



Meet Sam Fernald

Alexander (Sam) Fernald, PhD

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Alexander "Sam" G. Fernald was appointed director of the New Mexico Water Resources Research Institute (NM WRRRI) in July 2013 after having served as interim director since January 2011. As director, he leads the Institute in its mission to develop and disseminate knowledge that will assist the state, region, and nation in solving water resources problems. Dr. Fernald is also the program chair of the Water Science and Management Graduate degree program, where he establishes, initiates, and leads all academic, programmatic, budgetary, administrative, and instructional aspects of the program. Additionally, he is a professor of Watershed Management at the Department of Animal and Range Sciences at New Mexico State University. Dr. Fernald's earned degrees include a 1987 B.A. in international relations from Stanford University, an M.E.M. in 1993 in water and air resources from Duke University, and a Ph.D. in watershed science from Colorado State University in 1997. He was also a National Research Council Postdoctoral Fellow from 1997-2000 for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. His research interests include coupled human and hydrologic systems; water quality hydrology; land use effects on infiltration, runoff, sediment yield, and nonpoint source pollution; and surface water/groundwater exchange effects on water availability and water quality. Dr. Fernald received Fulbright Scholarships to Queen Mary University of London in 2021, Patagonian National University, Trelew, Argentina, in 2008, and the University of Concepcion, Concepcion, Chile, in 2000.

"How do you plan on advancing UCOWR's mission of leading in education, research and public service in water resources?"

I would like to advance the UCOWR mission by increasing diversity, growing membership, and elevating the profile of the Journal of Contemporary Water Research and Education (JCWRE).

Diversity is the cornerstone of effective education, research, and outreach that meets the needs of all learners and stakeholders. I would actively promote diversity in UCOWR and its programs, most importantly including underrepresented groups, and adding diverse academic disciplines and institutions. UCOWR focuses on connecting people across disciplines, and diligent attention to diversity will strengthen connections by including a fully representative swath of the water community.

Growing the membership will help bring together scientists and educators from different disciplines, leading to innovation for cutting edge science, new funding sources, and new collaborations. UCOWR already offers open arms to water educators and researchers of all stripes. Because of the broad topic coverage of UCOWR, we have a chance to expand into new cross cutting topics and bring on new member institutions.

Elevating the profile of the journal will strengthen the UCOWR organization. I would add to ongoing improvements in JCWRE by highlighting the cross disciplinary nature and applied outcomes that are increasingly important for water science and education. We have a window of opportunity to advance science and to meet community needs at a time when the water research and education communities are grappling with ways to combine social and natural sciences. The JCWRE is the perfect journal to bring together disciplines and catalyze publication of cutting-edge topics.