

## FROM THE PRESIDENT OF NAEP

Bruce Hasbrouck

In the last issue, I discussed many of NAEP's plans for the future. I am pleased to report that progress has been made on several aspects. The 2000 Conference was a smashing success—one of our best yet! We were extremely pleased with the quality of the presentations and the amount of work that was accomplished during the meetings of working groups and committees. Furthermore, the amount of information that was exchanged through casual conversations was outstanding. Most people made use of the collection of environmental professionals to discuss project-specific challenges and solutions.

One of the items that strikes me about NAEP conferences is the level of professionalism. *The New Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (1989) defines professionalism as "the conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a profession." Profession is defined as "a calling requiring specialized knowledge and often long academic preparation." Certainly NAEP represents the long academic preparation part. One of our member surveys revealed the average member had a master's degree. As well, specialized knowledge is evident in almost all of the presentations and many of the casual conversations (even the conversation about the difference in bubbles in beer vs. champagne)! All kidding aside, NAEP rep-

resents a vast collection of individuals that make up our profession.

Regarding the "conduct, aims, or qualities" of professionalism, the conference was an excellent example. Ethical conduct is the foundation of NAEP. Many of us are confronted with the continual challenge of ethics. The easy way in any project will give the least quality. Being thorough is time consuming and costly.

The aim of any study should be to objectively assess a certain issue. If the final results are not good for the client, the agency, or whomever, so be it. However, ethical conduct requires that we not only verify our results, but also assess whether the analysis was performed using the best and most recent techniques. As presented in our Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, we should "incorporate the best principles of the environmental sciences for the mitigation of environmental harm and enhancement of environmental quality."

The future of our profession and organization depends on each and every one of us. As part of a "yet to be successful", eight-year effort to gain licensure of Environmental Professionals, I was amazed at the reaction of many non-EPs. Most did not realize we are decision makers. There was the tendency to lump our profession with social environmental organizations and environmentalists. Even while reminded that there are environmentalists within the profession, the concept of objective, educated professionals was lost by the time the bill was heard in the legislative committees. Maybe someday . . .

The mantra of our future should be participation. Get involved, be part of the team, and stand up for your profession. Be active with your local chapter, attend seminars and training, and read. Our tools and techniques change faster than almost any other profession. As we are able to provide meaningful input towards projects, respect for Environmental Professionals will continue to increase. After 30 years, NEPA documents, permits, management plans, and other studies are products, not just an exercise.

If you did not make it to this year's conference, there is next year. I can assure you that the Conference Committee will continue to put on excellent events that will enrich each and every person who attends. The Journal is in its second year of production and continued refinements add to the quality and benefit to the reader. The Web Site has more and more information that is relevant and current. The Working Groups are increasing their scope and membership. The Committees are reaching their goals and objectives. And finally, the vision provided by the Board of Directors establishes NAEP as the leading multidisciplinary professional organization committed to the highest ethics and standards of practice for the environmental professions.

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### *A Note from Outgoing NAEP President Andy McCusker*

Many of you heard that I recently had a heart "incident". I want you all to know that I am "repaired", very healthy, and, with my company, available for work!

For those who may benefit from some further understanding about this heart that keeps us going, I have been always considered "low risk"—healthy, reasonable diet, reasonable cholesterol, regular exercise, good weight. Maybe a little high on the stress-o-meter at times, but, all in all, low risk. My heart is strong and my arteries show no signs of buildup, that is, except for ONE. One clogged artery.

Today's medicine, a cardiac catheter providing an avenue for examination and mechanical—most likely permanent—repair. My message? Watch out. Listen to your body. Observe and track

suspicious discomforts or pains. Learn and understand your family genetic history. And, don't wait until you are stopped in your tracks before consulting a doctor.

I am back! Traveling around the country. Working on permits and water issues. Installing Gunderboom systems. Hiking and playing ultimate frisbee. Keep in touch! And, thank you for the opportunity to be part of your professional lives.

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