

MENKA BIHARI

22647 Braeside Circle,
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SUMMARY

- Seven years experience in working on various regional/environmental planning and architectural projects in academic, research and industry settings.
- Proficient in conducting quantitative analysis using MS Excel and SPSS.
- Good working knowledge and experience in developing, conducting and assisting with public involvement/agency coordination efforts related to environmental plans and resource management programs.
- Knowledge of community planning and development, stakeholder analysis, transportation planning/policy, energy efficiency issues, and federal and state financial assistance programs.
- Experience in writing and assisting with policy analysis, grant reports, fundraising proposals, case study/market research and feasibility studies.
- Excellent survey design skills and extensive experience in conducting large-scale survey projects.
- Strong experience and knowledge of qualitative research and analysis (interviews, participant observation, focus groups, pilot testing etc.)
- Hands-on experience in preparing and developing environmental impact statements/ assessments for large land-use, natural resource and municipal development projects
- Good working knowledge of key federal environmental statutes such as NEPA, ESA, Clean Water/ Air Act, CERCLA (Superfund) etc.
- Familiarity with forest, sustainable development and climate change issues (e.g. REDD, forest carbon, ecological footprint, UNFCCC, CDM, GHG accounting/ inventory).
- Developed oral presentations for conferences, seminars and workshops, and prepared materials for presentation to district staff, consultants and community groups
- Excellent organizational, communication and computer skills
- Critical thinker with an aptitude for fast learning and implementation of ideas.
- Solid research, writing, presentation and organizational skills
- Exceptional analytical and strategic thinking skills with strong attention to detail.
- Highly-motivated, flexible and a self starter capable of working efficiently both individually and in a team.
- Strong interpersonal qualities and ability to work with diverse collaborators.

EDUCATION

Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD) in Regional Planning
(University of Massachusetts Amherst, USA)

Master's Certificate in Environmental Education
(Hamline University, St. Paul, MN, USA)

Master of Technology in Environmental Planning
(Center for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT), Ahmedabad, India)

Bachelor of Architecture (B. Arch.)
(University of Pune, Pune, India- Recommended for Gold medal for best thesis)

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WORK EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant

Sept. 2006- July 2010

University of Massachusetts Amherst

- Developed and conducted close-ended, mail-in surveys to measure social capital and its effect on community wildfire preparedness in 10 communities.
- Interviewed forest, fire and land-use planners across six communities to qualitatively analyze emergent themes on social capital and wildfire preparedness.
- Conducted advanced statistical analysis using SPSS to identify socio-economic and environmental factors that influenced community wildfire preparedness.
- Reviewed the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (1994-2009) for the USDA Forest Service funded study—the effect of National Fire Plan funding on community preparedness for wildfires.
- Assessed the Climate Change Policy to gain ‘climate literacy’ scientifically, understand the impacts of climate change and consider existing solutions such as the Kyoto Protocol, bills in the U.S. Congress, voluntary measures etc. to propose emerging and creative solutions at individual, local and global levels.
- Critically analyzed key environmental statutes such as NEPA, ESA, Clean Water Act, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, CEQA etc. to focus on major legal and policy issues.

Architect/ Planner, Architectural and Engineering Unit/Facilities Management Services 2009 United Nations Secretariat, New York City

- Worked on the Capital Master Plan by conditioning architectural schematics and linking them to space management database
- Collaborated with the Facilities Management Services for inventory management and documentation of gifts and works of art.
- Assisted with the construction shop drawing process.
- Exuded professionalism and sensitivity in a diverse multicultural environment

Environmental Educator-Naturalist

Aug. 2005- June 2006

Audubon Center of the North Woods, MN

- Conducted environmental program instruction for K-12, college and adult groups
- Developed program and curriculum for forest ecology, animal habitat, Ojibwe hike and adventure ropes and team challenge courses.
- Served as liaison and coordinated logistics for school/conference and weekend groups.
- Assisted with care of captive educational animals and raptors at the center.

Environmental Planner

May 2004- Aug. 2005

SENES Consultants India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, India

- Conducted Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA/EIS) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for developmental planning.
- Developed Environment Management Plan (EMP) for Sahara India townships across India for presentation at the MoEF/PCBs.
- Developed waste management master plans for New Delhi and evaluated alternative 3Rs (reduce, reuse and recycle) method.
- Conducted site collection studies for industrial/urban sectors in Northern India.
- Developed project proposals and wrote grants for the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), World Bank and other international funding agencies.

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- Identified and measured sustainable indicators for New Delhi and other metropolitan areas.
- Developed and evaluated carrying capacity of environmental infrastructure for urban development projects.

Research Analyst

Jan. 2003- July 2004

Center for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT), India

- Conducted an appraisal of the Joint Forest Management (JFM) programme in Kullu, Himachal Pradesh, India
- Documented the constitution and working of Village Forest Development Committees (VFDCs) as local level organizations for JFM
- Identified institutional strengthening and capacity building measures to provide recommendations for increased community participation at all levels.
- Organized and facilitated at public meetings and workshops to identify stakeholder groups and key issues.
- Assessed the significance of socioeconomic variables in participatory forest management by using advanced statistical tools.
- Analyzed the existing state and national forest policies to evolve strategies for sustainable management of Himalayan forests

AWARDS

Selected participant for the Journal of Planning Education and Research (JPER) Writing Workshop for New Scholars, August 2010, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VI

Selected participant for the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) PhD Workshop, August 2009, University of Washington, Seattle, WA

COMPUTER SKILLS

MS Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), SPSS, Adobe Photoshop and elementary knowledge of Arc view GIS

PUBLICATIONS

Bihari, M. 2010. Using Social Capital to Improve Community Preparedness for Wildfires. PhD Dissertation, University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Bihari, M. 2010. Theory of Social Capital and its Applicability to Wildfire Preparedness and Resource Management. In *Proceedings of the Environmental Design Research Association-EDRA41 conference*, Washington DC. June 2-6, 2010. Pp. 96-103.

Bihari, M. 2009. Rejuvenating India's Forest through Action against Poverty. *Internal Voices*, 9: 21-22. Brussels: United Nations Regional Information Center (UNRIC) for Western Europe.

Bihari, M., Hamin, E.M. and Ryan, R.L. Understanding the Role of Planners in Wildfire Preparedness and Mitigation (in review).

Bihari, M. and Ryan, R.L. Analyzing the Role of Community Characteristics in Enhancing Social Capital with respect to Wildfire Mitigation (in review).

Bihari, M. and Ryan, R.L. The Effect of Social Capital on Community Preparedness for Wildfires (in preparation).