

September 18-19, 2024

ITEM 214-2014-R0924

Request Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus of Ecology upon Dr. Andrew Hansen; Montana State University

THAT

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Professor Andrew Hansen from Montana State University, the Board of Regents wishes to express its appreciation for his service to the University, the Montana University System and the people of the State of Montana.

EXPLANATION

Throughout Dr. Hansen's career, he has been an international leader in the field of Landscape Ecology, addressing fundamental and applied questions relevant to large geographies and ecosystems, including the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. His scholarship has placed MSU, and the Ecology Department, among the top academic institutions investigating how land-use and climate change influence biological diversity and ecological processes within and surrounding protected wildlands. He has taught critical courses for the Ecology Department, including Landscape Ecology, Macrosystems Ecology, and Grand Challenges in Environmental Sciences. Some of his many accomplishments include bringing over \$13M in competitive grant funding to MSU, producing ~100 highly-cited papers in top journals, and training of ~30 graduate students and post-docs.

Dr. Hansen built an internationally recognized program at the cutting-edge of interdisciplinary science, developing and applying novel tools in remote sensing, statistical analysis, and ecosystem modeling to support landscape conservation. His research produced textbook examples of ecological change at large scales including long-term shifts in vegetation communities, ecological responses to human population growth in the 'New West', and climate change impacts on biodiversity and productivity in wild, natural, and working lands. Dr. Hansen has also developed novel methods for monitoring 'vital signs' of ecological health, helping to support state and federal agencies, non-profit organizations, decision makers, and land managers in the stewardship of our ecosystems, working lands, and communities – a central pillar of our land-grant mission.

In recent years, Dr. Hansen's research shifted towards applying lessons learned from the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem to chronic and emerging ecological issues in developing countries worldwide. Nearly eight years ago, world leaders (including Hansen) in the fields of landscape ecology and remote sensing were called on to develop new ways to monitor the success of countries in meeting what has been termed the '2020 Aichi Biodiversity Targets'. These targets were developed by the Convention on Biological Diversity, a group initiated by the United Nations Environment Programme. Dr. Hansen led a working group of international scientists to develop novel methods to monitor these biodiversity targets and to apply these methods towards better understanding change in forest structure across the global humid tropics.

Dr. Hansen was inducted as a Fellow of the Ecological Society of America, and also served as a Fulbright scholar. For the past three years, he has served as the Director of the Institute on Ecosystems, advancing the interdisciplinary research mission of MSU. The significant body of work by Dr. Hansen has been recognized nationally and internationally, and will have a lasting impact on conservation practices worldwide.

For these and other contributions, the Board of Regents of Higher Education is pleased to confer upon Dr. Hansen the rank of Professor Emeritus of Ecology at Montana State University and wishes him well for many years into the future.

ATTACHMENTS

None