

PENNSYLVANIA BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP
Board Meeting
29 May 2003
Fish & Boat Commission Headquarters, Harrisburg, PA

Board Attendees: Jacqui Bonomo (alternate for Larry Schweiger), Jim Brett, Tom Buzby, Cindy Dunn, Tom Ford (alternate for Pete Colangelo), Randy Gray, Paulette Johnson, Cliff Jones, Michael Hampton, Sally Just (alternate for Michael DiBerardinis), Tom Kerr, K.C. Kim, Blaine Puller, Tim Schaeffer (alternate for Andrew McElwaine), and Dessie Severson (alternate for Tom Pauley). **Others:** Charles Bier, Don Brown, Jim Drager, Frank Felbaum, Jean Fike, MaryLinda Gangewere, Ken Klemow, Ed Schroth, and Sue Thompson. **Excused:** Laurie Goodrich, Doug Kuntz, John Rawlins, and Dick Whiteford.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The minutes of the 27 February 2003 meeting were approved as corrected.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Tom Kerr presented the expense report ending 30 April 2003, which was approved.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Sue Thompson reported that PBP was present at the following conferences and meetings: PA Recreation and Parks Society, PA Land Trust Alliance, Rare Plant Forum, Metadiversity III, Non-Timber Forest Products, PA Academy of Science, Ecosystem Management Advisory Committee Bioreserves, Society of American Forestry/Wildlife Society, Earth Day events in Pittsburgh and Waynesboro, PA Association of Environmental Professionals, ANF Workshop, Green Marketplace, Nonprofit Summit in Pittsburgh, PA Outdoor Writers Association, Conservation Networks Design Workshop, and a lecture at Slippery Rock University. She was interviewed by Kelly Meinhart of GreenWorks TV and also by the Pittsburgh Business Times.

She encouraged members to review the PBP Media Book which she circulated. She reported that the PBDI would migrate to the PBP website with an interactive query form to be added. She announced that representatives from the PA Fish and Boat Commission participated in the first Biodiversity Conservation Plan (BCP) focus group facilitated by Jim Drager of The Drager Group. She asked members to donate "prizes" for those who complete the public comment form at conferences.

TASK FORCE, AGENCY, AND PARTNER REPORTS

Bioinformatics – Ken Klemow distributed a draft of new guidelines for the Listserve. Blaine Puller moved that the guidelines be accepted. The motion was unanimously approved.

Education – Paulette Johnson announced that the Education Task Force will meet on 6 June and continues to meet as a joint committee with the PA Biological Survey Education Committee. The PA Environmental Education Resource (PEER) directory is now on the Web and its biodiversity section will be reorganized. PBP has submitted a proposal for a workshop at the PA Alliance for Environmental Education conference in November. Dessie Severson and Ken Klemow asked the Education Task Force to investigate if and how biodiversity is included in higher education.

Public Relations – Frank Felbaum announced the initiation of planning for a statewide biodiversity conference in early 2004, which would have the working draft of the BCP as its focus. A suggested theme for this conference is "Biodiversity and Pennsylvania's Economy." Cliff Jones suggested that if the conference is held in Harrisburg, legislators may be more likely to attend. Sue suggested that if the theme of the conference is economics, partners involved in economic aspects of biodiversity would be encouraged to exhibit at the conference.

Science – Charles Bier distributed an orphan species recommendation drafted by the Science Task Force. After discussion, the following recommendation was approved by the PBP Board:

The Pennsylvania Biodiversity Partnership (PBP) Science Task Force recommends that the PBP Policy Task Force investigate the means by which statewide responsibility be established to inventory, protect, and manage native* organisms that are not already the legislated responsibility of any agency, including the Department of Agriculture, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, or Pennsylvania Game Commission, including consideration of the funding and staffing necessary to accomplish this and its impacts on the interactions among agencies. (*Native = Plants, animals, and other organisms that were present in the Commonwealth at the time of European settlement or, as far as can be determined, whose occurrence in the Commonwealth is wholly due to natural means of dispersal).

In addition, the Board also approved a recommendation that PBP send a letter to DCNR encouraging that agency to advocate for orphan species until the matter is resolved.

DCNR – Sally Just reported that Secretary DiBerardinis has embarked on a three-month tour of DCNR facilities and is collecting stakeholders' comments which will be integral to his action plan. She also described the Natural Heritage Program GIS online system.

DEP – Don Brown commented on current DEP initiatives including its watershed management program, how land use impacts air and water quality, and measurement of ecosystem health.

PA Fish and Boat Commission – Tom Ford reported that PFBC is experiencing troublesome economic times. He reported on legislation introduced to combine the PFBC with the PA Game Commission. Tom distributed a press release announcing the retirement of Pete Colangelo as Executive Director. Cliff Jones moved that a resolution be drafted commending Mr. Colangelo's service to the citizens of the Commonwealth. The motion was unanimously approved.

Allegheny National Forest – Michael Hampton reported that a public meeting was held in May to discuss the Allegheny National Forest Plan revision. A collaborative learning technique was used with considerable success. He will post future public meetings on the PBP Listserve.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION PLAN

Randy Gray provided a summary of that morning's meeting of the BCP team and announced that the discussion would continue on 17 July. He introduced Jim Drager of the Drager Group who is assisting the PBP in analyzing the public comment forms and conducting focus groups. Jim reported on the almost 300 public comments forms completed.

approved 18 September 2003