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Changes coming to Human–Wildlife Interactions publishing procedures

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AS WE TRANSITION to a new volume of *Human–Wildlife Interactions*, the editorial team has decided to use this opportunity to update the journal’s publication procedures. Readers and authors will notice these changes occurring over the next year, with a completed update planned for July 2024.

Cover letter form

We are now requiring corresponding authors to complete our submission cover letter form, which is downloadable from the “Before Uploading Your Submission” section of our Author Checklist page (<https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/hwi/authorchecklist.html>). This form is designed to attain all of the information needed from authors during their initial submission of a manuscript. Information that authors would typically provide in a cover letter, such as author names and affiliations, manuscript title, disclosure statements, and an opportunity to summarize the article scope and relevance, are required. Additionally, the form requires corresponding author acknowledgment that they have reviewed current journal guidelines and formatted their submission accordingly, including preparation for double-anonymous review. The cover letter form also includes current policies for publication charges and requires the corresponding author to acknowledge they have read and agree to this policy. We hope this new form provides clarification about adhering to journal guidelines, which speeds up the review stage, and ensures that authors are aware of the costs associated with publishing in *Human–Wildlife Interactions* prior to submitting their manuscript.

Frequently Asked Questions

In other sections of the Author Checklist page (<https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/hwi/authorchecklist.html>), authors will also notice responses to frequently asked questions. These questions provide authors with much of the general information needed across all stages of journal activity, from preparing a manuscript for submission, to preparing a revision, to production tasks and timeframes leading to publication. Additionally, for submission-specific questions, or for information not included online, authors are instructed to direct all email inquiries to hwi@usu.edu to ensure that it goes through to the editorial office.

Manuscript preparation guidelines

Detailed manuscript preparation guidelines can be found at <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/hwi/styleguide.html>. Most of the small changes that we’ve made to the guidelines reflect the online-only nature of the journal and remove relic procedures that were intended for printed publications. Our updated material also includes information that outlines our review procedures as well as our acceptance and rejection categories. This information is designed to provide transparency to authors and will help new authors understand the review process. In the future, we will be adding more information to the website to help illustrate the entire publication process from manuscript submission to publication. For journal editorial style and formatting details that are not already included in our guide, we will rely on the guidance of *The CSE Manual: Scientific Style and Format for Authors, Editors, and Publishers* (Council of Science Editors 2024).

Publication charges

Finally, *Human–Wildlife Interactions* is instituting some changes to its pricing and invoicing. Currently, our pricing and invoicing structure reflects the formatting that we used when our publication was printed. For example, we charged authors a certain price per typeset, published page. Beginning July 1, 2024, our pricing will be based on the number of double-spaced manuscript pages (formatted per our guidelines) of the final accepted manuscript. Authors may notice that the cost structure is bracket-based pricing (i.e., a set price for any manuscript ≤ 40 pages) rather than a per-published-page pricing. With this method, invoices will be sent immediately upon acceptance for publication to our journal, rather than waiting until the production and proof process to determine the actual published page amount. We recognize that authors are often operating under time-limited grants and hope that this set pricing structure and quicker response to invoicing will assist with the grant management process. The price scale that we are initiating is average compared with other wildlife and natural resources journals, and it is less expensive than most major publishing companies.

However, we recognize that many international researchers struggle to pay publication costs, and we will continue to provide an opportunity for this research to be published in *Human–Wildlife Interactions*. In the past, waiving publication costs was considered at some point

in the publication process, on a case-by-case basis. With our policy changes, we are instituting a waiver application process. Authors can complete a waiver application form, prior to submitting their manuscript to the journal, which will be reviewed quarterly by the editor-in-chief and an associate editor to determine the quality of the manuscript, the importance of the research, and the need for a cost reduction. Authors being awarded a waiver will be notified and instructed about how to proceed with their manuscript submission. This new process aims to provide equity through a transparent, consistent method of assessment and publication opportunity.

We hope that these changes coming to our journal bring it in line with the policies and procedures of other online journals in the natural resources profession. More importantly, we aim to facilitate transparency and understanding, and a timely process to publication, for our authors and readership. Thank you for your continued support of *Human–Wildlife Interactions*.

Literature Cited

Council of Science Editors. 2024. The CSE manual: scientific style and format for authors, editors, and publishers. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois, USA.

S. NICOLE FREY (photo unavailable) is the editor-in-chief of *Human–Wildlife Interactions*.