shows the major data trend
- Description of how data can be accessed (e.g., EDI, contact authors)
- Works cited, if applicable
- Appendix, if applicable

Research Article

A manuscript describing an original research question or synthesis of existing data of interest to the IEP community. Recommended length is <10,000 words. Includes:

- Abstract
- Introduction; includes relevance to IEP
- Research question/hypothesis
- Methods; includes description of data collection and analysis
- Results
- Discussion; focuses on relevance to IEP
- Works cited
- Appendix, if applicable

Research Note

A scaled down version of a research article. Methodology is relatively simple, and discussion is limited. Recommended length is <5,000 words. See “Research Article” guidance above for article sections.

Review Article

Article that uses existing data or literature to summarize a topic of interest. Recommended length is <10,000 words. Includes:

- Statement of the review topic
- Supporting data and references to literature
- Summary of review findings
- Works cited
- Appendix, if applicable

Submitting an Article to the IEP Newsletter

Issues of the IEP newsletter are published seasonally, three times per year. Editorial responsibility rotates by issue among different IEP agencies (note: editor contacts will be updated at the beginning of every calendar year):

- Winter Issue
 - Editors: California Department of Water Resources
 - Submission deadline: February 15th
 - Contact email: Daphne.Gille@water.ca.gov
- Spring Issue
 - Editors: California Department of Fish and Wildlife
 - Submission deadline: June 15th
 - Contact email: Jereme.Gaeta@wildlife.ca.gov
- Summer/Fall Issue
 - Editors: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 - Submission deadline: October 15th
 - Contact email: geoffrey_steinhart@fws.gov

In advance of the deadline for the intended issue (no late submissions will be accepted), please do the following:

1. Review IEP Newsletter Submission Checklist and Formatting Instructions (below).
2. Submit text as a Microsoft Word (.docx) file. This file must include the following:
 - a. manuscript text
 - b. references
 - c. table and figure captions
 - d. figure alternative text
3. Submit tables as individual Microsoft Word (.docx) files. Tables should be created in Microsoft Word.
4. Submit figures/graphics as individual files in their original format (e.g., .jpeg, .png, and .gif). Other file formats can be accommodated but may lead to conversion problems. Contact the appropriate IEP Newsletter editor listed above with any questions.
5. Submit appendices as individual files with the appropriate file extension.
6. Submit an electronic version of your completed article by email to the appropriate IEP Newsletter editor listed above.
7. Indicate in the email whether the submission is (1) an Opinion/Letter/Essay, (2) a Data Report, (3) a Research Article, (4) a Research Note, or (5) a Review Article.
8. Identify in the email the number and type(s) of attached files so the editor can confirm receipt of all files.
9. Include contact information (full name, affiliation, and email address) for the corresponding author(s) at the time of the initial submission.

10. Include the names and affiliations of any coauthor(s).
11. The appropriate IEP Newsletter editor will confirm receipt within one week of the submission deadline and an estimated timeline for review and response.
12. ***New***: we are now accepting scanned artwork from young readers to include in the End Matter section of each issue. Please email any electronic submissions to the appropriate IEP newsletter editor. Include with the submission: the name and age of the artist, relationship to IEP/IEP scientists, and a caption for the artwork.

IEP Newsletter Submission Checklist

- Email to editor indicating the type of submission (Opinion/Letter/Essay, Data Report, Research Article, Research Note, or Review Article)
- Manuscript text, references, figure alternative text, and table and figure captions are in a single Microsoft Word (.docx) file
- Table(s) – one table per Microsoft Word (.docx) electronic file
- Figure(s) – one figure per electronic file
- Appendices – one per electronic file
- Of interest to managers (OITM)

Formatting Instructions

File Naming Conventions

Please use file naming conventions given below.

Start all file names with the corresponding author's last name followed by the season of the target issue and year, a short title, and the type of contents (e.g., text, captions, tables, figures). The following are examples of specific types of files:

- Generic document: AuthorLastName_IssueYear_ShortTitle_Text.fileextension
- Word manuscript document: Smith_Spring2019_DO2018_Text.docx
- Table: Smith_Spring2019_DO2018_Table1.docx
- Figure: Smith_Spring2019_DO2018_Fig1.jpeg
- OITM: Smith_Spring2019_DO2018_OITM.docx

Formatting and Submitting Text

- Ensure the manuscript text, references, and table and figure captions are in a single Microsoft Word (.docx) file.
- Format your manuscript in US Letter (8.5" x 11") in portrait orientation with one-inch margins on all sides.
- To meet [website accessibility standards](#), use appropriate heading styles (see Microsoft Word > Styles) to denote different sections:

- Heading 1: title of the article
- Heading 2: main heading sections of the manuscript (i.e., introduction, methods, results, discussion, references, and table/figure captions)
- Heading 3: any sub-headings (e.g., Experiment 1, Experiment 2)
- Number all pages at the bottom and in the center of the page.
- Include line numbers on each page of the manuscript. Line numbers should be continuous (not restarting on each page).
- Font should be a sans serif type and a size minimum of 12 pt (14 pt preferred)
- Do not use boldface, underlined, or colored text.
- Italic type may be used in the text for special characters (e.g., n , F_{ST}) and Latin species names only. Provide full species name at first use.
 - Providing both Latin and common species names is ideal, as is listing species names in phylogenetic order.
 - If listing species, please use alphabetical order based on the Latin name.
- Please note that italic, super- and subscript text does not transfer over into the newsletter layout software and so editors will correct this text by eye. Please view the final proofs before publication of the newsletter to ensure that any formatting has been appropriately designated.
- When possible, avoid use of the Microsoft Word equation editor. When equations are used, provide alt-text for each.
- Do not include URLs in the text. Hyperlinks may be included provided that the text for the link will make sense to a reader.
- Include the title and author names at the top of the first page of the manuscript.
 - If a manuscript has multiple authors, designate a corresponding author to be the primary point of contact and include their email address in the manuscript.
 - Include the names and affiliations of all other coauthor(s).
- Use of either Standard International (SI) (e.g., m^3/s) or English units (e.g., ft^3/s) is acceptable but they must be used consistently throughout the manuscript.
 - Define unfamiliar units in the text.
 - Enter a space between numbers and the unit of measurement (e.g., 2.54 cm and not 2.54cm).
 - Use a comma to denote thousands, etc. (e.g., 1,000 ft and not 1000 ft).
- Cite personal communications using first initials and full last name, followed by affiliation and the words “personal communication” (e.g., A. Leopold, University of Wisconsin, personal communication).

- Include a full list of all citations referenced appear in the References section.
- Cite references in the text using name-year system, as in [the guidelines for authors](#) in the journal *San Francisco Estuary & Watershed Science*. Detailed citation guidelines are available [online](#) or in the book *Scientific Style and Format: The Council of Science Editor's Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers (8th edition)*.
- Include any additional material as individual appendices and follow instructions as appropriate for text, tables, figures, and captions as above. Assign each appendix a capital letter (A, B, C, etc.) followed by a brief title describing its contents. For example, Appendix A: Calculations Used for Hydroacoustic Data Analysis. If an appendix contains text, tables, and figures, these elements must be submitted as separate files. Submit an electronic copy of each appendix.
- Submit the manuscript text, references, and appendix in one electronic file (see detailed description of file naming conventions on page one of this document) in .docx (Microsoft Word) format. Contact the appropriate IEP Newsletter editor for questions regarding other formats.

Formatting Tables and Figures

Tables

- Ensure all tables referenced in text are submitted along with the manuscript text.
- Include the table number is included in the file name (see *File Name Conventions* above).
- Submit tables as individual Microsoft Word (.docx) files. Tables should be created in Microsoft Word. Tables must be searchable and readable by screen-reading software. Include table captions in a section of the manuscript text.
- The maximum size for each table, including a caption, is one 8.5" × 11" page with one-inch margins on all sides. Portrait orientation is preferred for larger tables.
- Table font should be sans serif type and a size minimum of 12 pt (14 pt preferred)
- Do not merge, split, or nest cells in tables. When necessary, repeat information for cells with the same information. Use only one row for main headings.
- Avoid unnecessary lines and borders as well as text boxes.
- Do not use boldface, underlined, or colored text.
- Italic type may be used in the text for special characters (e.g., n , F_{ST}) and Latin species names only. Provide full species name at first use.
 - Providing both Latin and common species names is ideal, as is listing species names in phylogenetic order.
 - If listing species, please use alphabetical order based on the Latin name.
- Do not use footnotes for tables. If absolutely necessary, contact the issue editor

for options.

- Prove alt-text for each table. Guidance for adding alt-text to tables can be found online.

Figures

- Ensure all figures referenced in text are submitted along with the manuscript text.
- Include the figure number is included in the file name (see *File Name Conventions* above).
- Submit figures/graphics as individual files in their original format. Figures can be submitted in vector (e.g., .epf, .pdf, or .ai) or raster (e.g., .jpeg, .png, or .tiff) format. Other file formats can be accommodated but may lead to conversion problems. Contact the appropriate IEP Newsletter editor listed above with any questions.
 - When submitting raster graphics, ensure that the resolution is at least 300 ppi (points per square inch) to ensure high-quality reproduction.
- Figure font should be sans serif type and a size minimum of 12 pt (14 pt preferred).
- Scale figures to the size they will be used in the final manuscript. The IEP Newsletter is published in a two-column format. Column width is 3.25" so any figures can be no wider than 6.5" and no taller than a full page.
 - Ensure that figure font is 12 pt after any size reduction.
- Number figures consecutively (Figure 1, Figure 2, etc.) as they appear in the manuscript.
 - Multi-part figures should be labeled with a capital letter following the figure number (Figure 1A, Figure 1B, etc.). Include multi-part figures as a single image.
- Do not draw a border around the figure.
- For color figures, only use colors with contrasting hues that are easily distinguishable by color-blind readers. Many tutorials, web applications, and other tools are available online including:
 - [PlotTwist](#), an open-source tool for creating palettes for continuous data
 - Goedhart J (2020) PlotTwist: "A web app for plotting and annotating continuous data." *PLoS Biology* 18(1): e3000581.
 - [viridis](#), an R package for choosing colors that are colorblind-friendly
 - [Color Check](#), a color contrast checking tool
- Ensure the axes of each figure are labeled appropriately and include units (e.g., °C, µs/cm) where applicable.
- Provide alt-text for each image. Guidance for adding alt-text to images can be found online.

Captions

- Descriptive captions must be included for all tables and figures at the end of the manuscript text. The manuscript text, references, alt-text, and table and figure captions are grouped together in one Microsoft Word (.docx) file. Acceptable formats for captions are the same as for manuscript text.
 - Table captions should be no longer than a phrase or short sentence.
 - Figure captions can be several sentences long and should contain sufficient information so that the figure can be understood on its own without referring to the text.

Formatting the Reference List

- Cite personal communications using first initials and full last name, followed by affiliation and the words “personal communication” (e.g., A. Leopold, University of Wisconsin, personal communication).
- Include a full list of all citations referenced appear in the References section.
- Cite references in the text using name-year system, as in [the guidelines for authors](#) in the journal *San Francisco Estuary & Watershed Science*. Detailed citation guidelines are available [online](#) or in the book *Scientific Style and Format: The Council of Science Editor's Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers (8th edition)*.

If you have specific questions about references or personal communications, please contact the issue editor.

Formatting Appendices

- Include any additional material as individual appendices and follow instructions as appropriate for text, tables, figures, and captions as above (e.g., use contrasting WCAG compliant colors, a font size of 12 pt [14 pt preferred], one-inch margins, alt-text, etc.). Assign each appendix a capital letter (A, B, C, etc.) followed by a brief title describing its contents. For example, Appendix A: Calculations Used for Hydroacoustic Data Analysis. If an appendix contains text, tables, and figures, these elements must be submitted as separate files. Submit an electronic copy of each appendix.

Formatting of Interest to Managers (OITM)

Of interest to managers (OITM) is a short paragraph (5-8 sentences) describing the newsletter submission and its contribution to the IEP community. The paragraph should include the author(s) name and affiliation, followed by a brief description of the article. Use wording such as “the author presents...” instead of gender-identifying pronouns (e.g., “she presents...”). Conclude with the importance of the article to the IEP research community.

***New*:** We are now accepting visual abstracts in place of the OITM paragraph. The visual abstract can be a figure or image that encapsulates the takeaway from the article;

this visualization should not also appear in the main article. A short caption and alt-text must accompany the figure. Follow instructions as appropriate for figures and text above (e.g., use contrasting WCAG compliant colors, a font size of 12 pt [14 pt preferred], one-inch margins, etc.). The one exception to previous formatting guidelines is that the visual abstract should be no larger than half a page, including margins (i.e., 6.5" wide and 4.5" tall).

What if I forget something?

It happens! Use IEP Newsletter Submission Checklist before you submit your electronic copies to make sure you've included a complete manuscript. If you find out later that you've forgotten something, have additional questions, or have crucial information that affects your manuscript, please contact the issue editor.