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Letter from the New Editor

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LETTER FROM THE NEW EDITOR

The “changing of the guard” at *Great Plains Research* brings a different perspective to the journal. With this change has come a shift in editorial emphasis that I hope will make *GPR* a new outlet for synthetic, multidisciplinary scientific research relevant to the plains. As the new Editor, my aim will be to increase the availability of important ecological, economic and social sciences research results with relevance to the understanding and management of the Great Plains.

This vast, ecologically rich and varied grassland region covers the whole interior of the North American continent, north from Texas to central Saskatchewan and east from the Rocky Mountains to the deciduous forest ecosystem, around 95°W longitude. Its topography and high productivity have allowed rapid and heavy exploitation, often in ignorance of the natural and social costs associated or how to mitigate them. Finding the relevant theoretical and practical scientific information needed to understand this region and to manage it intelligently is difficult at present. The relevant literature is diffuse and voluminous. This journal, with its focus on the region, can provide a way to concentrate relevant information and get it into the hands of the scientific community, the community leaders, and our public policy representatives.

The new editorial policy will encourage those submissions in particular that make general findings in the sciences relevant to this vast region. Articles being solicited now include thoughtful reviews of critical scientific findings and issues relevant to the Great Plains, whether the research was done in the Great Plains or not. The key will be how well the findings are related to the region, and how well the science is communicated to other scientists outside the specific discipline, in the style of the *Scientific American*, for example. The most successful paper will be acknowledged with the annual Leslie Hewes Award for the best article in the volume.

Several types of articles are of particular interest to me. These include:

- **synopses** of the “state of the science” on topics with relevance to the Great Plains;
- **overviews** of critical environmental, economic and social issues for the plains;
- **reviews** of knowledge on important questions and their regional application;
- **syntheses and cross-disciplinary analyses** with relevance to the plains, and

- **original research findings**, such as have been published in *GPR* since 1991.

I invite scientists doing interesting work with important implications for this region to synthesize their significant research results and present them and their relevance to this audience. The overall goal is to develop *GPR* as a centralized outlet for science of regional importance, to communicate important scientific findings to as wide an educated audience as possible, and to help keep the scientists, interested citizens and leaders of this region up to date on scientific progress relevant to the Great Plains.

To discuss your ideas, you can email me at: SLouda@UNL.edu. Or, better yet, to submit a manuscript directly or to support this effort by subscribing (\$25/yr/individuals), please send your materials to me at:

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