

PENNSYLVANIA BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP
Board of Directors Meeting
9 December 2003
Bureau of Topographic & Geologic Survey, Middletown, PA

Board Attendees: Jim Brett, Tom Buzby, Nick DiPasquale, Cal DuBrock, Tom Ford, Laurie Goodrich, Randy Gray, Paulette Johnson, K.C. Kim, Doug Kuntz, Robert Miller, and Blaine Puller. **Others:** Jim Drager, Frank Felbaum, Ken Klemow, Ed Schroth, and Sue Thompson. **Excused:** Jacqui Bonomo, Michelle Cohen, Michael Hampton, Tom Kerr, Tom Pauley, John Rawlins, Richard Whiteford

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Randy Gray welcomed members and introduced new *ex officio* members Deputy Secretary Nick DiPasquale (as the alternate for DEP Secretary McGinty) and Robb Miller, the Governor's Advisory for Hunting, Fishing, and Conservation. A request from Audubon Pennsylvania that PBP be a non-financial sponsor of the upcoming Deer Conference was discussed. The motion that PBP be a sponsor (motion by Paulette Johnson motion; seconded by K.C. Kim) passed with one abstention.

Board meeting dates for 2004 as proposed in the agenda for the meeting were approved and are as follows: Tuesday, 24 Feb 2004; date to be determined in the spring in conjunction with PBP conference; Thursday, 29 July 2004; and Thursday, 28 October 2004. The October meeting will likely be in conjunction with a board field trip to northeastern Pennsylvania which Ken Klemow volunteered to host. The minutes of the 18 September 2003 meeting were approved.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Sue Thompson announced that MaryLinda Gangewere resigned her position as Executive Administrator effective 30 November 2003. A search for a replacement will commence after the holiday season. Thompson also reported on various outreach and information gathering efforts, including focus groups, exhibits at conferences, and presentations.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The final expense report for the Wildlife Restoration and Conservation Program (WRCP) grant was presented. The proposed 2004 basic operating budget was unanimously approved (motion by Tom Buzby; seconded by K.C. Kim). There was a brief continuation of the discussion of the relative benefits and drawbacks of continuing to be a project of the Tides Center versus an independent 501(c)(3). Thompson and PBP staff will continue to investigate the relative costs.

TASK FORCE AND AGENCY REPORTS

Education – Co-chairs Paulette Johnson and Ed Schroth reported on a variety of projects and proposed projects, including a Natural History Series, for which the Education Task Force would serve as a coordinating body, and an on-line biodiversity tutorial for adults. The Education Task Force has formed three subcommittees (K-12, Adult, and Higher Education) to focus on issues specific to each of these groups.

Public Relations – Chair Frank Felbaum summarized the morning discussion's regarding a spring PBP conference, the focus of which will be to present and discuss preliminary recommendations for the Biodiversity Conservation Plan. The conference theme will be the relationship between biodiversity and economics with both a keynote speaker to focus on that topic as well as a panel discussion specific to Pennsylvania.

Bioinformatics – Chair Ken Klemow proposed that the PABIODIV guidelines be changed to add messages that support specific candidates or legislation to the list of topics not accepted by the listserve. This change, which was unanimously approved, will make explicit the guidelines that Klemow, who serves as the list moderator, has been employing. Based on his rejection rate of about 50% of the messages submitted, Klemow suggested that the guidelines for PABIODIV may

be too restrictive and that the Board may want to re-visit them at some future date. Klemow will present samples of rejected messages at a future meeting.

DEP – Nick DiPasquale reported that Secretary McGinty is critically reviewing the various DEP grant programs and that one focus will be increasing opportunities for demonstration projects

Fish & Boat Commission - Tom Ford reported that PFBC has hired a new Executive Director, Dr. Douglas Austen. Ford also discussed bills introduced to increase license fees as well as provide money for infrastructure. Omissions in the legislative report concerning a possible merger between PFBC and PGC were noted.

Game Commission – Cal DuBrock continued the discussion about the merger issue and suggested that board members visit the PGC and PFBC websites to study their reports and their responses to other reports. He announced that Scott Klinger, a member of the PBP Funding and Stewardship task forces, is the new Director of PGC's Bureau of Land Management.

Governor's Advisory Committee – Continuing the merger discussion, Robb Miller reported that HR 15 does not recommend merger, but rather just says it's feasible. Another report (HR222), which will be released at the end of March, suggests housing law enforcement in a separate agency supported by General Fund money, which would thus free funds presently expended on law enforcement for other activities. Miller stated that Governor Rendell wants to solve the PFBC infrastructure funding problem.

OTHER BUSINESS

Blaine Puller asked that House Bill 2002, which would allow PGC officers to enforce ATV laws, be referred to the Policy Task Force to recommend if PBP should take a formal stand on this issue.

Jim Drager, who is working with PBP on public input, presented an interim report on the results of the focus groups and public comments.

approved 24 February 2004