

DRAFT
PENNSYLVANIA BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP
Board of Directors Meeting
8 February 2006
Stackhouse School, Fisherman's Paradise, Bellefonte, PA

Attendees: Charles Bier, Tom Buzby, Michelle Cohen, Cliff David, Frank Felbaum, Tim Horner, Paulette Johnson, Sally Just, Ken Kane, Tom Kerr, Ken Klemow, Scott Klinger, Doug Kuntz, Ben Moyer, Sarah Nicholas, John Rawlins, Sue Thompson, Chris Urban. **Excused:** Jacqui Bonomo, Lois DeMarco, Tom Ford, Blaine Puller, Dick Whiteford, Melody Zullinger.

WELCOME AND GENERAL BUSINESS

Chairman Paulette Johnson called the meeting to order and introduced Chris Urban (PFBC), Sarah Nicholas (new director of the Wild Resource Conservation Program), and Tim Horner (PBP board member). Secretary John Rawlins presented the minutes of the 2 Nov 2005 meeting, which passed unanimously (motion by Doug Kuntz, seconded by Cliff David). Frank Felbaum was elected to serve as the PBP alternate to the Governor's Invasive Species Council (motion by Cliff David, seconded by Ben Moyer, passed unanimously) to replace Paul Lyskava, who was appointed to the Council to represent the Pennsylvania Forest Products Association. Additional meeting dates for 2006 were proposed, pending availability of meeting locations: Thursday, May 25; Wednesday, August 23; and Tuesday, November 14. There was a brief discussion of a field trip in conjunction with the summer meeting, perhaps focusing on wind energy.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT / PBP ACTIVITIES

President Sue Thompson reported on activities since the last board meeting, which focused on updating the PBP website, completing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service grant, and working on the Biodiversity Conservation Plan. Thompson submitted the final report (98 pages) and invoice to USFWS. Executive Administrator Merewyn Boak made major changes to the PBP website, increasing the size from 14 pages to over 40 pages and increasing the ease of navigation. Thompson made presentations about PBP and the biodiversity plan to the Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania and a University of Pittsburgh class in non-profit management. Both presentations resulted in additional sponsors for the plan. She also met with the design/editing team for the plan several times. Thompson submitted an abstract about the biodiversity plan to the Allegheny Biodiversity Symposium, which will be hosted by the western New York chapter of The Nature Conservancy in April 2006. Our proposal to *Temper of the Times* for releasing the plan was one of the finalists in this national competition, but was not funded.

Thompson attended meetings of the Governor's Invasive Species Council (including the Management Plan Steering Committee); the Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Professionals board retreat; Pennsylvania Biological Survey Steering Committee; Ned Smith Center for Nature and Art board orientation; and a presentation on health insurance for western Pennsylvania nonprofits in preparation for leaving the Tides Center (PA). The *ad hoc* committee formed at the Nov 2005 meeting to review standards for the pilot FSC certification assessment project of the Allegheny National Forest (Tom Ford, Paul Lyskava, Ben Moyer, Brad Myers, Blaine Puller, and Thompson) completed its work. PBP was selected as one of 14 organizations to participate in Carnegie Mellon University's course on Technology Consulting in the Community. We will be assigned a computer science major to assist us and will concentrate on our contact information database and some hardware issues.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Thompson presented the treasurer's report for Jacqui Bonomo, including an annotated listing of 2005 expenses explaining variances; final accounting of the USFWS grant, and a revised budget for 2006 of \$185,100 plus fees. Funds in hand as of 31 Dec 2005 totaled \$181,110. She also handed out a list of potential foundations for board members to review as well as appealing to the board for 100% participation as BCP sponsors and to actively recruit additional sponsors.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (T. Buzby, J. Bonomo, S. Just, J. Rawlins)

Committee Chair Tom Buzby presented a slate of new appointments to the board (Frank Felbaum, PA Biological Survey); reappointments to the board (Michelle Cohen and Paulette Johnson); and board officers (Doug Austen / Tom Ford (alternate) as the at-large representative to the Executive Committee)

(seconded by Ben Moyer, passed unanimously). Johnson mentioned that now that she is back in the classroom at Slippery Rock, her teaching schedule will make it hard for her to continue as the board chair. She suggested that the committee work to appoint a new chair, stressing that it was an issue of her availability and not the work load of chairing the PBP board.

TASK FORCE, AGENCY, AND OTHER PARTNER ACTIVITIES

Biodiversity Informatics Task Force – Chair Ken Klemow mentioned that there had been some problems recently with the PABIODIV listserv host and suggested that we might want to move the listserv hosting closer to the PBP office. Thompson will work with the task force to investigate alternatives.

Funding Task Force – Thompson passed out sponsorships packets to board members to help in fund-raising. Approximately \$7,000 has been donated or pledged with sponsors at all levels except Forest Giant.

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources – Sally Just provided an update on the PA Natural Heritage Program reorganization. Many of the changes made are the result of a program review by an external consultant. They are interviewing for a new position in the Office of Conservation Science. The 2006 Wild Resource Festival will be 20 May at French Creek State Park.

Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission – Chris Urban, accompanied by two live rattlesnakes, gave a comprehensive presentation on proposed changes to regulations concerning various amphibians and reptiles. Urban focused on changes to the previous rules, especially relating to snake hunts. This proposed rulemaking had significant public comment, mostly from hobbyists and Urban stressed the continuing call for comments. Cliff David moved that PBP submit comments supporting the proposed increase in the minimum length for taking timber rattlesnakes from 38 inches to 42 inches (seconded by John Rawlins, passed with one abstention). David also made a motion that PBP support prohibiting the sacking of non-native rattlesnakes (seconded by Moyer, motion failed). David then moved that PBP reiterate our previous comments on science-based management of reptile and amphibian populations (seconded by Tom Kerr, passed with one abstention).

Pennsylvania Game Commission – Scott Klinger reminded people that the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS), which incorporated PBP's public input process for the BCP, is now available on the PGC website. He also reported that PGC has hired a forest ecologist, Dr. Ben Jones.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Some time was spent discussing when, where, and how to release the Biodiversity Conservation Plan. There was a consensus that we follow the same general format that we used to release *Biodiversity in Pennsylvania*, which was successful both in terms of attendance and media attention, but perhaps add multiple levels of release. Rawlins stressed the importance of at least mentioning recently completed planning efforts by partners in the document, especially the CWCS. In terms of initiating implementation of the plan, task force chairs were charged with reviewing recommendations and determining those with highest priority; those that are easiest to do; estimated costs to implement and potential funding sources; and who could potentially implement as lead and potential partners. The board will review these recommendations at a future meeting.

There was a brief discussion of board and task force chair responsibilities based on draft documents provided by Thompson. It was felt that conflict of interest was already covered in the bylaws, but that confidentiality was not clearly defined. Further discussion was deferred until a later meeting.

A motion to adjourn was offered by Tom Kerr (seconded by Sally Just), which passed unanimously.