

PENNSYLVANIA BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP
Board of Directors Meeting
18 February 2005
PA Fish & Boat Commission Headquarters, Harrisburg, PA

Attendees: Julia Anastasio, Charles Bier, Jacqui Bonomo, Tom Buzby, John Dernbach, Tom Ford, Laurie Goodrich, Paulette Johnson, Tom Kerr, K.C. Kim, Doug Kuntz, Blaine Puller, John Rawlins, Sue Thompson, Richard Whiteford. **Excused:** Michelle Cohen, Frank Felbaum, Andrew McElwaine, Ken Klemow.

Sue Thompson called the meeting to order and introduced John Dernbach and Julia Anastasio as the new alternates for DEP Secretary McGinty. She also noted the resignations of board members Randy Gray, Michael Hampton, Tom Pauley, and Bill Adams due to changes in employment and retirement.

Board Development Committee

On behalf of the Board Development Committee (Jacqui Bonomo, Sally Just, Blaine Puller, John Rawlins), Chair Tom Buzby presented a slate of new candidates (Cliff David, Heritage Conservancy; Ben Moyer, outdoor writer; Tim Horner, PA State Association of Township Supervisors; and Lois DeMarco, Allegheny National Forest) as well as re-election of continuing members (Ken Kane, K.C. Kim, Doug Kuntz, Blaine Puller, Richard Whiteford). The motion was seconded by Jacqui Bonomo and passed unanimously. Buzby noted that the committee is still considering two additional candidates (Melody Zullinger, PA Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, and someone from the PA Homebuilders Association) and will continue its work on developing potential board candidates.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Paulette Johnson assumed her role as the new chair and thanked Buzby and the other members of the committee for their work. The minutes of the 28 Sep 2004 meeting were approved unanimously (motion by Buzby, seconded by Tom Kerr). The dates for the remaining meetings in 2005 were set for 26 May, 25 Aug, and 2 Nov. The possibility of a field trip in conjunction with the 25 Aug meeting was discussed.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Sue Thompson reported on outreach activities since the September 2004 meeting including exhibiting at the PA Farm Show (over 12,000 people visited the PBP booth) and a lecture to a class in non-profit management at the University of Pittsburgh. Obviously, most efforts focused on the PBP conference in November 2004. In addition, Thompson is serving on the Planning Committee for the Mid-Atlantic Highlands Biodiversity Conference scheduled for June 2005 and was elected to the Board of Directors of the PA Association of Environmental Professionals. She was also invited to serve on a 6-person panel to review the Environmental Protection Agency's Ecological Research Program, where she will serve on the work group on state and regional-level tools and methods to protect and restore ecological resources. This panel will involve several teleconferences plus on-site meeting at Research Triangle, NC.

PBP received an invitation from the PA Department of Agriculture to nominate a representative to the Governor's Invasive Species Council. Thompson was selected as the representative with Paul Lyskava as the alternate (motion by John Dernbach, seconded by Tom Kerr).

Thompson submitted proposals to DCNR's Community Conservation Partnership Program, EPA's Environmental Education Program, and a Dominion Watershed mini-grant. PBP received a small grant from Tides for Thompson to attend the Tides Project Gathering in San Francisco as well as a go-ahead to submit a full proposal to DEP's Environmental Education Grants Program.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Tom Kerr presented the proposed 2005 operating budget, which passed unanimously (motion by Tom Buzby, seconded by K.C. Kim). Bonomo noted a desire to have a budget approved *prior* to the start of the fiscal year in the future. There was again a discussion of the pros and cons of being a project of Tides, with a decision postponed until a future board meeting.

TASK FORCE, AGENCY, and PARTNER REPORTS

DEP (John Dernbach / Julia Anastasio) – The new priorities statement developed by DEP contains an explicit endorsement of protecting biodiversity, with discussions on revisions to regulations and implementing practices in permitting programs that would protect biodiversity.

Education Task Force (Paulette Johnson) – The Education Task Force met in January in Slippery Rock to work on the education section for the Biodiversity Conservation Plan. Ed Schroth resigned as co-chair, but will remain active on task force. Johnson noted that the task force will need to elect new chair while she is chair of the PBP board.

Fish and Boat Commission (Tom Ford) – Ford reported that PFBC Executive Director Doug Austen continues to push new initiatives, including a proposed new PFBC facility in Pittsburgh, and that PFBC continues to work on funding for infrastructure.

Funding Task Force (Jacqui Bonomo) – Bonomo thanked the people and organizations who contributed to the conference raffle and sponsorships. The task force experienced schedule conflicts in arranging a teleconference and Bonomo will call people individually for their input on the funding part of the plan. Tom Ford noted that two key issues are (1) species management and the lack of funding for most species and (2) habitat conservation.

Policy Task Force (Tom Buzby for Paul Lyskava) – Buzby presented a letter to the Game Commission on deer management for approval, which passed with one abstention (motion by Puller, seconded by Rawlins).

Science Task Force (Charles Bier) – Portions of the science section of the Biodiversity Conservation Plan will be presented at the upcoming PA Academy of Sciences Conference and the Environmental Issues Forum.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION PLAN

In addition to a review on the discussion during the morning meeting, there was a general discussion of indicators. The need for broad measurables or indicators of performance was recognized as well as the need to articulate specific goals for the biodiversity plan, including (1) performance measures and (2) scheduled tasks. While admitting the difficulty of determining performance measures for biodiversity, Dernbach suggested that "performance-based budgeting" may help to measure progress. K.C. Kim noted the lack of even such basic biodiversity indicator of knowing the species in the state. Puller agreed that there was a lot more that we don't know than we do know, but felt that there were many things that could be done relatively easily that would improve biodiversity conservation. There was agreement that *Snapshot 2002* is good basic assessment and that this assessment should be repeated at regular intervals in the future. (five years to ten years).

approved 26 May 2005