

FROM THE PRESIDENT OF NAEP

It's Your Profession, It's Your Backyard, It's Your World

Andrew J. McCusker

If you are reading this first NAEP President's Message of 2000, you are most likely an environmental professional. You have the tools and abilities to understand environmental issues. You have the power, latent or realized, to influence others. What are you going to do with these tools, these abilities, this power?

In the elevated, perceived significance of this grand year 2000, maybe you found yourself contemplating your career, your life, and perhaps your legacy to your future descendants and the world.

I ask you to read this message, for I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the NAEP, to focus some thoughts about our role as environmental professionals beyond our specific individual employment or professional responsibilities.

1. NAEP Membership—What's in it for me?

We can rattle off the litany of information: networking; a chance to participate; opportunities to influence; our journal, *Environmental Practice*; the NAEP annual conference; the NAEP web-site, the new "interactive" on-line membership directory; and access to Working Groups and Committees on NEPA, ISO 14000, transportation, utilities, international issues, regulatory process, and sustainability.

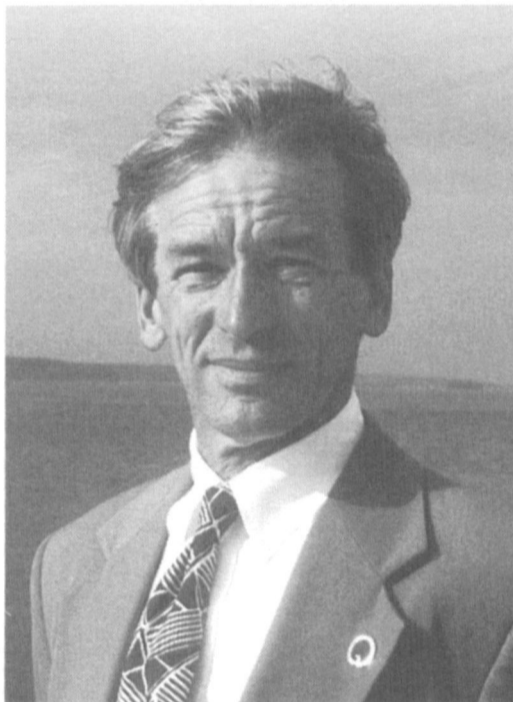
I now ask you to consider an alternative perspective on this question.

2. NAEP Membership—Why should I support the mission of NAEP with my membership and participation?

This is a question I would be delighted to answer.

NAEP provides several important functions to the profession, to the process, and to effective decision making that are worthy

of your support. NAEP takes an active role in influencing effective incorporation of environmental considerations into federal, state, and local decision making. NAEP coordinates its membership in addressing impact assessment for development projects and in promulgation of laws and regulations. These activities can make a significant contribution to our profession, be applicable to your own backyard, and cumulatively function to improve the environment. Through activities of the working groups and subcommittees, the annual conference, publication of articles in *Environmental Practice*, and through awareness and recognition from the NAEP-NEPA Awards program, NAEP contributes to improved decision making and a cleaner environment.



Andy McCusker

Through the support of NAEP membership revenues and NAEP member involvement, NAEP provides a web-site, raising awareness and information accessibility. This site supports a "list-server" that allows professionals to ask questions, and share insights as well as information.

NAEP developed and supports a professional credential, the Certified Environmental Professional, which provides a mechanism to recognize the expertise and experience of senior level environmental professionals.

NAEP also supports a conference that brings regulators, lawmakers, resource agencies, industry, educational institutions and consultants from all over the country together to share recent developments and case studies, leading to new successful projects and synergies.

Last but not least, NAEP initiates the formation of, and provides support to, state and regional, professional and student chapters throughout the country. These chapters in turn provide opportunities for communications, information dissemination, professional development, and recognition of the profession at a geographic scale where professionals can more easily and more regularly come together.

3. What do I ask of/suggest for you, the Environmental Professional? Involvement. Relevance. Impact.

Support efforts to highlight our profession and our ability to provide guidance, shed light. Support efforts to improve the awareness, the process of decision making and the right way to go about it. Support NAEP and your local chapter.

Consider how to add your light and clarity to the fog and confusion of incorporating environmental considerations into decision making where you live.

Do a self-assessment on how appropriate and up-to-date are your own tools for doing your job and contributing to the process.

Ask us or tell us at NAEP how to help you in doing these things. Correspond with our Training & Higher Education Working Group. Participate in the conference or your local chapter activities. Lead an effort yourself. Be involved. Be relevant. Have an impact.

May we all leave the path we have trod a little better for our having passed the way.

Address correspondence to Andrew J. McCusker, MACKWORTH Environmental, 3 Adams Street, South Portland, ME 04106; (fax) 207-767-4306; (e-mail) ajm@mackworth.com.