

Welcome to *Lithosphere*

Dear Readers,

So, do we really need *another* journal full of papers on solid earth science taking up shelf space in our offices and competing for scarce subscription funds in our libraries? The answer to this question was, in a sense, addressed 150 years ago by Charles Darwin in a somewhat different context: new journals, like new species, arise to fill a niche in which resources are available. For evolving species, the resources might be sunlight, oxygen, and nourishment; for journals, the necessary resource is authors with good papers they'd like to see vetted and widely disseminated with a minimum of delay. The Geological Society of America already publishes some of the premier journals dedicated to the geosciences, journals such as *Geology*, the *Geological Society of America Bulletin*, and the more recent online publication, *Geosphere*, which serve as popular venues for authors aspiring to reach a wide audience. In fact, these journals may be a bit too popular, hence the need for *Lithosphere*.

Currently, growth in membership, in international reach, and, consequently, in submissions has meant that the editors of *Geology* and *GSA Bulletin* are often faced with having many more excellent papers than they have space to publish, even with ahead-of-print online publishing available to ease the wait for print. Careful examination of the submissions to these established journals revealed a surfeit of papers dealing with solid earth sciences, and research into the sustained growth of tectonics- and structural geology-related disciplines showed a continuing interest in the fields. This, along with a goal of providing an outlet for interdisciplinary papers and papers that explore interactions and integration determined the general focus of *Lithosphere*. Whether the new species, *Lithosphere*, can compete successfully and flourish remains to be seen, but the niche is there to be filled and authors are clamoring for journal pages. It seems logical, a good deed even, to bring the one to the other.

Maybe we do need a new journal addressing solid earth science research, but why should *you* submit your paper(s) to this journal? First, a quick look at the pages that follow should convince you that authors can count on a final product that reflects GSA's perennial high production values: its outstanding professional staff takes pains to ensure that text is accurate and complete and that figures are reproduced as authors intended. We editors will do all we can to make sure that your submissions are reviewed quickly by competent peers and that decisions are rendered respectfully. With the help of our Editorial Board and reviewers, we will also work hard to maintain the highest evaluation standards so that papers published in *Lithosphere* are as widely disseminated and appreciated as those that appear in *Geology* or *GSA Bulletin*. The journal's format will include short articles similar to those published in *Geology*, longer research articles, and review articles solicited by the editors. It is our goal to have high-quality papers in both the short and long formats evaluated and published quickly so that *Lithosphere* becomes a venue for rapid publication of research that just won't fit in the short-format journals.

Finally, it is our intention that *Lithosphere* evolve quickly into a venue of choice for provocative research that capitalizes on the clear trend towards interdisciplinary research in tectonic processes at all scales, especially those of the lithosphere, from the Earth's surface to its base. We place a premium on finding, attracting, or commissioning and then publishing those papers which will compete effectively for the attention of researchers working, in some way, on the lithosphere. At the end of our terms as editors, we'd like to be able to say that *Lithosphere* published high-quality, wide-ranging research addressing how the Earth's surface, crust, and mantle interact to shape the physical and chemical evolution of the lithosphere—the part of the Earth where we humans live, work, and play, after all—and thereby spurred the evolution of our thinking about our planet.

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