

Southeast Coast Network

National Park Service
Inventory and Monitoring Division



Standard Operating Procedure 2.1.03

Southeast Coast Network Authorship Guidelines—Version 3.0

Please cite this as:

Southeast Coast Network. 2019. Southeast Coast Network authorship guidelines—Version 3.0. Southeast Coast Network Standard Operating Procedure NPS/SECN/SOP—2.1.03. Southeast Coast Network, Athens, Georgia.

Summary

The following Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) outlines the guidelines and responsibilities for authors of products developed by the Southeast Coast Inventory & Monitoring Network. This SOP was updated in March 2019 to clarify guidance for authorship of NRDS reports.

Revision Log

Revision Date	Author	Changes Made	Reason for Change	New Version #
12/27/2016	Wright	Major guideline changes	To bring SECN guidelines in compliance with National IMD guidelines	2.0
3/5/2019	M. B. Gregory	NRDS Guidance changes	To clarify guidance for NRDS authorship	3.0

Introduction

In June 2015, a memorandum was issued by Kirsten Gallo, Chief of the Inventory and Monitoring Division (IMD), which outlined guidance for determining authorship on scientific and scholarly products developed by the IMD. The following was derived from that guidance, sometimes verbatim, and should serve as a general guideline for the responsibilities and expectations for authorship of SECN products. Authorship is determined in a manner consistent with Director's Order #79, which instructs adherence to appropriate professional standards and responsible publication of scholarly and scientific documents. Guidance is based largely on existing procedures in place in sister Department of Interior (DOI) agencies, which are detailed in the original memorandum.

General Guidelines Applicable to All Products

On a collaborative project, the roles and responsibilities of each team member should be outlined in an initial project meeting, led by the project leader.

Primary Author

The primary author should be the person who takes the lead in all aspects of the product's development, and is accountable for the product as an "accurate, verifiable report" of the research (Gallo 2015) including:

- Conception and design of the study.
- Active participation in collection of field or laboratory data.
- Contribution of novel analytical or laboratory tools or reagents.
- Analysis and interpretation of results.
- Compliance with peer-review guidelines of their own agency.

Secondary and Other Authorship

Co-authorship is based on the amount of contribution to a collaboration. First and second authors generally take the bulk of the workload, with other authors providing contributions. Junior authors can be listed alphabetically after the primary authors. All co-authors should contribute substantially to the project and with the same level of scientific integrity and quality as the primary authors.

Secondary (and beyond) authorship is warranted based on contributions such as the following (Gallo 2015), and secondary authors are responsible for complying with the peer review processes of their own agency:

- Acting in a leadership or coordination role that results in a high-quality dataset.
- Data analysis that appears in the final product.
- Writing a portion of the final product.
- Making a substantial contribution to the interpretation of the results.

Persons who contribute the following may be recognized in an acknowledgement, or as a co-author if they also meet the above criteria:

- Identification of study questions, study design, and protocols.
- Responsibility for data collection at individual study sites.
- Significant contribution to analyses or interpretation of analyses, or development of map layers derived from study data.

The following generally do *not* warrant authorship unless there is a compelling reason, but may be recognized in an acknowledgements section if appropriate.

- Generation of cartographic maps that are not substantially derived from study data (e. g., basic locator maps).
- Database management / development / quality control (though authorship of databases or data sets might be warranted).
- Scoping / brainstorming meeting participants (but developers of novel approaches might need to be included).
- Funding.
- Consultants (statistical).
- Reviewers.
- Editors.
- COTR / ATR designation on a project.
- Authorship / contributions to cited references.
- Use of published data (should be cited as a reference).

Exceptions / Clarifications:

- Honorary authorship for persons or agencies that provide financial support is not appropriate.
- Ghost authorship, or removing oneself from the author list, is not permitted.
- Reviewers may be acknowledged, but are not held responsible for the final content of the report.
- It is generally *not* appropriate to be an author on a product that was developed under a contract.
- In some cases it *is* appropriate to expect co-authorship on reports from cooperative agreements. In such cases, expectations should be discussed with cooperators during the proposal development stage and should be explicitly mentioned in the agreement. However some limits to NPS authorship are as follows:

- SECN staff should not be coauthors on final reports to the NPS from cooperators. These should be independently written by the cooperator in accordance with the agreement product specifications.
- It is often appropriate for SECN staff to be co-authors on reports in the NPS publication series or to external outlets (such as journals) if our contribution to those publications meets the authorship standards outlined above.
- In cases where the primary author of the report is unable to meet the responsibilities listed above:
 - The network program manager or peer review manager can delegate any or all of those functions to a new product lead.
 - Depending on where a product is in the development and publication process, the original author should not expect to remain primary author. Although he or she might remain as such, the contributions of the new product lead might (and often will) warrant primary authorship.
 - The original author should remain a coauthor, but his or her place in the order of authors is dependent on the contributions to the final product.
- For official document revisions (typical of standard operating procedures):
 - Minor revisions should retain all original authors in their original order, and any additional authors as warranted.
 - Major revisions should have a designated primary author before revisions begin, whose responsibilities include all those listed above. All original authors should be retained in their original order (unless shifted because of a new primary author).

It is sometimes appropriate for the author to be “Southeast Coast Network.” This is particularly true for documents that will be frequently updated as new data become available such as program summaries, resource briefs, web pages, and some standard operating procedures.

Specific Guidance for Data Summary Reports

Generally, authorship for data reports should follow the same guidance as that outlined by Gallo (2015) with the primary author being the person who takes the lead in the major aspects of the data collection effort (e.g., planning, field work, data entry, QA/QC, processing), and who is accountable for the product as an accurate and verifiable data source. The primary author for SECN data reports should be the protocol lead. They are expected to ensure parks have a chance to review reports prior to publication, brief parks on the contents of the reports, and serve as the network's point of contact for any questions or issues related to the published data and/or report. In some cases, at the discretion of the protocol lead and the peer review manager (program manager for most NRDS report), compilation of data reports may be delegated to other staff members and/or interns. Data reports compiled by anyone other than the protocol lead may include reports that are primarily automated data summaries or other summary-type analyses explicitly described in the protocol's reporting SOPs. Data sets and data reports are separate products, however, the protocol lead is responsible for the content of the data set regardless of data report author. If the protocol lead chooses to delegate the responsibility of compiling NRDS reports, the person compiling the report will be first author. In this case, the protocol lead will always be the second author. As with the NRR reporting guidance, changes to, or assignment of, primary authorship on data reports should be discussed and agreed upon prior to beginning work on the report.

- In cases where a significant amount of analysis is necessary prior to publishing the report (such as analysis of audio recordings), additional authors might be warranted.
- Development of figure and table templates as prescribed in the monitoring protocols (draft or published) does not warrant authorship on data summary reports. The protocol and/or reporting SOP(s) should be cited.
- Development of a report template from prior years does not warrant authorship on future data summary reports.
- Managing contracts related to data collection, management, and analysis does not warrant authorship of data summary reports.
- If, in the professional best judgment of the authors or reviewers, there are significant findings that require more in-depth interpretation of results and their significance, the report should be published in the Natural Resource Report (NRR) series, and authorship and contributions should be adjusted as necessary.

Other Notes

Presentations made at professional meetings, conferences, and symposia generally provide new information to a targeted audience. Because presentations or associated abstracts may potentially be cited, these talks should follow the authorship guidelines above.

Presentations made in other venues such as park or other internal briefings or public presentations, should generally be solely authored by the person giving the presentation regardless of whose data and information is being discussed. In cases where discussing the work of someone else in the network, the presenter should direct the audience to the proper person or place (IRMA or the network web page) for more information.

The network should be listed as author on all derivative products such as resource briefs or program summaries.

Recommended Practices for Establishing Authorship on Cooperative Projects

Quoted from Gallo (2015).

1. At the first kickoff meeting the participants will discuss what effort or contribution they consider qualifying as co-authorship versus those contributions that should be acknowledged, but do not merit authorship. The above guidelines will be used as a starting point, but additional factors unique to the particular project may also be discussed.
2. Any collaborators in the project can request clarification or discussion about authorship as the project progresses.
3. When the first draft of a planned technical report, journal paper or other product is outlined, key collaborators should discuss and decide upon possible publication outlets, authorship responsibilities for writing, analysis, editing, and interpretation of findings, and order of authorship. A draft list of acknowledgements will also be discussed.
4. Authorship and acknowledgment decisions should be recorded and circulated to all collaborators, and should be revised as appropriate as the product is finalized. In some cases, key collaborators may be initially involved with a project, but then drop out or fade away as the project progresses (or new ones may be added). These guidelines and appendices should be used ensure appropriate authorship and acknowledgment of the final product prior to publication.
5. If appropriate, the final draft of the paper or product will indicate authors' specific contributions to the published work in a byline (Weltzin et al. 2006).

Literature Cited

- Gallo, K. 2015. Guidelines for determining authorship on scientific and scholarly products developed by the Inventory and Monitoring Program. Memorandum issued 25 June 2015. National Park Service, Natural Resource Stewardship and Science, Inventory & Monitoring Division.
- Weltzin, J. F., R. T. Belote, L. T. Williams, J. K. Keller, and E. Cayenne Engel. 2006. Authorship in ecology: Attrition, accountability, and responsibility. *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* 4:435–441.