

Ben Young Landis

Writer/Creator. Designing Lasting Impact for Science, Environment, and Society.

PROFILE

- I am a writer, creative consultant, and trainer with roots in environmental management and ecology.
- Analytically, I identify and connect contexts across issues, disciplines, and audiences.
- Aesthetically, I embrace thoughtful messaging, inspired wordplay, and elegant design.

As a writer, I frame messages and pen eloquent copy to help nonprofit, academia, government, and industry clients connect with their audience — explaining their societal impact and core mission. As a consultant, I design resonant strategies and memorable brands — producing evocative stories, digital content, advertising collateral, and experiential events. As a trainer, I teach scientists and experts how to concisely and engagingly communicate their knowledge to others — answering the question “why should I care?” for communities and decisionmakers.

SELECT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Comms Advisor, California Council on Science and Technology (Sacramento, CA, USA, 2015-18)

As consultant, I launched and managed social media accounts for CCST and its science policy fellowship; wrote policy briefs; and provided media relations, creative direction, program strategy, and executive writing services.

Science Communicator, U.S. Geological Survey (Sacramento, CA, USA, 2010-15)

For the USGS Western Ecological Research Center, I translated complex scientific findings for resource manager, journalist, and lay audiences on topics such as marine ecology, energy and wildlife, protected species, fire ecology, wetland restoration, and climate change. I prepared press kits, guided researchers through media rollouts, hosted public outreach booths, and staffed the Center Director on briefings at regional, bureau, and secretarial levels.

Writer and Contributing Editor, North Carolina Sea Grant (Raleigh, NC, USA, 2009-10)

I wrote and photographed story packages on fisheries, aquaculture, and coastal economies, interviewing scientists, agency managers, industry reps, and commercial fishers to highlight public benefits of state and federal grants.

Science and Environment Journalist, Orange County Register (Santa Ana, CA, USA, 2009)

I worked as a newspaper reporter on daily and digital deadlines, with interviews spanning Apollo astronauts and university researchers. Sponsored by the AAAS Mass Media Science & Engineering Fellowship.

Environmental Policy Researcher, Duke University (Durham, NC, USA, 2007-09)

I worked on assessing the value of regional water infrastructure in North Carolina's Triangle Region, and studied the idea of measuring economic benefit flows in justifying regional cost-sharing for water infrastructure investments.

Aquatic Ecology Technician and Asst. Lab Director, University of California (Davis, CA, USA, 2000-2007)

I conducted bioassessment sampling in impacted waterways and field work on salmonids in Mendocino redwoods.

SELECT CLIENTS AND PARTNERS

10th World Conference of Science Journalists • AGU Thriving Earth Exchange • Burroughs Wellcome Fund • CCST • Delta Science Fellows • Latino Heritage Internship Program • Latino Outdoors • National Association of Science Writers • SETAC North America • Sacramento Ad Club FREETHink • Science Talk • Sigma Xi • UC Davis FUTURE • Wild River • Worcester Refugee Assistance Project

FOCUS: California Council on Science and Technology

Challenge: A state-created nonprofit that advises California leaders on science policy, the California Council on Science and Technology (CCST) lacked a concise messaging strategy conveying its unique mission and relevance to the very policymakers it sought to serve.

Design Solution: I assessed CCST's history, programming, partners, and audience, and crafted new tagline for the organization: “Making California's Policies Stronger with Science.”

Lasting Impact: I incorporated the theme into all CCST copy, branding, social media, and collateral. The strategy now anchors all leadership talking points and CCST's major gifts campaign.

Online: ccst.us/reports/annual-report-2017

FOCUS: 10th World Conference of Science Journalists

Challenge: Hosting a global meeting amidst diplomatic tumult in 2017, U.S. organizers needed messaging that could foster unity and warmly welcome attendees from diverse nations and sectors.

Design Solution: With partner Kelly Tyrrell, we crafted “Identity” — a nine-month, multi-stage social media and attendee engagement campaign culminating in the message: “If you believe in the societal impact of science journalism — come find your global community.”

Lasting Impact: The strategy generated necessary advance buzz, drawing praise and set a new bar for WCSJ and NASW marketing.

Online: bit.ly/wcsj2017identity

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PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS and LEADERSHIP

I am the founder of **Capital Science Communicators (CapSciComm)**, a network for greater Sacramento students and professionals in journalism, public relations, creative, policy, outreach, and research. Since 2013, we have cultivated a vibrant regional community: local science cafés have proliferated from one to four active programs, and we continue to foster career advancement through our networking events, jobs listserv, and Twitter engagement.

www.capsciomm.org/2017/04/12/boardstatement201704

Also: Duke Environment Club of Sacramento (Co-Founder) • NorCal SETAC (Board Member) • AAAS (Member) • American Geophysical Union (Member) • National Association of Science Writers (Member) • SCONC (Member)

EDUCATION

Master of Environmental Management in Environmental Economics and Policy

Duke University, Nicholas School of the Environment

Focus included ecosystem services; virtual water; quantitative survey design; ecology and spirituality.

Bachelor of Arts in Evolution and Ecology, and **Minor** in Education

University of California, Davis

Focus included aquatic ecology; fish biology; research management; kindergarten assistantship.

SELECT SAMPLES

The Economic Ornithology of Sunflower Seeds

seefoodwrite.com/blog/archives/303

Community Supported Ingenuity

bit.ly/Coastwatch-2010-CSF

Growing Science in Agricultural Wetlands

bit.ly/USGS-20140124-Mercury

Art Helps a Scientific Collaboration Come to Life

bit.ly/AGUTEX-DSAT

Better Know a Fish!

www.betterknowafish.com

Hope in a 'Post-Facts' World

link.medium.com/sQHasHLoyS

CCST 30th Anniversary Press Kit

conta.cc/2D9KSNB

Biomethane Policy Briefing Package

bit.ly/CCSTOnePager-Biomethane

Diversity

bit.ly/BWF-201611-Diversity

Communicating Ciencia I & II

communicatingciencia.wordpress.com

twitter.com/hashtag/CómoSciWri

FOCUS: CCST Science Translators Showcase

Challenge: For the relaunch of its Science & Technology Week in the California State Capitol, CCST sought a new program and event that could elevate its network of university partners, their student researchers, and CCST's profile in the state-level policy community.

Design Solution: I designed the #CCSTShowcase, auditioning and training grad students for a conversational networking event with Capitol staffers. I created policy webinars leveraging CCST insights, led students through scicomm primers, workshopped "science slogans" with each student, and emceed the final event.

Lasting Impact: The Showcase drew praise from state staffers, who engaged with students on topics from wildfires to biomedicine. Showcase alumni have gone on to fellowships in congressional and state policy. The program was repeated with a new cohort for Governor Jerry Brown's historic Global Climate Action Summit.

Online: twitter.com/hashtag/CCSTShowcase

FOCUS: Our Owl Friends and the Wild River Way

Challenge: A third-generation family farm facing increasing competition, Wild River needed to grow awareness for its marquee product — organic kiwifruit — as well as its social responsibility.

Design Solution: With partner Guy Rogers, we created the "Our Owl Friends" brand — an unforgettably cute mascot that captures consumer attention *and* conveys the company's sustainability story.

Lasting Impact: Our designs for wholesale and consumer packaging art now has regional and national reach via Walmart and Whole Foods, shining new light on this California family company.

Online: wildriverfruit.com/our-owl-friends

MORE POSTS AND ARCHIVES ONLINE

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/younglandis

Twitter: www.twitter.com/younglandis

MuckRack: www.muckrack.com/younglandis