

**PENNSYLVANIA BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
18 September 2003
Warren Holiday Inn, Warren, PA**

Board Attendees: Charles Bier (for Larry Schweiger), Michelle Cohen, Tom Ford (for PFBC), Randy Gray, Paulette Johnson, Ken Kane, K.C. Kim, Doug Kuntz, Paul Lyskava (for Tom Buzby), Blaine Puller, John Rawlins, and Dessie Severson (for Tom Pauley). **Others:** Louis Deal, Jim Drager, MaryLinda Gangewere, Ken Klemow, and Sue Thompson. **Excused:** Nick DiPasquale (alternate for Kathleen McGinty), Laurie Goodrich, Cliff Jones, Sally Just (alternate for Michael DiBerardinis), Tom Kerr, Andrew McElwaine, and Dick Whiteford.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Randy Gray welcomed the members and introduced Paul Lyskava, Tom Buzby's alternate to the meeting. He outlined plans for the picnic supper following the meeting and the field trip on Friday with hosts Ken Kane, Doug Kuntz, and Blaine Puller. The minutes of the 29 May 2003 board meeting were amended to include the attendance of Michelle Cohen and approved as amended. Randy will be contacting board members for suggestions for the nomination process.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Sue Thompson reported on the WRCP final grant report recently submitted. She distributed the total expenses incurred during the grant and noted that there was a 64.9% cash and in-kind match of the total grant costs when only 25% was required. She will send the 10-page narrative to the members.

Sue also reported on coverage of PBP in the media, including the Pittsburgh Business Times, Plant Talk (an international botanical journal), Allegheny News (newsletter of the Society of American Forestry Allegheny Chapter), GreenWorks TV, and a GreenWorks webcast. Conferences in which PBP participated since the last Board meeting included ones sponsored by the PA State Association of Boroughs, Allegheny Chapter of the Society of Forestry, PA Invertebrate Biodiversity Project, Ag Progress Days, County Commissioners Association of PA, Ned Smith Center, and the PA Council of Governments. She also gave a presentation to the Heritage Conservancy staff and a wildflower walk at the Ned Smith Festival.

Sue and Bob McKinstry convened a very productive meeting with economists from Penn State University and the University of Pittsburgh to discuss developing a request for proposals on the impacts of biodiversity loss/conservation on Pennsylvania's economy. Nick DiPasquale and Paul Lyskava also attended the meeting as members of the PBP advisory committee on this project and she invited other interested people to join the committee.

PBP staff has been working with the Executive Service Corps to draft a contract for services to aid in the spin-off process from the Tides Center – Western Pennsylvania, our present fiscal sponsor. Randy noted that assistance will be needed for payroll, taxes, and auditing functions.

FOCUS GROUPS

To assist in developing the Biodiversity Conservation Plan, PBP is hosting a series of focus groups with diverse stakeholders throughout the state. To date focus groups have been conducted with southeastern PA land trusts, environmental professionals (both an eastern and western PA session), the PA Biological Survey, and Fish and Boat Commission. Focus groups are scheduled with DCNR, environmental educators, and land trusts working in southwestern PA and additional ones are in the planning stage.

Jim Drager conducted a focus group with all board members participating using the same format as other focus groups. Jim will present an interim report on focus group results to the board at the December meeting.

TASK FORCE AND AGENCY REPORTS

Bioinformatics – Sue thanked Ken Klemow for his services as moderator of the PA Biodiversity Listserve. Ken encouraged members to post their information on the listserv, which presently has over 500 subscribers. He reported that he returns approximately 30% of the messages received because of inappropriate material, often suggesting that the messages be rephrased. The motion to approve the revised guidelines for the PA Biodiversity Listserve was seconded and passed.

Education – The Task Force’s Higher Education Work Group is revising a RFP for collecting information concerning biodiversity-related degrees, internships, scholarships and employment opportunities. That information will be shared with high school graduates to encourage them to build careers in the biodiversity community. The amount of the contract will not exceed \$10,000 and the proposal and deliverables will be presented to the members for approval. The motion to proceed with the RFP was seconded and passed.

Science – The letter concerning “orphan taxa” was approved by the Board with slight modifications.

Fish and Boat Commission – Tom Ford announced that applications for executive director of the PA Fish and Boat Commission are being accepted until the end of September. He also noted that a legislative committee held meetings to consider merging PFBC with the Game Commission. There is also legislation pending to direct tipping fees to PFBC.

approved 9 December 2003