

Society for the Study of Social Problems
Environment and Technology Division Annual Business Meeting
30 July 2026, MS Teams

In attendance:

Angus Nurse (Chair, Minute Taker)¹

Marko Salvaggio (incoming Division Chair)

Tanesha Thomas

Nels Paulson

Clare Cannon

Becky Rafter

I. Brief Introductions

II. Update from Angus Nurse, Division Chair

AN noted a few pieces of business from the Chair. First, to note that AN is the outgoing chair of the Environment and Technology Division and Marko Salvaggio, present in the meeting, takes over as the new Division Chair after the annual meeting in August.

AN confirmed that key tasks for the annual business meeting were to: note the student paper award and to get volunteers for next year's award panel; to discuss next year's annual meeting and ideas for possible panels for the meeting that Marko can take into discussions with the other division chairs. The meeting also needs to confirm the Division budget which has been revised downwards in line with changes to the budgets according to Division size. E & T currently has approx. 76 members, thus the annual budget is \$400. AN noted that there is a need to try and grow the Division Membership but there are challenges in doing so. Some colleagues in the UK have dropped their SSSP membership and the two reasons generally cited are the journal going fully electronic and not getting a print copy as part of the membership fee, and also the fact that they're probably not going to get funding to travel to the annual meeting in the current climate.

AN noted that the Division originally had three or four panels for the annual meeting in New York but was now down to two sessions. The strongest one that's kept all its presenters is Tanesha's session, so well done. Marko's session had dropped down to three presenters and Angus's session had lost three or four of its planned papers with the remaining one reallocated and the session being cancelled.

¹ These minutes are a summary of the discussion rather than a verbatim transcript of the meeting.

MS confirmed that his session was three papers and that they were looking to merge it with another session, but this late in the day it would be too challenging for the panellists to have to change things around with their schedule. The meeting noted that the Division had several people who accepted their involvement in the programme and then dropped out because they couldn't get funded through their institution. That seemed to be the main reason for people who wanted to come and present dropping out after paper acceptance.

Final key update from AN was on publications, noting that the Division has worked to develop its publications activity over the last few years and has a special environmental issues themed issue of *Social Problems*, which should appear in August 2027. The issue is edited by AN, MS and Michael Long (on behalf of the journal editorial team). The special issue is at the stage of papers having been submitted and going through the peer-review and editorial processes. The Division also has an edited book collection on key debates in environmental sociology in progress, this is being edited by AN and Laura McKinney, one of the Division's former chairs. That edited collection is due to be submitted to the publishers in August (or early September) so it should come out next year. The other likely division publication is a textbook on teaching environmental problems. This was discussed at the annual meeting in Montreal and will be the subject of some dedicated effort once the other publications are more or less out of the way. This is just to flag to the Division membership that if anybody is interested in putting a chapter together for the teaching textbook, to contact Division leadership. We will add this to the calendar of activities for the next year.

III. Student Paper Award

The Division did not make a Graduate Student Paper Award last year as the Division was advised that the preferred award winner was ineligible under the award rules. This year the Division had three eligible candidates and is pleased to announce that the winning paper was "The Dead River is Killing Us": Environmental Risk and Reproductive Decision-Making in Colombia's Caribbean Coast, by Maria Ximena Dávila, PhD Candidate in Sociology at the University of Texas at Austin. AN thanked Marko Salvaggio, Jonathan Tollefson and Tanesha Thomas for serving with him on the award panel.

AN asked for volunteers for next year's student paper award panel. Historically, the previous winner has been a member of the panel, so Jonathan won a couple of years ago and then served on the panel. The meeting agreed to keep this process so that either AN or Marko would need to reach out to Maria and check that she's happy to be on the panel for next year. Marko, Tanesha and AN volunteered to be on the panel for next year.

IV. 2027 Annual Meeting, Chicago – Division-Sponsored Sessions

Next item is Division-sponsored sessions for the 2027 annual meeting. The theme for Next Year is: [Building Communities for Radical Change](#). The 2027 annual meeting takes place in Chicago. The conference theme notes that sociology remains embattled and aims to collectively imagine something beyond sociology as currently constituted, to consider a sociology after sociology. The conference asks: ‘Can we build a radically reconstructive project from the rubble of the old discipline? What would that look like?’

AN, and MS noted that the Division could have 1 sole Division session and three co-sponsored sessions, and it does generally look that co-sponsored sessions are more successful and probably have less of a chance of being cancelled.

MS confirmed that he had been in touch with the new chair of the Conflict Social Action and Change Division and they were interested in maybe doing something collaborative. MS suggested something that could potentially fit the theme of the conference next year, something along the lines of like building radical environmental communities. The other thing to add is given that Tanesha’s session did so well this year, and that one was co-sponsored with poverty class and inequality, which might be a larger division to consider co-sponsoring with them and keeping that theme going.

MS also commented that in the past the Division had co-organized sessions with the Global Division and should consider doing so again. NP agreed querying whether Clare Cannon had previously arranged a session with the Global Division on Gender and the Environment and whether something along these lines would fit the conference theme? CC confirmed collaboration with the Global Division had been done a couple of times including around climate issues. A session around rural and gender issues was also suggested in the meeting chat by Becky which the meeting endorsed and CC confirmed she would be happy to organise something with the Global Division. NP summed up that there were four potential co-sponsored sessions: Marko’s radical communities’ idea, Tanesha’s session, a collaboration with Global that CC would pursue and Becky’s rural and gender proposal. MS to take these ideas into meeting with the other Division chairs on the last day of the meeting. NP suggested that if a lot of the other divisions are doing their meetings ahead of time, it might be worthwhile to send emails to those incoming chairs in advance of the annual meeting rather than wait until the last day of the conference in case decisions had already been taken. AN reminded MS that in previous years there had been a spreadsheet circulated among Division leaders to facilitate collaboration, taking into account that not all Division leaders would be available for the last day or the conference due to travel arrangements. At least one email had already been received from another Division leader seeking collaboration. BR queried if gender and rural was too broad for a potential panel and whether it needed to be narrowed down or refined. AN suggested it could be narrowed down to something

a bit more specific, like, gender disparities in the rural environment, although not suggesting that as the specific title. MS and AN to follow up on the ideas and possible co-organizers. MS queried which should be the E & T Division's sole session. NP suggested this should be closely linked to the conference title and queried if the Division might take the opportunity to push back a little on the idea that the sociology discipline is in rubble given that some research is in good health and that in some areas being a sociologist carries quite a bit of sway. AN and MS agreed noting the increased options for publication and engagement with some policymakers. AN suggested E & T could have a division session that critiques the conference theme and maybe takes it forward a bit in terms of saying that in environmental sociology there are developments in scholarship and opportunities. NP suggested something like opportunities in the future of environmental sociology, a broad session that kind of pushes back a little bit on the idea of sociology being in rubble while also fitting into this idea of radical change simultaneously. MS agreed in terms of this being the focus of an E & T Division session.

V. Budget confirmation and Discussion

AN noted that the Division budget had been reduced to \$400 based on Division size with E & T now being classed as a medium sized division and the division budget now \$400 instead of \$600. The current 2026 budget, as adjusted, provides for a \$200 annual stipend to the division newsletter editor (Emily Burke). AN, and MS to check that Emily wishes to continue in this role, although we understand that she does. The Division also gives an award of \$150 to the division's graduate student paper competition winner which facilitates their attendance at the annual general meeting. The Division then also contributes \$50 to division sponsored receptions at the annual meeting. The meeting was asked to agree whether to retain the existing budget allocation. The meeting agreed, confirming that it did not wish to reduce the stipend for the newsletter editor as this would be unfair. AN noted that the Division did not currently have a social media editor which may be something to consider in the future as this is occasionally queried from SSSP office. NP confirmed that he still had control over the Division's Facebook page which was previously run by a graduate student, although it was acknowledged that this had been dormant for several years, the last posting possibly dating back to 2019.

VI. E & T Newsletter and Publications

AN confirmed that the next Division newsletter Summer 2026 had recently been put together and the text agreed with Marko and submitted to the newsletter editor for distribution hopefully before the Annual meeting.² The newsletter introduces Marko as

² The Newsletter is now available at:

https://www.sssp1.org/file/Newsletters/E&T/SSSP_E&T_Summer_2026.pdf

the Division's new chair, lists the 2027 conference as requiring E & T member input on panels and papers and provides an update on recent division scholarship. AN flagged that details of recent publications had been collated from online notifications mainly through Google scholar and publications notified by email and encourages division members to notify MS of publications and news items for future newsletters.

VII. New Division Chair – takes over at the August Annual Meeting

AN formally notified the meeting that MS takes over as Division Chair at the annual meeting and queried if MS wished to add anything or identify anything he needed as he takes over. MS confirmed that he had a pretty good idea of what to propose to some of the division chairs by e-mail before the New York meeting. MS would reach out to individual members where required for titles and confirmation that they wish to be session organisers or co-organisers. MS also confirmed that he would be happy to meet up with Division members at the annual meeting. Several confirmed this would be a good idea. MS to follow-up by email.

VIII. Any Other Business

BR introduced herself as being new to the group and thanked all for their leadership and for all the work and scholarship that being carried out. BR is at Georgia Tech in Atlanta, with a focus on nuclear communities that live around nuclear plants, both nuclear energy, nuclear power, and nuclear waste and nuclear and mining for uranium. Her research is all community based. Having worked in social justice in the field for most of her career, she has now gone back to school to get a PhD. AN welcomed BR to the meeting and the Division as did NP who complemented BR on her amazing work.

AN commented that when putting together the Division's edited collection, one of the things the editors did was to go back through several years of SSSP meetings to get a sense of what kind of papers were being presented at the conference and who was doing what kind of work. AN commented that the amazing range of work being presented could probably have filled the book several times over which may be something for MS to think about as Chair and whether or not we do another edited collection at a later stage.

NP thanked AN for his time serving as chair and for the work to develop both an edited volume highlighting the work of this division plus a special issue in *Social Problems*, in a short two years as a division chair. AN thanked NP and also thanked MS for his hard work on the special issue which was being developed with the editorial team at *Social Problems*. It was worth identifying the long lead in and time commitment for this work. The initial conversation with the editorial team took place after their session at the 2024 annual meeting in Montreal. It's to the credit of the *Social Problems*

editorial team that they have been able to develop an efficient system for progressing the special issue with the online nature of the journal making it easier to have a good selection of papers. MS noted that at the recent Division chairs meeting it seemed as if E & T were the only division that was really doing things in terms of publications and this is something that he as chair would like to see continued.

MS also raised the issue of Division-sponsored SSSP workshops that we could apply to hold. E & T didn't have anything lined up for Chicago next year, but looking at the future event in Baltimore, he would love to be able to do something for the division to host some kind of workshop as MS used to live in Baltimore and there's just some great environmental organisations in that city that it would be good to partner with. NP confirmed that the Division did apply for and get funding to do that kind of workshop several years ago. We were supposed to do it in San Francisco and then COVID hit, but we had the funding for it. And then we were going to do it in Chicago and then still it wasn't like things were still pretty locked down. NP suggested that the past proposal could be resurrected and changed to fit with MS's contacts in Baltimore. NP indicated that he and Tanesha may have discussed this issue previously in relation to environmental pollution. This is a major issue in Baltimore in respect of a huge incinerator that's been a controversy for many, many years. TT and MS agreed, Baltimore has significant problems with environmental pollution down in this one area of the city which particularly affects a low-income black community with higher rates of cancer within that area. So, there are some environmental groups that have been working on resisting the incinerator and these are some groups that E & T could potentially reach out to.

Meeting Ends.