

Archiving Digital and Paper Documents

Your help is needed

The development of a useful archive for any organization depends on acquiring documents of historical significance from its members and officers. If questions about how to proceed are not answered here, [contact us](#).

Encourage others to participate, especially senior ecologists.

Process for Submitting Documents

Where to send your documents

ESA's official repository is the Hargrett Rare Book & Manuscript Library, located at the University of Georgia Library (UGAL) in Athens. This is the best place for documents pertinent to ESA's sections, chapters, and committees as well as documents relevant to the governance and management of ESA as whole.

Go to [addresses](#) for specific directions on sending documents to UGAL.

If you choose to send your documents to another repository, [contact us](#) so that their location is recorded, thereby facilitating the work of historians.

Many ESA members will have documents that are not specific to ESA as an organization but which should be archived because they are pertinent to the history of ecology as a science and profession. Usually such documents should be given to the archives of the individual's home institution or to other [archives that specialize in ecology](#).

Contact the archives of your choice before shipping documents. If you are uncertain about where to donate your documents, [contact us](#).

Digital Files

In general, all archives prefer that digital files be printed. However, that is not a requirement everywhere. Digital files are best submitted using Dropbox or other similar services, or by downloading the files onto a flash drive and mailing the drive to [addresses for digital files](#).

If your files are in digital format, organize them into folders with labels that historians will find useful.

What to save

All members

- Correspondence pertinent to the history of ESA and ecology
- Peer reviews and reference letters; [contact us](#) if confidentiality must be maintained for a period of time
- Unpublished essays and committee reports
- Photographs of potential historical value
- [Oral histories](#)

ESA Sections, Chapters, and Committees

- Minutes (including changes to by-laws)
- Newsletters and photos
- Annual reports if they were not printed in the Bulletin or archived by the Washington Office staff.
- Materials related to programs or activities, such as correspondence of officers.

Do not submit papers, minutes, or reports that have been published in the *Bulletin* or one of the other journals. Annual reports of all sections, committees, and chapters are normally published in the October issue, and all ESA publications are routinely archived at UGAL.

ESA Governing Board

- Board minutes are normally printed and archived with the *Bulletin*; no additional steps are required
- Presidential papers (minimally, ESA-related correspondence by past presidents on any subject matter related to ESA business)
- Materials generated by any officer pertaining to process, science, or policy
- Unpublished documents

ESA Executive Office and Staff

- All staff reports to Board & Council
- Annual reports if they are not printed in the ESA Bulletin
- Press releases, news clippings, or a list of clippings
- List of members (annually)
- Survey dates, questions, results, and outcome
- Changes in governance documents, such as new policies, by-laws and the constitution
- Newsletters, e.g., the SEEDS newsletter
- Agenda book of the Executive Director
- Public affairs documents, e.g., coverage of visits to Congress, photographs, etc.
- Official letters
- Any materials that demonstrate the process of decision-making (in addition to the final products themselves)

ESA Publications Office, editors, and reviewers

- All ESA publications, including the online *Ecosphere*, are routinely archived; no action is required.
- Correspondence, decision statements, and peer reviews where confidentiality is not an issue.

If you become aware of documents or photos that could be easily overlooked by historians, whether formally archived at your institution or still in filing cabinets or boxes, [contact us](#).

Volunteer to write an obituary for one of your deceased colleagues, for publication in the *Bulletin*. For instructions, go to [obituary guidelines](#).

Scan or photograph pertinent documents, with written permission, that could be difficult to find in the future. Add them to your personal archives or [contact us](#).

If you find personal stories, anecdotes, student-written biographies, and correspondence that reveal personalities and attitudes, add them to your archives or [contact us](#). Obtain written permission.

Develop a timeline or flow-chart showing the history of your sub-discipline.

**Who studied under whom?
Significant milestones?
What were your sources?**

Write the history for your section, chapter or committee. To see an example, go to [Historical Records Committee history](#).



HRC's Mission

Established in 1944, the Historical Records Committee is charged with encouraging members to conserve documents and photos pertinent to the history of ESA and ecology, and with facilitating the accessibility of such records to members, historians, biographers, and the public.