

Review: *The Sierra Club Green Guide: everybody's desk reference to environmental information.*

By Andrew J. Feldman

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Feldman, Andrew J. *The Sierra Club Green Guide: everybody's desk reference to environmental information.* San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, c1996. 282 p. US \$25.00 paper ISBN: 0-87156-402-5. Recycled, acid-free paper.

As a frustrated college student, Andrew Feldman discovered the lack of organized access to environmental information sources. While a great number of such sources existed, finding the best of them listed in one place was impossible. Now a research consultant who continues to work in environmental fields, Feldman has written *The Sierra Club Green Guide*, a useful resource for those who do not know where to turn when faced with an environmental question or research need.

As stated in the preface, the *Green Guide* is not intended to be comprehensive. It provides critical evaluations of sources Feldman considers the most vital in the environmental field, including those that might refer researchers to other sources more specific to their needs. The book is divided into two broad categories: Environmental Issues, covering agriculture, air, biodiversity, energy, environmental justice, health and toxics, sustainable communities, waste, and water; and Green Living, which covers "topics that integrate environmental concerns into our everyday lives" (p. xxi), and includes chapters on architecture, education, employment, gardening, grants, investing, shopping, and travel. Under each category, Feldman has included listings of government clearinghouses, organizations, Internet sites (electronic mailing lists and Usenet groups are for the most part excluded), commercial online services, bulletin boards, directories, bibliographies, reference handbooks, dictionaries and encyclopedias, introductory reading lists of classic and basic works on the topic at hand, abstracts and indices, and periodicals (mostly limited to magazines and organizational newsletters). Each entry contains a 50-400 word abstract, which includes background information about the source and an overview of its scope. Phone numbers, e-mail addresses, names of contact people, and methods of Internet access are given where

applicable.

Feldman has designed the *Green Guide* to be an easy-to-understand desk reference, and he succeeds because of his careful organization and clear, non-technical language. The "How to Use This Book" section outlines the organizational structure of the guide. Also useful are the cross-references between sections. Each source listed is indexed by title, along with topical keywords. The appendices list addresses of federal information centers, database vendors, and publishers. While clearinghouses and organizations have their addresses included in the regular listings, publication addresses are given only in the appendix. It may have been helpful, and more consistent, to have all addresses listed with their respective sources. Another point of minor confusion is the cover subtitle, which boasts "more than 1200 essential resources." Meanwhile, the preface and the listings themselves indicate the number to be just over six hundred. Overall, however, *The Sierra Club Green Guide* is a clearly written, well-organized reference work that should be essential to any library wishing to assist its users in finding information on environmental topics.

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