

**Subject: RFI: Public Access to Peer-Reviewed Scholarly Publications  
Resulting From Federally Funded Research**

**Date:** January 11, 2012 8:03:26 PM EST

Dear Science and Technology Policy Office,

I'll begin by quoting a letter with the appropriate sentiment which was written by Dr. Mike Taylor:

"Thank you for extending the deadline for comments on Public Access to Peer-Reviewed Scholarly Publications Resulting From Federally Funded Research. The Research Works Act has only very recently come to the notice of scientists, and it is because of this extraordinary proposal that it is now apparent to us that we need to reaffirm what we thought was settled: that OF COURSE scientific work funded by the public should be freely accessible to the public. I do not understand how this can even be a matter for discussion. The public pays: the public should benefit in every way possible.

The language in the RWA is highly misleading, attributing to publishers far more input into the scientific process than they really have. The truth is that scientists (often funded by public money) provide the underlying research, the writing and the figure preparation that result in a manuscript submitted for publication. Other scientists then provide the editorial services and (contra publishers' claims, as can be easily verified) the peer review. Publishers' contributions are limited essentially to typesetting, the provision of web hosting, and sometimes a very limited amount of compensation for senior editors only (usually not the handling editors who actually deal with authors' works). The notion that such a minor contribution should suffice to hand publishers, rather than the public, the right to determine how, where and under what regime the resulting works are disseminated, is ludicrous."

This is a blatant attempt to rob the public of a service and property which is by rights theirs to access freely. The RWA will not go forward. It must be stopped and measures need to be put in place to prevent Elsevier and similarly-minded groups from attempting such obviously shameless coups on what is not and will never be theirs to own in the future.

Sincerely,  
Lee Hall  
Paleontologist  
SWCA Environmental Consultants

