

Laboratory, Elsham Treatment Works, Elsham Wolds, Nr Brigg, S. Humberside, DN20 ONU, United Kingdom.

### AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS

The 20th International Conference on Coastal Engineering is scheduled to be held in Taipei, Taiwan, 9 thru 14 November 1986.

Contributions are invited in the following topics:

(1) Theoretical and Observed Wave Characteris-

tics, (2) Coastal Sediment Problems, (3) Coastal Structures and Related Problems, (4) Coastal, Estuarine and Environmental Problems, and (5) Ship Problems.

For further information on submission of papers or attendance at the meeting, contact Dr. Billy L. Edge, Secretary, Coastal Engineering Research Council, American Society of Civil Engineers, Cubit Engineering Limited, 207 East Bay Street, Suite 311, Charleston, South Carolina, 29401, USA.

Billy L. Edge  
Charleston, South Carolina, USA



## BOOK REVIEWS

**The journal and CERF board members may not necessarily agree with all of the statements contained in the following book reviews. These boards can not assume responsibility for the reviewer's assessments of the books that they evaluate.**

**The Future of Wetlands: Assessing Visual-Cultural Values**, edited by Richard C. Smardon, Allanheld, Osmun Publishers, 81 Adams Drive, Totowa, New Jersey, 226p. US\$ 39.95, ISBN 0-8-6598-020-9.

Wetlands are privileged zones with great ecological, visual and educational significance. The conjunction of earth and water with a diffuse "interface" gives rise to diverse surroundings, rich in cultural and visual values. Many wetlands embrace unique and rare natural phenomena needing adequate protection against urban or recreational developments.

In addition, many unexceptional wetlands are highly susceptible to human impact and require development control through special and general ordinances and bylaws. However these ordinances rarely include specific consideration of historic, cultural or visual values. Consequently it seems inevitable, that the general tendency to consider aesthetic values in zoning regulations includes wetlands, and that the basis for such values is adequately studied.

To these ends, Richard C. Smardon, editor of the book *The Future of Wetlands*, offers information and techniques about the visual-cultural values of wetlands. He includes, among them, the relationships between landscape, recreation and environmental education. The book is structured in five parts: Part I is an introduction to policy and to the visual-cultural assessments of wetlands in the USA and Great Britain. Also it provides a revision of "state-of-the-art-technique" for assessing values. Parts II and III contain illustrations of perceptual assessment of values, and of field methods for describing the physical attributes of wetland landscapes.

Part IV provides a proper evaluation of the wetlands environment by studying methods and techniques of impact assessment. It includes methods based on perception studies (outlined in Part II) and using descriptive techniques as in Part III. Part V gives a series of criteria to help the decision-making process to determine what technique, or group of techniques, is necessary and available for practical applications in various wetland contexts.

The editor knows the general limitation of resources available today for this type of study and directs much of his book to illustrating methods and techniques to overcome them. There is, in reality, a tendency to utilize more effective methods in cost and time. Many methods are suitable for individuals or small groups and sophisticated or complex procedures needing large investments in equipment and development are advocated only for state agencies or specialized consultants.

Smardon gives, opportunely, considerable emphasis to the use of simple field methods as an alternative to the more complex ones. In many cases the professional valuer has no access to a computer, or lacks adequate software and perhaps cannot obtain detailed photogrammetric maps. Equally, he may not need to undertake elaborate and sophisticated visual judgements. Only in difficult situations is it necessary to resort to the use of more complex methods.

These subjects receive a balanced treatment by a selection of authors, including university researchers (Richard C. Smardon, William E. Hammit, James F. Palmer, Edmund C. Penning-Rowsell) and specialists and practitioners (Michael S. Lee, Molly Burgess Mooney, Rowan A. Rowntree) in such diverse subjects as the environmental sciences, landscape architecture, forest recreation, historic preservation, wildlands environments, geography, biogeography, and ecology.

The book is well structured, contains sufficient drawings, photographs and references to make the text clear, and includes as Appendix A a "generic Visual-Impact Checklist" prepared to afford a complete and adjusted field evaluation of the visual impacts of the main activities over the wetlands. Overall a useful and practical volume.

Miguel Aguilo  
Universidad Politecnica de Madrid  
Madrid, Spain

**Eolian Sediments and Processes**, edited by M.E. Brookfield and T.S. Ahlbrandt, 1983, Elsevier, Amsterdam, 660p. \$US 78.75, ISBN 0-444-42233-1.

The IAS meeting in Hamilton in 1982 has spawned a number of thematic volumes, of which this was one of the first to appear. Not all the 32 papers in this volume were presented at the conference, some were added later to improve coverage.

The volume is split into four parts, covering sedi-

ment texture, eolian processes and recent and ancient depositional examples. Other divisions might have been preferable, for example desert and non-desert, theoretical and empirical, but I suppose this would not have made much difference to the overall impact of the book.

The book starts with a review by the late Ed McKee on "Eolian sand bodies of the world." It is something of a personal view, highlighting areas McKee thought were interesting and worthy of further study. I remember attending his keynote address, and being slightly disappointed. This chapter leaves me with the same feeling. Obviously this does not detract from McKee's seminal contributions in this field, but this, as was the talk, is just an illustrated "tour" of various eolian (mainly desert) deposits. McKee does make passing reference to 'dune-like' structures in other depositional environments, but his remarks lack conviction. The illustrations in this paper, being screened black and white prints from color slides, are not as clear as they should be, and about a third could have been omitted. As a last minor comment, I was thrown by his use of the word 'shingle' (to describe overlapping dune ridges). It has taken years for the British to get out of the habit of calling coarse clastic beaches "shingle", so confusing to many Americans. Please don't re-open old wounds fellows!

Setting KcKee's paper aside, the rest of the volume (like all good dunes) has its ups and downs. The texture section is mainly on loess, and includes a good review by Smalley and Smalley, and a fascinating account of the Chinese Loessic Plateau by Darbyshire.

The process section leans heavily, as always, on Major Bagnold's work, although the experiments are becoming more sophisticated and technically improbable every decade. It is intriguing to reflect on how much was deduced by Bagnold, using rudimentary equipment, which is still applicable today. The other major (sorry) influence apparent in this section has been the funding of planetary eolian studies. Greeley *et al.*'s paper is a nice, thought-provoking example of this type of work.

Examples and models of eolian deposits occupy the bulk of the book (450 out of 650 pages), and range in scale from Brown's discussion of the Earth's boundary layer to details of cross-bedding and minor structures (papers by Hunter and colleagues). Several of the papers are enjoyable, especially accounts by Whitney on ventiforms, and Hyde and Wasson's unusual contribution on eolian sand movement on lake flats in Australia. It was good to