March 16, 2016

*To*:

Dr. Stuart E.G. Findlay

Editor-in-Chief

Aquatic Sciences

*From*:

Dr. Marcus W. Beck

US Environmental Protection Agency

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Enclosed please find our manuscript, entitled “Ecological determinants of *Potamogeton* taxa in glacial lakes: assemblage composition, species richness, and species-level approach”, to be considered as a research article in Aquatic Sciences. The *Potamogeton* genus includes over 80 species of aquatic macrophytes with wide ranges that cover almost all freshwater systems across the globe. Our manuscript presents the first evaluation of this diverse genus to describe environmental and spatial factors that drive variation in community structure on a regional scale. A large dataset of more than 200 lakes in the Midwest United States was used to characterize variation attributed to spatial, local, and climate variables. Our results highlight the importance of landscape-level approaches to ecological conservation. The conclusions can also be generalized to freshwater communities of glacial lakes in other regions (e.g., northern Europe).

Due to misunderstandings with the reviewers in the past, we kindly request that our reviewers are ecologists and not taxonomically-oriented botanists. We consider that ecologists can give us a fair review, as our manuscript deals with general ecological questions which are not necessarily well-known to taxonomists. Please do not hesitate to contact us with questions regarding our manuscript. We greatly appreciate the opportunity to publish our work in Aquatic Sciences.

Respectfully,

Marcus W. Beck