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## VZJ Launches New Paper Type: “Priority Communications”

*Vadose Zone Journal* (VZJ) is rolling out a new type of manuscript called “Priority Communications.” This idea was suggested by one of the associate editors and was accepted by the co-editors of the journal in June 2013. These new manuscripts are intended to highlight time-sensitive research results that have far-reaching impacts across the vadose zone community. These manuscripts will undergo the same rigorous peer-review process as any other submission, but the process will be accelerated, with a goal of online access within 32 days of original submission. Manuscripts to be considered for Priority Communications review will differ in style and length from general submissions. The editors will use the following criteria when considering new manuscripts.

Manuscripts will present one or more of the following:

- New results in a rapidly growing field of vadose zone research (i.e., “game changers”)
- New results that will likely have an impact on a large number of on-going studies
- Important groundbreaking results of interest to the broader community

Length and writing style

- Manuscripts must be concise (no longer than four printed pages)
- Manuscripts must be written in a language that is easily accessible to a wider audience

The workflow process for these types of manuscripts will follow what is now routine for other submissions, except for a few modifications to accelerate the review process and widen distribution to readers. The modifications include:

- Manuscripts accepted as-is or with minor (editorial) revisions will move forward. All other manuscripts will be released to the authors.
- Authors agree to pay for Open Access to improve distribution to readers.
- We anticipate that the number of Priority Communications manuscripts will be limited to no more than one per month.
- These manuscripts will be highlighted by SSSA through social media, press releases, or similar tools.

To have a manuscript considered for Priority Communication status, authors should contact the editor with a written justification for why the paper should be considered as such. It is the editors’ goal that the new manuscripts will provide an exciting new outlet for rapidly communicating new vadose zone science to the readers of VZJ, members of SSSA, and the broader scientific community. We expect some tweaks to the workflow as we gain experience handling these fast turnaround manuscripts, but our goal of online access within 32 days of submission will remain.

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