Dear Readers,

The Evans School Review Editorial Board is pleased to present this third edition of our student-run, peer-reviewed public affairs journal. The quality of the articles herein and the range of topics they address showcase perfectly the Evans School’s dedication to diversity and academic excellence. We are beyond honored to feature the work of these talented authors and researchers in our journal, and we thank each of them for allowing us to share in their hard work and achievement.

I began the school year with high hopes for this issue. As a relatively new journal, we still had a lot to learn, and significant room for improvement. That said, I never imagined it would come together as well as it did. Thanks to our amazing Editorial Board, we really hit it out of the park on all fronts. Everyone put an unbelievable amount of time and energy into making this the best edition of ESR yet and it really shows. Despite full course loads and work schedules, they never once sacrificed quality or integrity. I could never thank them enough for their vision, work ethic, patience and endurance throughout the past year.

In only our third year, we have come a long way in our quest to become a journal that is as reputable and esteemed as the Evans School itself. Some of our accomplishments this year include attracting nearly twice as many submissions as last year, debuting a new policy blog, launching a beautiful new website, crafting a more thorough editing process, and creating a brand new look and style guidelines.

None of this would have been possible without the help of our classmates, the Evans School staff and faculty, and members of our community, whose contributions make me realize how lucky I am to be a part of the Evans School.

On behalf of the Editorial Board I would like to first thank our advisors Maureen Pirog and Craig Thomas who shared with us invaluable guidance and expertise. We also appreciate Ellen Whitlock Baker, Dean Archibald, Linda Lake and Junko Sakuma for their generosity and patience throughout the many changes we made this year. Sumi Bhat-Kincaid, Chris Toman, Adrienne Meyer and the entire ESO staff: you are all amazing! Thank you so much for your assistance. I would also like to give a huge thanks to prior years’ staff, and especially last year’s editors-in-chief Matt McCleary and Mary Waldron for your advice and support. You left incredibly large shoes to fill. Thank you also to Sue Sabol, Manhattan Steak House, and Vain Salon, for helping us fund our journal this year, as well as Ann Lally, Jason Smith, Erin Hatheway, Tony Calero and Leslie Mabry for your kind assistance. Lastly, I would like send extend a massive thank you to the backbone of our journal - all the staff and section editors who took time out of their busy schedules to provide valuable and insightful comments on this year’s submissions. We could not have done any of this without you.

In closing, I want to share a story that speaks to my motivation for serving on ESR’s Editorial Board. Recently, a fellow student politely questioned me about how appropriate a journal is for a professional, skills-based school like Evans. That exchange made me realize just how much I believe in supporting endeavors like ESR. As aspiring leaders and policymakers, we should be as candid as possible with our knowledge and research. What we do in graduate school should not be devalued, for it is here that we inform our opinions and refine our values with optimism and courage. Grad school gives us license to explore, stretch limits, and learn from each other in an atmosphere unlike many workplaces or households. Thus, I argue that providing a forum to motivate others and offer solutions for real-world problems is absolutely appropriate for a public affairs school, if not more so than for other disciplines.

I hope that you too can see the value in ESR and other student-run publications around the world. It was a privilege to take part in this instructive and inspiring process. With that, I leave you to the issue. May you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed putting it together.

Cheers,

Bridgette Savino
Editor-in-Chief
Alumni Spotlight

Policy Analysis
IN AN ERA OF UNCERTAINTY

According to a report by the US Climate Change Science Program, climate change will have profound impacts on America’s forests (2008). Scientists predict that wildfires, driven by warming temperatures, extreme weather events and drought will affect more forests, be more severe, and more frequent. The 2012 wildfire year was on par with the worst in recorded history, in terms of acres burned. Uncharacteristically severe megafires, driven by climate effects and the effort to eliminate fire from forests over the past century, can have devastating effects on forest sustainability and pose risks to watersheds and wildlife habitat. America’s great drought, the largest on record in terms of geographic extent, continues into 2013, leading to predictions of yet another severe fire season this year. Reduced snowpack and accelerated snowmelt will impact forest growth and aquatic life. Climate change will stress forests in other ways, facilitating invasive species incursions into some forests, and contributing to unprecedented outbreaks of forest pests and disease in others. Fire, disease and pests are, of course, natural and essential to the developmental life cycle of forests; yet the pace of change is unprecedented and the future is largely uncertain for our forests. For example, in the American Southwest, scientists have observed that severely burned forests are not recovering from the effects of fire – the forests are permanently converted to brush and grasslands (Reese, 2012).

Climate impacts on forests have social costs as well. The United States Forest Service budgets somewhere around $950 million a year for firefighting yet spent almost $1.5 billion in 2012, raiding other agency accounts to cover the cost overruns (Associated Press, 2012). This is in addition to the state and local expenses, including in Washington State where emergency firefighting costs are expected to be close to $20 million in this fiscal year (Geranios, 2012). Nationally, state, local and federal firefighting costs probably reached $2 billion in 2012, according to experts (Barker, 2013). These social costs increase when one considers damaged and lost property and infrastructure, and lost lives. As climate change effects become more pronounced, costs continue to skyrocket. A recent report from the insurance industry pegged the costs of Hurricane Sandy at $65 billion and the US drought at $35 billion (Rice, 2013). The US Congress responded to Sandy with a $50 billion relief bill that will invest a few dollars into rebuilding ecosystem infrastructure and resiliency. The relief package provides $360 million to Department of the Interior programs to “increase the resiliency and capacity of coastal habitat and infrastructure.