

Whatcha Gonna Do?

The Situation

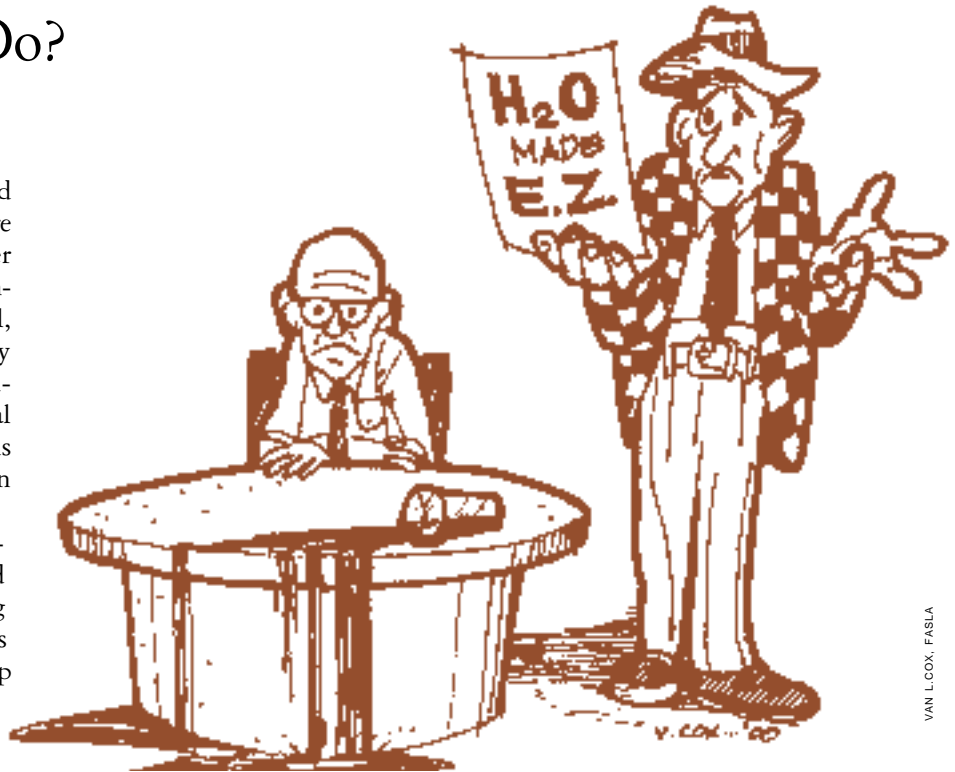
Noe Noledge, ASLA, was determined to expand his landscape architecture business into the realm of water quality including watershed management, water pollution control, and stream restoration. Noe had stood by and watched while a number of his competitors received public and professional acknowledgement for their work in this field, and he desperately wanted to join them in their cutting-edge endeavors.

Despite his determination, Noe overlooked one important point. He lacked any formal training or any continuing education units in water quality. This lack of education and training showed up in his applications and proposals, and he was routinely turned down and bypassed for new state and local jobs that were receiving federal matching funds. On one particularly appealing project, a fellow member of the Society, Wel Trayned, suggested that he and Noe collaborate on the new Back Creek stream restoration project. Wel was an award-winning designer of water conservation projects with national name recognition. This would be just the kind of opportunity Noe needed to switch his specialization. In the interest of expanding his practice and increasing his revenues, Noe told Wel he had prior experience in streambank restoration. Later, Wel found out that his partner lacked any experience whatsoever in water conservation.

Whatcha Gonna Do?

Wel was in a bind. He felt that Noe had betrayed his trust and may have committed an ethical violation. So for this reason he wrote to the ASLA Ethics Committee for advice.

In his letter, he described the situation and asked the committee whether and to what degree Noe was in violation of the ASLA Code and Guidelines for Professional Conduct. He also asked the committee if it had any suggestions as



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to what short-term steps Noe might take to increase his knowledge of water conservation work.

The Recommendation of the ASLA Ethics Committee

The ASLA Ethics Committee suggested that Wel help Noe find a reputable continuing education program that would provide him with the skills and certification he needed for this kind of work. The committee noted that the ASLA School of Continuing Education provides seminars on a variety of emerging practice areas including streambank assessment and classification and streambank restoration.

The committee also noted that as a member of the Society, Noe had an ethical commitment to keep his education and training current in his area of practice. In this regard, ES1.3 states, "Members should endeavor to protect the interests of their clients and the public through competent performance of their work; participate in continuing education, educational research, and

development and dissemination of technical information relating to planning, design construction and management of the physical environment."

Similarly, R1.301 states, "Members shall undertake to perform professional services when education, training, or experience in specific technical areas involved qualifies them, together with those persons whom they may engage as consultants."

Editor's Note: One of the objectives of the ASLA Ethics Committee is to educate members about the ASLA Code and Guidelines for Professional Conduct. The code contains important principles relating to duties to clients and to members of the Society.

Readers are invited to send their comments on cases appearing in LAND to Managing Editor, 636 Eye Street, NW, Washington DC 20001-3736 or e-mail to bwelsh@asla.org. Members are invited to submit questions regarding ethical matters along with supporting data to Allen Hixon, FASLA, Ethics Committee Chair, c/o ASLA, 636 Eye Street, NW, Washington DC 20001-3736.