

# Preface

The initial premise of this book was an archival account of 25 years of history in landscape ecology within the USA. In 2007, a poster entitled, “USIALE: The First Twenty-five Years of Landscape Ecology in North America (1983–2008),” was presented by Gary W. Barrett and Terry L. Barrett at the Seventh World Congress, International Association for Landscape Ecology (IALE) held in Wageningen, the Netherlands (see Chap. 11). What precipitated this concern was the research of past and at that time present USIALE documents of record found scattered in a loose web of redundancy. This was due to the fact that each consecutive administration had separately recorded its unique contribution to the USIALE records for the most part irrespective of past entries. Accordingly, the continuity of the organizational documents appeared as a trace of interrupted information through no fault of any one administration. The poster was one of the first public attempts to accurately assign USIALE a consistent referent title (United States Regional Association of the International Association for Landscape Ecology), timeline, and ordered accomplishments from selected USIALE documentation. “... The poster will attempt to summarize the themes and sites of the US-IALE annual meetings, award recipients, and officers of the association. In addition, a forthcoming paper will attempt to quantify topics, principles, and advances in the field of landscape ecology based on publications in the journal, *Landscape Ecology*.” This volume is in answer to this promised paper.

The inceptive timeframe concerning this volume was drawn from the meeting of USIALE held at the University of Georgia during January 1986 (see Chap. 3) through the 25th year celebration, which took place at the University of Georgia during April 2010. However, when researching the chapters that follow, it becomes apparent that USIALE was conceptualized during the Allerton Park Workshop sponsored by the National Science Foundation (NSF), held in Piatt County, IL from 25 to 27 April 1983. Therefore, the book now describes a 30-year history of landscape ecology in the United States (i.e., 1983 through 2013).

This volume outlines the mission of USIALE, link between IALE and USIALE, and effort to promote transdisciplinary research and training among colleagues across continents and disciplines. Landscape Ecology, as readers will become increasingly aware, is a holistic and an integrative science as scholars in landscape

ecology address agrolandscape, environmental education, pollution abatement, resource allocation, or global climate change with a slide rule of scales.

Scientific disciplines typically have a charter, by-laws, annual meeting, journal describing findings for its membership, and approved committees to guide its future. However, landscape ecology is being revalued to address multiple facets of the plane of traditional landscape (see Chap. 8). For example, not only the surface of Earth but the substance of celestial bodies becomes apparent with new technologies. Ecological and anthropological processes linked to Earth can no longer be exclusively juxtaposed with celestial observations. Customary strategy alone can be equally inadequate when approaching the tests of expanding global agendas of governments and individuals—such as planetary mining or bandwidth regulation. Similarly, where inquiry cannot be limited to a preset of questions, refreshed thinking is required to approach ever-increasing complexities in a vignette of economy, politics, security, and society. It is rare during a lifetime to witness a paradigm evolve into a comprehensive and integrative science such as Landscape Ecology.

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History of Landscape Ecology in the United States

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2015, XVIII, 194 p. 46 illus., 22 illus. in color., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-1-4939-2274-1