Soil Horizons is launching a new department of reader submissions in the “front matter,” or non-peer-reviewed section, of the publication, and we are pleased to introduce Lorene Lynn as coordinator and associate editor of this section. Lorene is a consulting soil scientist who specializes in permafrost dynamics and tundra ecology. She primarily works for oil and gas clients in the arctic and for mining and government clients throughout Alaska. Previously, she worked for the USDA-NRCS soil survey and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Her graduate studies on coastal erosion along the Beaufort Sea Coast of Alaska sparked a career in which she never experiences heat, instead working in a parka in the arctic in the months most people associate with summer.

Her passion for bringing an understanding of science to all people led her to work with Soil Horizons. She would like to see the front matter section deliver the human side of soil science stories for a broad audience. She lives in Palmer, Alaska with her husband and two children, who are both very close to launching lives of their own. Following are the guidelines for submitting content to this new section of Soil Horizons.

Reader Submission Guidelines
What we’re looking for are stories that convey the beauty and wonder of soil, the excitement and rewards of working as a soil scientist, and personal anecdotes that may be helpful to other soil scientists. The language should be appropriate for lay audiences, including teachers, students, and the general public. Articles might include personal accounts of unique field experiences; work with students of all ages; soil-related hobbies (e.g., soil art projects); visits to interesting or inspiring preserves, parks, or other landscapes; volunteer experiences, etc.

If you have an idea for an article, please contact Lorene Lynn at Lorene.Lynn@hdrinc.com to discuss the suitability of the story for the front matter section and how best to put the article together.

The main thing to keep in mind is that these articles are meant to be entertaining and personal, rather than technical or scientific. So as you write, focus less on technical description and more on the human elements of the story.

- Let us know what you’re planning. We welcome your ideas for articles at any time. If you have one, please contact guest editor, Lorene Lynn, at Lorene.Lynn@hdrinc.com to discuss the suitability of the story for the front matter section of Soil Horizons and how best to put the article together.

- Keep the audience in mind. Soil scientists read the front matter section of Soil Horizons, but the primary audiences for this content are non-experts, including teachers, students, and the public. So, steer clear of technical jargon and try to give readers a story rather than a report.

- Get personal. If you’re writing about one of your own experiences, tell readers what your thoughts and impressions were, how and why you got involved, what you learned or found most interesting, what went wrong and what went right. If you’re writing about a student project or an event, collect these impressions from others—preferably while the project or event is still going on—and include them in your story.

- Clearly state your theme, premise, or main point. Did a field trip open your eyes to an issue you’d never thought about before? Did viewing artwork in a preserve deepen your appreciation for the landscape? Writers are usually driven to write because they have a message to convey, but sometimes that message gets lost in the details.
or left out entirely. Make sure to state yours explicitly.

- **Report any outcomes early on.** Technical reports save results and conclusions for the end, but stories typically hit readers with the outcomes right away. If a program for inner city kids successfully sparked their interest in science, for example, describe this positive result to readers before launching into the details such as where the project took place, who funded it, etc. Telling readers upfront *why* what you did was important and valuable helps ensure more of them will stick around to learn *how* you did it.

- **Choose your details carefully.** Anecdotes that convey the excitement and trials of working in the field (such as an encounter with a bear or getting sucked into a bog) are always great to include. Technical details on how you took soil measurements should be left out unless they’re critical to the story you’re telling.

- **Be concise.** The typical length of an article in the front matter section of *Soil Horizons* is 1,000 to 1,500 words, or about four to five double-spaced pages of text. If you think you’ll go over 1,500 words, please discuss this with Lorene Lynn ahead of time.