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OBFS Annual Report 2008

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 Common Interests: **Bohdan Dziadyck**
 Diversity: **Amy Whipple**
 International: **Deedra McClearn**
 Small Field Stations: **Linda Wallace** and **Bo Dziadyck** (co-Chairs)
 Organizational Development: **Ian Bilick**
 Outreach: **Philippe Cohen**
 Website: **Faerthen Felix, John Kim, Mark Stromberg**
 Historian: **Mary Huff**

The OBFS Annual Report is posted on the web site (www.obfs.org) as a PDF file. It is available to all members in good standing. Hard copies will be sent only to members who specifically request them. A reminder to specifically request hard copies will be e-mailed to all members at the time of publication.

Please remember to vote in the Annual Election – Ballots have been sent to all member stations in good standing. If you do not receive a ballot, email the editor@obfs.org or David.White@MurrayState.edu.

Editor's Note: The OBFS *Annual Report* contains the minutes of the annual meeting, other meeting minutes, budgets, meeting attendees, and other business of the organization. The OBFS *Newsletter* contains news from member stations, election materials, opportunities and services for members, annual meeting information, funding possibilities, and other 'news'. Both publications are available in .pdf format at www/OBFS.org. Normally, both publications will be completed at the end of December of each year. *D.S. White*

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Official Secretary Notes

OBFS 2008 Annual Meeting, Blackrock Forest, Cornwall, NY 18-21 September, 2008

Thursday, September 18, 2008

Welcome Address (7:30 pm – 9:00 pm)

President Brian Kloepfel called the meeting to order with the Tom Callahan Memorial Big-Assed gavel. President Kloepfel and Vice-President Larry Weider introduced OBFS to new members and first time attendees. First time attendees introduced themselves. President Kloepfel announced that the theme of this year's meeting is "Greening of FSML's" and it was being webcast for the first time. President Kloepfel then presented Tom Callahan's "Four Maxims for Conduct at OBFS Meetings:" (1) treat everyone decently, (2) laugh at yourself, (3) know that everyone makes mistakes, so **Get Over It!**, and (4) don't call the authorities unless there is either fire or blood. President Kloepfel introduced the Board of Directors and made some general announcements. The number of paid member stations was down by thirty stations as of the meeting but this number is probably not entirely accurate. Problems working with the new OBFS database are still being ironed out.

The Nominating Committee (Eric Nagy) announced that we need volunteers for the fall ballot for Vice President, Treasurer, and Director-at-large. Peter Connors explained performance art and the workings of the auction and Claudia Luke reminded everyone to keep their ears open for quotes to present during the auction. Philippe Cohen described what was needed to complete the OBFS brochure. Philippe asked the membership to edit and give general comments but a total re-working of the brochure is not in the cards. Art McKee introduced a poster for the National Phenology Network and encouraged stations to participate to the extent that they can.

Bill Schuster, Executive Director of the Blackrock Forest Consortium, welcomed the membership to Blackrock. They are thrilled to have us! They are attempting to make this a "green" meeting: re-useable water bottles, composting, recycling, purchased carbon offsets, etc.

Bill introduced his staff:

- John Brady - forest manager
- Barbara Brady - administration
- Jack Caldwell - operations manager
- Emily Cunningham - director of development
- Hannah Roth - research technician
- Francie Schuster - GIS technician / kitchen
- Matthew Munson - IT

Also,

- Donna Hammond – Flying Pig Catering,
Westchester, NY

Bill then introduced the Blackrock Forest region. ~1500 ha, in 1930 re-growing heavily used (abused?). Once part of Harvard University. William T. Golden had the idea to have numerous institutions jointly use the forest. Now 21 different groups (colleges, universities, natural science education facilities) are members of the consortium, now near the end of 20 years of use, members pay dues, and land will be released soon. William Golden passed away last year. Continuous unit, gated to control access. Education is a major component of what Blackrock does, but also some long-term research. Buildings built with help from NSF-FSML, both buildings cost over \$4 million. Green as possible. Can sleep 60 people. Has awarded over 120 small grants for almost \$500,000. Dr. Neil Maher, Rutgers Newark, presented the environmental history of Blackrock Forest. Environmental historians focus on the interrelationship between nature and culture.

Board of Directors Meeting (9:00 pm – 10:45 pm) (open to all members)

In Attendance: Tom Arsuffi, Shorty Boucher, Philippe Cohen, Bo Dziadyk, Faerthen Felix, Brian Kloepfel, Deedra McClearn, Eric Nagy, Greg Smith, Larry Weider, Amy Whipple (also in attendance Ian Billick, Jeff Brown, Isabelle Kay)

Approval of Minutes of 23 July 2008

Brian reviewed action items from previous conference call. Shorty is still looking for a second signatory for the OBFS account. MOTION to APPROVE, seconded, passed unanimously.

Financial Items

Shorty presented a budget which does not include the restricted fund information. Reimbursements are not updated so the expenses will be closer to the budgeted but not as much.

Nina will no longer be able to handle the OBFS display; we need to find someone that will take over that service.

OBFS Poster. Can we track who is using that, is it working? Rocky Mt. Lab will not be able to produce the poster this year. OBFS should identify someone that will pick up the production of the poster. The courses link on the webpage is broken, we will just link to the main OBFS page and the "Courses" link will be prominent.

Shorty estimated for the budget the cost of paying for a Treasurer assistant to help with duties. She budgeted \$11,000. Eric discussed the possibility of getting AIBS to

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share an assistant. This year has been a tremendous amount of work for Shorty, but the workload may be reduced as issues with the database are ironed out. The other option is for OBFS to pay for a 0.25 FTE assistant at the Treasurer's institution. It is also important for this assistant to not have regular turnover. Larry mentioned that our strategic plan recognized the eventual need for some paid staff to move the organization forward. Eric will ask AIBS to see if this might be an option. Ian asked if this position could be scaled up and this assistant work more for OBFS in the future. Eric will check on this also. We will put forward \$11,000 as an estimate for this cost to the membership. This will give them an idea of a potential recurring cost.

Philippe asked where the budget was for the brochure. Shorty will check and update this for the member presentation. \$5000 was budgeted for this.

Amy asked about travel for the winner of the Diversity Award. This was not budgeted. This amount, \$1000, will be added to the Diversity budgeted amount, increasing this to \$1500.

Eric asked to move expenses for Jan's travel to the NAML meeting to the Board travel item.

Shorty brought our attention to the "Other Non-budgeted Expenses." NEON membership will be \$1000 per year so this should be budgeted annually.

Amy asked what the net was for this year. It looks like we broke even. The projected budget of 2008-09 shows an estimated deficit of \$33,910.00. Shorty pointed out that this number is simply a reflection of the way the spreadsheet was structured. She will correct this.

We should get the budget for every year items under control. Larry asked when membership dues had been raised. It has been several years. Ian suggested doubling station dues, Brian suggested \$150. Eric suggested we have a mechanism for stations that cannot afford the dues increase to request maintaining their current dues. Who will approve these requests? Probably the Executive Committee will. MOTION by Larry to increase station member dues from \$100 to \$150 and increase individual member dues from \$25 to \$50 and allow a hardship waiver for member stations, seconded by Philippe, passed (with one abstention). We need to be sensitive to the members with this issue.

Shorty said the estimate for tax preparation is probably an overestimate. Next year should be easier.

Eric said that in the new by-laws, the Board controls the budget; it does not have to be approved by the membership. We will present the budget, ask for input, and the Board will approve it on Sunday.

Shorty asked about "Committee Proposals Contingent Upon Review": continue to budget for attorney for non-profits – Yes; Common Interests – Yes; Diversity – Yes; International travel – Yes.

See Page 20 for the 2008-2009 proposed budget.

Letter of support for Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory
Brian read the letter he wrote on behalf of OBFS to support the symposium proposed by Ian Billick and Mary Price entitled, "The ecology of place: charting a course for understanding the planet." The Board suggested a few changes. MOTION, seconded, passed (Philippe recused himself because he is on the Board of Trustees of RMBL).

Committee Reports

Annual Meeting (Larry):

The meeting is set as far as Larry knows. The 2009 Annual Meeting will be held at La Selva in Costa Rica. The University of Michigan Biological Station has submitted a proposal to host the 2010 meeting. MOTION made to hold the 2010 annual meeting at The University of Michigan Biological Station, seconded, passed unanimously. We should make an announcement to the membership about possible sites for future meetings, particularly the west coast.

Registration costs have continued to climb for annual meetings. Registration for Costa Rica will be ~\$355. The Board discussed ways to keep costs down at meetings. Should we go to some institution to find some ways to cut the costs down? It was agreed that asking NSF might not be the best approach. But there might be foundations, universities, vendors, etc. that can contribute to meetings and keep the costs of hosting the meeting lower. Lower costs for the host station result in lower costs for members. We cannot control travel costs so we can try to reduce costs for host stations.

Organizational Development (temporarily Brian):

We are currently without a chair of this committee. This committee is charged with documenting the value of field stations and finding ways to support station work. Also the committee is responsible for exploring development (funding) opportunities for OBFS. Ian Billick was suggested as interim-chair for this committee. MOTION for Ian to serve as interim-chair, seconded, passed unanimously.

Friday, September 19, 2008

OBFS Business (8:00 am – 8:45 am)

Members went around the room to introduce themselves. Agendas for all Committee Meetings are posted on the side board. Information for dissemination can be placed on the bulletin board or the table out front.

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Concurrent Committee Meetings - Block 1 (8:45 am - 10:15 am)

Governance Committee (Eric Nagy)

Main Hall (notes taken by Greg Smith)

In attendance: Eric Nagy (Chair), Brian Kloeppe, Peter Connors, Ian Billick, Greg Smith.

Discussion of Auction Form for 501(c)(3)

Two auction forms were presented. Peter Connors led the discussion and the committee agreed that OBFS does not need to provide a value for the donation items. Greg should remind Peter to send an email detailing the discussion he had with the accountant. The "purchase" at the auction should be treated as a donation, not as a purchase, and the form was adjusted to reflect that. There will be two separate forms, one for the donor of the item and one for the purchaser of the auction item.

By-Laws

Eric Nagy led the discussion of suggested changes to the by-laws, including: clarification of the role of nonvoting members (add Treasurer to the list of nonvoting member duties), powers of the nonvoting members, voting members should be given the right to bring concerns to the Board and have the Board respond in a reasonable time, quorum number reduced to 10%, distinction between regular and special meetings (special meetings are called for very distinct purposes), clarification of Board of Director meetings, clarification that the Past President can also be removed from office by the members (just as any of the officers can - removal must parallel how they were brought on), duties of the Editor (submitted by David White), and explanation of votes required to amend or change the by-laws.

Ian Billick suggested the Board consider language that would protect the Board and OBFS against potential lawsuits. These could be incorporated into the by-laws and/or the Articles of Incorporation. Ian will send the passage to Eric for consideration.

Policies and Procedures Manual is still a work in progress. Eric is looking for help. Eric and Greg will move on that.

Member Support Committee (Sarah Oktay for John Kim)
Science Center, 1st Floor Classroom (notes taken by Sarah Oktay, pasted verbatim here)

Members present: 11

Chair (Temporary): Sarah Oktay

Friday Sept 19th 8:45 am

Asked everyone to identify themselves and their station. Attendees: Vincent Voegel, Matt Fairchild, Jack Witham, Mac Hardy, Drew Jones, John Anderson, Shane Waddell, Bo Dziadyk, Edie Ellin, Geoff Carter. Brian Koeppel sat in later during the meeting.

First question: how long have you been coming to the meetings?

Asked folks who have been to 5+ meetings to review our agenda and asked their opinion on are we missing anything??

Bo: Member Support committee has lots of overlap with the Small Stations committee; should meld a great deal of their efforts. Desire to meet needs of newer stations and smaller stations are sometimes very similar, although we do have unique needs for smaller stations. Duplication of effort is not the best way to go about things.

Mac: For small stations their needs are quite different than the large stations.

Bo: Right, we had some regional meeting in 2005, there were stations represented there that rarely come to OBFS meetings, did discuss regional meetings.

Mac: this committee (MS) has to deal with issues that involve all the stations, large and small.

Vincent: Small stations tend to need more member support (less support staff)

Geoff: this committee can address the needs of new directors at established stations; some of them have the same issues as directors at small stations

Sarah O. as a new director, any help for new or small stations is welcome

Sarah O: How can the web site be improved for member support? Would a survey work?

Geoff: Is there a search engine function? Consensus: No:

Shane: We should a survey form together and email it to all members,

Has John put together a sample survey? (don't know) this committee could put together the survey questions. With all the changes to web page does John have the time to do this? How do we go about sending out requests for info, protocols, etc.?

Mac: could we put the membership of the meeting on the web site?? We lose members from year to year, committee members change from year to year (only 2 members present in Member Support committee from last year)' lots of people only are able to come every other year to OBFS; need to preserve some ownership. Also, may people come to the meeting just because it sounds interesting and don't necessarily have ownership in the process throughout the year. A list serve where people could join in on the conversation on a specific topic at any time during the year would be helpful

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A few specific issues were thrown out on the floor: 1) Having a mission statement; 2) Safety protocols; 3) Edie: Liability issues: towers

Back to search functions on OBFS website: Q: Can we search among the field stations for who is like us? (Bo)

Geoff: protocols and liabilities are an issue for all of us; other organizations address these issues better. Would be very helpful to have "qualified links" i.e. a page with a series of links that would be useful to all stations such as: National Risk Managers Associations; NSF; NBI. Whatever we develop as a resource, we need to look beyond each other!

More comments: One meeting to the next the membership got lost. With this committee some of should take that on (develop specific suggestions to improve website);

Shane: hate to overwhelm people with too many resources up front (no clutter, too much clutter on the website now)

Geoff: much of what we are talking about concern web design functions

Shane: website is a little cluttered (list on the left is very comprehensive)

Geoff: be aware of websites we really like; forward those on. Send out examples to web subcommittee
Excellent web sites out there

Several people stated that the main OBFS page has too much on it; Need more of a tree format (see below for suggestions)

Sarah O: try to task people with a set of tasks to follow up on (forward website ideas);

Committee members don't consider themselves a member of any specific committee because they float in and out year to year

Q: Are these breakout sessions not effective because there are too many overlaps; can't get to everything.

Bo: 2 years ago we (Small Stations committee) formed a steering committee of 5 members; this year only 2 members were here (Linda Wallace is ill); small steering committee of the larger committee would work well; really only is a chair and floaters; need to sign up people.

Shane: we should communicate with the outreach committee (before we go through the website survey); talk to the website subcommittee; get their input on the survey questions

Q 1: Who does website serve?

Part of clutter is serving several masters (members; people looking for station info)

Sarah O: Question: Money issues: things we should pay for: treasurer: web site help? Lots needs to be done on the web site Executive board has to do a lot of stuff.

Might be worthwhile for some of the field stations to let us know how we develop our websites (who does it great) have them look at the website and look at general suggestions

Shane: first things first, get survey done; may not want to make dramatic changes. Members will tell us what we need to do. Faerthen may be able to make many of the changes if they are small (with John's help on things that take more time)

Survey; all three things listed under #2 (of agenda).

- a) Poll to identify needs of old, new, big, small, member stations, make sure to have a list of suggestions for people to rank along with the opportunity to add stuff
- b) collect documents of use to all stations in order to have way to ask about current practices and protocols (currently done via email requests pretty well (requestor summarizes responses
- c) evaluate what could be changed and what works well on website

Decided among group after some discussion that the broader survey will serve everyone

Public versus member viewing portal (#4 is public viewing sections, simplified viewing page; Membership one still needs to be cleaned up. VIP to have 2 portals one for visitors and one for members.

One other topic: proposal Exec. Committee is working on: only question or concern; should NSF get more input from OBFS as to what we need?

Brian K: NSF really wants input from us as a community.

Concerns: a lot of the field stations are either not members of OBFS or not active members, need to be some recruitment (fall between a couple of committees) Here is an organization of roughly 175 stations including several of the LTER sites and 40% of the marine lab sites; these are the opinions and needs of OBFS as a whole.

In reality, live connections such as phone calls are one of the ways people become a member (recruitment issues)

Geoff: likes Brian's idea (pitch to NSF): wasn't NSF one of the original founders of OBFS? Shouldn't OBFS represent a bigger broader agenda to other funders: ESRI (bog grant program).

Sarah O: a great link for web site would be other funding opportunities that other groups are not aware of; good

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way for member stations to share knowledge amongst each other.

Top 10 issues (survey; for member stations and survey on website)

Eddie: making it searchable (member and public portal) several different ways to search the web site
How about paying for it? John Kohn has been hired that past couple of years, contractor or subcontractor; additional \$5000 to hire John for website help.

Opportunity to report out (tomorrow am) #1 needs; search function

FYI (Brian K): each committee gets \$500 dollar could pay for the survey monkey subscription. *Eddie* also offered the Harvard Forest survey monkey subscription

Start of survey: Identify yourself (if you are member of OBFS, your info is in the database) - some discussion ensued as to whether the survey should ask basic questions about each station (number of staff; size; affiliations, etc. What programs do you have (database not searchable)

More discussion as to process and how small station committee is surveying its members. Big difference Small stations committee is going to do an ongoing application and info guidance type survey on the web or posted to members (no deadline)

We decided to: write up a strawman survey of initial questions and bat it around ourselves via email for the next week or two and then forward it to the other committees (Outreach and Small stations) for their input. Lots of overlap and similar thinking,

Next discussion: Should we allow multiple people from same station to answer survey? Can be a lot of benefit from having multiple users answer anonymously.

First part of station should add to general database and identify specific metric about each station; such as: Identifier: are you the ED, are you the FD, are you the Assoc Director?

After about 5 minutes of discussion, decided each station should share: one response per field station: one vote (one vote. Collaboration via all members (best scenario) which would be funneled through the decision makers who can and will act

So: decided to meet again at 7:00 am (Saturday) at breakfast before reporting out for the general assembly. If possible start on strawman survey at the conference or asap upon returning home. A signup sheet was passed around for everyone to sign in and give their email address for future correspondence.

International Committee (Deedra McClearn)

Science Center, 2nd Floor Classroom (notes taken by Larry Weider, pasted verbatim here)

Participants: Deedra McClearn (chair), Al Muth, Tom Arsuffi, Paul Foster, Larry Weider (scribe), Isabelle Kay, Art McKee, Amy Whipple, Pramond (Prescott College)

List of field stations – approx. 10% of OBFS field stations are international (non-US)

What does OBFS want as a representation globally?

What are our short-term goals regarding internationalizing OBFS and how do we attain these goals?

How do we fight a perceived “lack of interest” within OBFS regarding international issues?

We debated whether OBFS really has an interest in internationalization. Some discussion about younger generation of scientists has greater opportunities to make ties with international stations. If OBFS is going to further develop as an organization, we cannot ignore international issues.

Tom A: Ecological Society of America (ESA) proposal for an exchange program between Mexican stations and U.S.-based stations through the SEEDS program.

Deedra: NSF International Program – ask Judy and Peter about their thoughts about whether NSF would like to see greater OBFS interactions with international stations/ members.

Deedra submitted a recent grant (PASI) to provide training of U.S. grad students at La Selva and pair them up with Costa Rican scientists.

PASI program – joint US-Latin America workshop grant (U.S. participants get funding from NSF and non-U.S. participants receive support from DoD) – grad students, postdocs, database managers – to enhance training efforts.

Tom: could we tie into community college student programs (i.e. large number of minority students)?

Art: gave background about IOBFS – no longer has a home. Suggest that OBFS take over the role of IOBFS.

2009 Meeting: link up with key regional CA/Carib. stations/consortia – commit OBFS funds to bring in up to 3 stations from the region to attend the meeting.

Art: invite key ESA person to come to 2009 meeting.

Al: UNESCO – man & the biosphere (MAB) program – how many biosphere reserves might be tapped into?

RAMSAR sites (international wetlands)

Art: European field stations meet collectively (within and between countries).

Al: UC-Riverside has a Mexican field station connection.

Amy and Deedra have Mexican connections.

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Izzy: needs analysis – how can OBFS help international stations? How can a “mutualism” be established between OBFS members and non-OBFS international stations?

Specific goals:

- create “sister station” relations between U.S./international (e.g. Mexico, Costa Rica)
- can community college programs be used to increase internationalization of OBFS?
- emphasize boosting Latin American participation (e.g. 10 more stations)
- no child left inside (funneling students to U.S. and international field stations)
- grant proposals? International Programs – talk to Harold Stolberg? Talk to Judy and Peter?
- Look for 1 African and 1 European and 1 Asian station to invite to 2009 meeting

La Selva meeting next year:

- Invite rep from ESA? ILTER? European Stations?
- Identify someone from Mexico, Caribbean, Andes
- Invite scientists rather than “bureaucrats” (e.g. Chinese field stations)
- Symposium/workshop at La Selva to highlight different international research opportunities (e.g. global climate change, human-environment interactions, population issues) – e.g. focus on establishing ties for joint international grant proposals.
- Symposium theme – “role of biological field stations in research, education and social action”
- Add 1 day longer for meeting to accommodate the symposium
- Translate the OBFS brochure into Spanish, have it on the OBFS website for downloading

For breakout group later at current meeting:

- Focus on plans for La Selva meeting with symposium focus
- Ask membership about global scope vs. regional scope
- Let's not try to solve the big issues at this meeting but save them for next year
- We should form a symposium committee to help plan next year's event
- U.S. members can be asked to provide names of international contacts to increase the size of our network (collaborators and fellow field station people)

We should clean up and up-date the IOBFS web site if we are going to have an international theme for next year's meeting.

Notes by Larry Weider, edits by Deedra McClearn

Outreach Committee (Philippe Cohen)

Science Center, 2nd Floor Dry Lab (notes taken by Philippe Cohen, pasted verbatim here)

Present: Philippe Cohen, Ray Highsmith, Jo-Ann Jennier, Karie Slavik, Nancy Lowe, Dave Larson, Nina Consolatti, Laura Carter, Chad Jemison, Gwen Pearson, Allison Kuhne, John Thompson, Violet Nakayama, Nathan Rank, Mark Stromberg, Jeff Brown, Faerthen Felix

Brochure

Text

Philippe asks for comments on text, not substantial changes in text. Text originally contained bullet statements, but removed them because it didn't look good. If members want bulleted statements restored, they are requested to organize the bullets.

Layout

Discussion about landscapes versus people pictures. People can get distracting. Should resolve whether people pic or landscape pic is better. Philippe and Eliza Jewitt (designer) inclination is to go with the landscapes in order to maintain the feeling that field stations are special places in terms of where they are and what is there. While what people are able to do, we don't want to lose that other message. So unless they get a strong sense that the including the two landscape shots is the wrong way to go, we will likely go with layout 1.

Photos

Resolve issue of permissions. Lawyers disagree about whether you need an individual's permission to have their face included on a public image. Should be OK if use is not for profit, but trouble could arise.

Violet mentioned that laws may vary among states. For UCNRS, members are especially careful to get written permission. Susan Rumsey has plenty of photos with faces. Philippe checked with publishing house lawyer and university lawyer. Michigan lawyers were stricter in interpretation. Most of the people pictures don't show clear faces.

* Motion passed: All attendees supported use of images according to the lawyers, photographers, and publishing house representatives with whom Philippe has spoken.

Final question- attribution of photographer needed?

Mark said might be best to make a caption that describes content of photo. Others thought its not needed. The options are to include photographer name and/or field station name. There was the sentiment that field station

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name is preferred. The problem is that including both has a negative impact on the layout appearance.

* Group agreed that we would ask photographers whether they needed their names included in the caption, and omit photographs where they insist. If the latter is the case, then there may be a need to get additional, specific types of photos.

Please write on the hard copies text you would like to see revised.

* Jeff Brown volunteered to provide a photo of acid rain damage

* Laura Carter offered to find graph that shows change in acidity of something at Hubbard Brook.

* Mark Stromberg offered to provide photo of bat from 'Bats of North America.'

Need high resolution image of radar or sonar (300 dpi for 3 in X 3 in image).

* Faerthen Felix offered to look. [Nathan googled 'radar' and found some very pretty radar weather pictures at NOAA]

* Laura Carter offered to look up NASA image for permissions

How many do we need to print? Discussion ensued. Will be put on high quality recycled paper. Philippe suggests 10,000 and suggests we mail out to OBFS community a solicitation. Assuming 100 stations reply, this would mean 100 per station.

* the group applauded Philippe and Eliza's hard work!!!

Website

Faerthen reviewed purpose of website: not looks for public, but utility for OBFS members.

Most important problem: different components of data from field stations in separate databases. So we try to merge into a single place, but now the database software is outdated, and we need to update it. Google map layer for location of field sites is almost done, by John Kim.

Infrastructure of website needs to be updated. Need to pay someone to port it to updated software and redo database management.

Could go to NSF for support or AIBS to collaborate with for hosting and site maintenance.

John estimated \$5,000 for upgrade that includes integration of PayPal.

Discussion about running RSS for news.

LTER registered our domain name but we control it.

Kevin Brown volunteered to organize mail server.

Public face of website

Initial concept of brochure was to provide visual structure for website to cover main areas of outreach and education, research, and contributions to understanding.

Questions about how the site should change as we become more attractive to the public. Should it be revised to be more public friendly or should a new component be added?

Consensus that it should be added.

People looking for search terms that would be desirable to add to have OBFS pop up to bring to public's attention.

University students looking for field courses.

Whatever we are doing, it will not move forward on a patchwork basis. Will need staff time.

Change website in two phases: phase 1 make backside work well, phase 2 make public portal that uses backside well.

Website called idealist.org for volunteers. Model for obfs.

American conservation experience.

Some people use search box and others use side bars.

NSF Discussion/Update (10:30 am – 11:00 am)

Judy Skog and Peter McCartney led a discussion of NSF priorities: manage funds in times of tight budgets, emphasize overall goals of Office of Management and Budget, link to other federal agencies, reflect the goals of NSF senior management, and offer co-funding opportunities to leverage investments (BIO, GEO, EPSCoR).

BIO Priorities (Judy Skog)

- Life in Transition: Strengthening Core Programs
 - origins
 - energy
 - adaptation
 - Adaptive systems technology
 - Dynamics of water processes in the environment
 - NEON
 - Climate change
- Multidisciplinary Programs
 - dynamics of coupled natural and human systems

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- interdisciplinary training for under-graduates in biology and math
- biology of infectious disease

○ Centers (long-term support for specific activities)

- iPlant Collaborative
- Centers for Environmental Implications of Nanotechnology
- NCEAS - National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis
- National Institute for Mathematical and Biological Synthesis
- National Evolutionary Synthesis Center

DBI must frame goals within this infrastructure

- Empowering biological discovery.
- Support for enabling research activities and provide expertise for future research through undergraduate research opportunities

Infrastructure Lifecycle

- Catalyze — Support — Network
- NSF works mostly in the “Catalyze” phase for infrastructure

NSF: FSML and Beyond (Peter McCartney)

- Support for the stuff we need: facilities improvement, equipment, power, communications, and connectivity, and planning
- Successful projects have:
 - demonstrated infrastructure need
 - high potential for biological impact
 - broad user base
 - increased user potential

There are many NSF programs with synergies with work that field stations do.

FSML and NEON

- both programs are infrastructure, not research
- synergies between FSML and NEON will be realized larger by research users
- both programs are to be managed within a comprehensive vision
- unique role in early career advancement
- leverage investments in common resources, technology, protocols

Continental scale science questions

- are there weak and strong forces connecting the biosphere, geosphere, and atmosphere at regional to continental scales?

Directions for FSML

- think about highest priorities for field stations
- what moves research forward
- context within regional and national research
- roles in training and coordination for research and education in networked and collaborative science

Opportunities

- direct support - equipment, connectivity
- training - field opportunities
- stewardship - promoting data sharing, data policies
- coordination - RCN, workshops, working groups
- prototyping - data management tools, sensor/data acquisition technology, networking protocols

Tools for Catalyzing Change

- workshops
- research coordination networks in Biological Sciences
- INTEROP (specialized program in cyber infrastructure)
- Synergy across FS and ML will more likely be driven by the science users than by the infrastructure.

NSF-FSML Workshop (11:00 am – 12:00 pm)

Brian Kloeppe and Hillary Swain opened a group discussion about a proposal from OBFS to NSF on ways that member stations could benefit more from synergistic activities. Brian asked how many stations were members of these other “field station-type” networks. There are some OBFS members that participate in other networks. Hillary explained that Peter and Jan asked about a proposal for a workshop with field stations that would show the value for stations and how stations can link to other networks.

Needs and Opportunities:

- What does your FSML want to be able to do that they are currently unable to accomplish?
- How does this link into other planned/existing networks?
- What are emerging questions in science and new initiatives that FSML's can contribute to?
- How would new technologies, cyber infrastructure, and other improvements enable FSML's to increase their activities in scientific research, education, broader outreach, data sharing, etc.?
- Potential funding sources for these improvements?

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- How are FSML's and their researchers measuring their broader impacts?

Members contributed the following ideas for how linked networks of stations could be useful

- biodiversity issues and how can it be supported among member stations
- greater bandwidth for support of larger networks of remote sensing instruments
- support of more modern molecular techniques at field stations
- development of more active research programs, perhaps in collaborative ways
- invasive species issues and interactions with native species
- collaborative efforts of individual research teams putting out sensing equipment without attempting to integrate that equipment
- increase educational opportunities for younger kids, not just higher ed. ("No child left inside.")
- coordinated data collection efforts for natural events (fire, for example).
- how will organism distributions change with climate change.
- information about long-range movements of organisms coordinated among stations
- study of woodland infectious diseases
- integrating data collection standards so that data from all stations could be shared
- consequences of changes to snowpack for aquatic and terrestrial organisms
- measures of groundwater recharge in the short-term and long-term
- collection of common information (plant viruses, for example)

In preparation of this proposal, there will be a survey of all field stations and marine labs asking them about needs. There will be 1-3 workshops around the country to develop the proposal, then present to NSF. Brian is looking for suggestions of locations and topics for the possible workshops. Plan is for a full draft by early November and submission of the proposal before the holiday break. This process must be driven by science and can benefit from the early planning of programs like LTER and NEON. There may be others already doing some of the things we would like to do (listed above) and OBFS needs to look for those and figure out how we can link to work already being done.

OBFS Board of Directors Meeting (12:00 pm – 1:00 pm) **Committee Reports (continued)**

Governance (Eric)

Eric presented the Board with updated by-laws that were worked on at the Governance meeting this morning. The new changes reflected: Article II. Section 2. Rights and Obligations of Individual Nonvoting Members. Discussion included what offices would we want a nonvoting member serve. Should a person have to be affiliated with a Field Station to serve on the Executive Board? People not affiliated with stations still have skills in leadership of OBFS. We could just say members can serve and let the membership sort it out in voting. Several thought that leaders in OBFS should have extensive experience with field stations but this could be someone that has been involved in the past but is now not with a station. These individuals could still be good leaders.

Philippe suggested that we sell ourselves short if we think the only people that can represent and lead us are people that are exactly like us. We also have a Nominating Committee that will present candidates to the membership. The by-laws will reflect that all officer positions will be open to voting and nonvoting members.

Eric also brought forward changes to Article III. Section 2. Powers and Purpose of Station Voting Members. This will allow the voting members to call the Board of Directors to action to deal with some concern/issue of the general membership. The Board agreed that this was reasonable.

Article III. Section 3. Dues will be set by the voting members. The BOD will present the proposed change in membership dues to the general membership. This is contrary to some of our previous discussion about dues increases.

Article 3. Section 8. Quorum numbers will remain to 10%. How are we calculating this number, or when do we count voting members: first of the year, end of the year? We are looking at 10% of what number? Philippe suggested using an actual number, not a %. Should we set a date for member counts? We will stick with a % which might provide more flexibility.

Article III. Section 13. Eric clarified changes to meeting structure and who could call a meeting.

Article IV. Section 1 and 2. Board of Directors. This will force the BOD to provide information to members. The BOD has always done this, it just was not part of their explicit duties. An additional change was made for consistency.

Article IV. Section 15. Board of Director Meetings. All Board meetings are open but the Board may call for a closed meeting as needed. Should the entire membership be invited to conference calls? Probably not necessary for

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an open call to attend but posting conference call dates on the website and published in the newsletter is a good idea.

Article V. Section 3. Past-president can be removed, just as any of the other officers.

Article V. Section 8 and 11. Duties for the Directors-at-Large were added and David provided input on the duties of Editor.

The BOD proposed that these changes go forward to vote by the membership on the fall/winter ballot.

Eric, Jan, and Greg will work on completing the OBFS Policies and Procedures Manual.

New Facilities Slide Show and Next Year's Host Station (1:00 pm – 2:00 pm)

David Lentz, University of Cincinnati, presented their new station, "Cincinnati Center for Field Studies" in conjunction with Hamilton County Park District. Leased an old Shaker farm for use as a facility.

Mark Stromberg, UC Natural Reserve System, Hastings Natural History Reservation. Mark presented a new gift of 175 acres adjacent to the original land, also some new modular buildings. Modular buildings are treated as trailers and you can bypass a lot of the architectural reviews.

Holly Ackenson, Taylor Wilderness Research Station, presented their new facilities rebuilt after the old buildings were burned in a forest fire. They also renovated an old homestead into a new facility with a 1920's motif.

Deedra McClearn, LaSelva Biological Station, Organization for Tropical Studies, Costa Rica, presented information on the host site for next year's Annual Meeting. Meeting will be held September 24-27, 2009. The theme of the meeting will be "International Field Stations." Pre- and post-meeting trips have not been planned. Deedra would like to get some input from folks this year about what they would like to do while in the area. La Selva is about 2 hours north of San Jose. La Selva hosts researchers and students from all over the world, over 3,600 user days per year. Peak use is Feb.-Apr. La Selva can sleep 150 people and feed 200 people. Plan ahead for obtaining a passport, you will not need a visa. The CDC website has useful recommendations for foreign travel vaccinations. Be sure to get a tetanus shot.

Mixer and Nuts-and-Bolts Session - International (5:30 pm - 6:30 pm)

This session was canceled due to an extended research tour in the Blackrock Forest.

"Green Buildings" Tour (7:30 pm - 8:30 pm)

Jack Caldwell and Bill Schuster led tours of BRF's two new buildings and discussed green technologies incorporated into them.

Discussion of Green Facilities at Field Stations (8:30 pm - 9:30 pm)

Philippe Cohen and Bill Schuster moderated a discussion on green building and shared examples of their experiences in green design.

Saturday, September 20, 2008

OBFS Business (8:15 am – 9:15 am)

Secretary's Report (Greg Smith)

Publicly thanked Claudia Luke for her service to OBFS and for her help with the Secretary transition. He asked that members check the member list and update their information.

Treasurer's Report (Shorty Boucher)

Operating Fund Balance = \$44,462.60 spread among CD's, checking account, PayPal account. Income was ~\$1,000 less than projected. Overview of budget included some new expenses including tax preparation. If you were a committee chair and have invoices for reimbursement, please turn them in. There is a placeholder amount in the budget for the BOD to review, a separate line item for the brochure production, and a line for website database work. The NEON membership fee will move into the main operating budget. Last year we had a net loss of \$717.86.

Proposed Budget for 2008-2009. The budget reflects a proposal by the BOD to raise station dues to \$150 and member dues to \$50. This will be voted on later today. Members should discuss this. If a Field Studies poster will continue, someone will need to take over responsibilities from RMBL. The budget also reflects an increase for a Treasurer's Assistant to help with various tasks that are the responsibility of this office. Most of the budget items stay the same. John Kim will continue to be contracted for database services. There is also a proposal for \$500 to continue to consult with the tax attorney as needed. Total budgeted expenses = \$48,660.00. Even with a dues hike we are projecting a deficit of \$18,160.00 for 08-09 if all budgeted items are spent. As we have grown and the database work has gotten more complicated, we need to think about help for the Treasurer. Philippe suggested a lump sum for committee budgets instead of individual lines for each committee since many committees never spend their budgeted amount. Larry pointed out that there will be an adjustment to the cost for the Annual Meeting. Jeff Brown said he could put Shorty in touch with someone that works with non-profits that might be able to help with bookkeeping. The website will eventually have a more public face but right now we need to work on the database. Jan suggested that until the website is more useful and appealing, the Field Station poster might not be necessary. The poster might take a year off and look at starting the

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poster up again next year. That money can be reallocated. The Secretary can work with Faerthen to "beta-test" the database.

Finance/Investment Committee Report (Peter Connors)

It was a bad year for our investments. Balance as of Aug. 31, 2007 = 77,879.07; balance as of Aug. 31, 2008 = \$75,829.77. The funds managed previously by Citizens Funds lost 15.15% and 12.93%. These results trail benchmark indices. The funds are watched over a 3-year cycle. Citizens Fund was bought out by Sentinel. As of April, there has been a change in management of the funds. The new managers have very good records and they do provide green funds. We will do nothing at the moment and watch the results with the new fund manager. The Finance Committee will review the performance at the end of the year.

Vice President Audit (Larry Weider)

This year, we were about ~\$12 off in our audit. There were some difficulties and confusion, especially related to the PayPal collection of dues.

Diversity Committee (Amy Whipple)

Presentation of the 2nd Annual OBFS Diversity Award. Nominees were: Adirondack Ecological Center and Cranberry Lake, Sagehen Creek and Sedgwick Preserve, Mountain Lake Biological Station, Coweeta Hydrological Lab, and Hatfield Marine Science Center. This year the OBFS Diversity Award was given to Llano River Field Station for the Texas Tech University Outdoor School. They have reached >5,000 students, 50% of which are from Title I schools, 43% are Hispanic.

Committee Reports – Block 1 (9:15 am – 10:00 am)

International (Deedra McClean)

OBFS is an international society: 10-15% of members are outside of the US. Discussed the commitment of OBFS to international stations and spin-off from IOBF. Focus on practical things for the future, particularly for next year's meeting in La Selva. The Committee will organize a symposium on international stations at next year's meeting: "The Current Role of Biological Field Stations Around the World in Teaching, Research, and Outreach." Speakers would be invited, creating a global symposium. Deedra proposed a symposium committee to help plan for this, apart from planning of the regular meeting. The committee will look for input from OBFS members on international connections. Also looking for input on ideas for funding the symposium, especially funding for speakers from foreign countries. Judy Skog pointed out that NSF will pay for foreign scientists to travel to the US but it will not pay for foreign scientists to visit other foreign countries. The membership liked the idea of a symposium and suggested that there should be some deliverable from the event, using it as a way to educate about the importance of stations around the world as well as getting international

stations more involved in OBFS. We should check with the International LTER program, Conservation International, Costa Rica USA, etc. about funding.

Governance (Eric Nagy)

The Committee worked out the tax form for the auction. Also, the committee has been working on by-laws for some time. We have approved the by-laws and now are working on some "tweaking." The membership will vote later today on whether to place these on the fall ballot. There is ongoing development of a Policies and Procedures Manual, day-to-day activities of how to run the organization. Eric and Greg will work to put this together.

Member Support (Sarah Oktay for John Kim)

The Committee reviewed what the Member Support Committee is supposed to do. The Committee wants to (1) conduct a poll on member needs, (2) collect documents from members that can be shared, and (3) website improvements (search function, two portals: member and visitor). There was recognition of how various committees overlap. The Committee agreed to allocate their budgeted \$500 to website development. The survey (demographics, needs, website use) will be reviewed by the Committee, then sent to the membership for approval before placing on the web.

Outreach (Philippe Cohen)

The main item of discussion was the brochure. The text can be reviewed but it is too late for substantive changes at this point. Edits and re-wording can be suggested, as can layout suggestions. There was discussion about permissions policy; how can images be used in the brochure? It is useful to get permission but it is difficult to track down some of the people in older pictures. The Committee agreed to use pictures with permission from the photographer even if not from everyone actually in the pictures. Photographer credit was discussed since using Photographer names crowd the layout. The plan is to print ~10,000 copies and Jasper Ridge will be responsible for mailing the brochure to whoever wants them. The Committee would like to wait for printing until the website has a more public face since the brochure directs the reader to the website.

President Kloeppel announced that the 2010 OBFS Annual Meeting would be hosted by the University of Michigan Biological Station. Vice President Weider reminded the membership to complete the meeting exit survey before they leave. This information is useful for planning the annual meetings.

Historian Report/Group Photo (10:15 am – 10:30 am)

Mary Hufty gathered those present for a group photo on the Blackrock Forest lawn.

Concurrent Committee Meetings - Block 2 (10:45 am - 12:00 pm)

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Small Field Stations Committee (Bo Dziadyk and Linda Wallace (not present))

Science Center, 1st Floor Classroom (notes taken by Greg Smith)

In Attendance: Bo Dziadyk (Augustana College), Bill Ehmann (Individual Member), John Hayes (Ordway-Swisher Biological Station), Jack Witham (Holt Research Forest), Holly Akenson (Taylor Wilderness Research Station), Sarah Oktay (Nantuckett Field Station), Chad Jemeson (Huyck Preserve), Drew Jones (Hopkins Memorial Forest), David Lentz (Univ. of Cincinnati Center for Field Studies), Vincent Voegeli (Yellowstone Ecological Research Center), John Thompson (Mohonk Preserve), Paul Foster (Reserva Ecologica Bijagual), Mac Hardy (Ouachita Mountains Biological Station), Isabelle Kay (UC San Diego Reserves), Greg Smith (Univ. of Akron Field Station), John Anderson (Aton Forest).

The committee structure was developed about 10 years ago by Beth Cline at the Archbold Meeting. Small Stations is a subcommittee under Common Interests. Linda Wallace is now a co-chair of the Small Stations Committee. Greg Smith asked for other members to participate as they can and volunteer to serve as members of the steering committee. Greg is willing to let someone else take his seat on the steering committee given his various other OBFS duties.

What is a small station? Stations with small area, small budget, few personnel, limited programs (education only, limited summer courses), very regional activities (draw only from your area or your home institution), not active year-round. This committee can also benefit new stations which are often small and share issues with established smaller stations. Sarah brought up the idea of an exchange program - setting up a group of near-by field stations that can share resources, students, ideas, etc.

Should this group have a larger meeting devoted to small/new stations? If so, should this meeting happen separate from the OBFS or in conjunction with OBFS? The group thought that there should be clear objectives as to the reasons for such a meeting. Nuts-and-bolts kind of things could likely be handled at OBFS and not in a separate meeting. However, regional collaboration should be encouraged. A separate, regional meeting might encourage non-OBFS members to participate with other field stations. This might ultimately get other stations interested in OBFS. There could be sub-meetings of OBFS focused in specific areas of the country that would potentially allow more station participation, bring in more member stations, introduce stations that are near one another. Regions could send representatives to the main OBFS meeting and report on what their region is doing. Smaller meetings can allow focus on specific topics that are not possible in the time allowed for committee meetings at the main OBFS meeting.

The group discussed a survey designed to understand more about the needs of small/new field stations. Bo provided a list of potential questions for the group to review and Sarah will work these questions into the developing member survey from the Member Support Committee. Those questions are

1. List the name, location and address of your field station.
2. Is your station a member of Organization of Biological Field Stations? If so, skip to question #4.
3. Please provide the following information about your station: physical size, age of the station, education programs, research programs, outreach.
4. Do you send or hope to send representatives to the annual OBFS meeting?
5. What do you perceive as the greatest needs of your station? Please list the top three in priority order.
6. How can the OBFS, in particular the Small and New Field Stations Committee, assist you?

Bo discussed how this committee might maintain its identity. He asked if this committee merits continuation as a distinct group. The group agreed that this distinction is useful and asked about articulating what constitutes a small station. Identify this would help establish goals that the committee can focus on. The group discussed common challenges.

Holly Akenson, Mac Hardy, and Isabelle Kay, expressed interest in joining the steering committee so the new steering committee is Bo Dziadyk, Linda Wallace, Holly Akenson, Isabelle Kay (recorder), and Mac Hardy.

Diversity Committee (Amy Whipple)

Science Center, 2nd Floor Classroom (notes taken by Amy Whipple, pasted verbatim here)

Attendees: Amy Whipple, Tom Arsuffi, Violet Nakayama, Jim Gosz, Nancet Lowe, Gwen Pearson, Deedra McClearn, Brian Kloeppel

Award update

a. 2008 Award: Report from Amy with additions from Violet. We had 6 great applicants and did not have to beat the bushes for applications this year. Awards were made today of the permanent and rotating plaques to Bonnie Loeffler of Llano River Field Station and nominee certificates were handed out. The travel award is being used by a teacher from the program at Llano River this year (up to \$1000). Amy and Tom will finish Llano River's letter and press release.

Suggestions - be sure to get a good photo of award presentation and frame the certificates.

b. 2008 Process and ideas for modifications (review committee) Thanks to a great review committee!

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Questions raised during evaluation were: do we want a numerical scoring system? Is there a problem in comparing widely different programs (k-12 vs college, large versus small numbers of participants)? Should there be more than one award?

c. Future planning/changes and organizer Plans: Add first generation college students to list of audiences (emailed idea from Brian Kloeppe). Poll review committee on evaluation procedure. Poll membership on possibility for a second award at the discretion of the (with split \$ award). Tom Arsuffi will organize this year's review.

d. Documenting diversity practices: John Kim emailed a suggested including information on awardees on the website (in the handbook) and maybe having a wiki. Discussion focused on streamlining production of prepared website materials on the winning and nominated sites for others to use as model program ideas. This would include collecting information in a format that it can easily be formatted for the web: Handbook; Wiki

e. Additional activities, ideas for consideration

1. Workshop: *The diversity session was well-received, but was not wanted every year. Diversity is a sub-topic at today's education session and will be incorporated in the international theme at La Selva.* An additional session at La Selva would be too much, but we might target 2010 for a focused diversity activity at Michigan.
2. First generation students (Brian Kloeppe) this was added to the target audience list. It was seen as overlapping with the other audiences already listed.
3. Development opportunities? Jeff Brown: pursue resources for video: "Biological Field Science". The video would explain what science is, show exciting field science, and show what careers are available. Could target ~8th grade as well as families.

Issues:

Declining interest/lack of interest in field science, recruiting under-represented students, career awareness
Family/community support for other careers
Traditional Ecological Knowledge

Funding sources/partners:

NSF: ISE/CRPA

ESA/SEEDS/Teresa Mourad

Foundations: Mellon and Sloan

"Youth Voice" for Wild and Scenic Film Series

Faerthen Felix

UCNRS

KBS and NAU also

Stations could tie into "No Child Left Inside"

Models for programs: Llano, Fairchild Challenge

Promote Citizen Science programming (ISE)

Organizational Development Committee (Ian Billick)
Science Center, 2nd Floor Dry Lab
No minutes reported.

Education/Diversity Panel Part I (1:00 pm - 2:30 pm)

Past-President Jan Hodder introduced a series of presentations focused on education and diversity. Wynn Cudmore presented, "The northwest center for sustainable resources: a model for using biological field stations to enhance science education." NCSR is funded by the NSF Advanced Technological Education (ATE) Program. They have received \$7.5 million through 2008 and have just been funded for an additional 3 years. They develop and disseminate ecosystem-based curriculum materials with an emphasis on community college natural resource and environmental science programs. NCSR also offers professional development for college faculty, primarily community college faculty but also high school and universities. Information can be found at www.ncsr.org.

Curriculum Characteristics

- o increased levels of science and mathematics
- o incorporation of ecosystem management and new technologies
- o increased field and laboratory experiences for students
- o materials are "classroom-ready"

Goal: to ensure that all students, regardless of major or career interest, become scientifically literate members of society and capable of understanding technology.

"Science as a Process" Instrument. Pre- and post-test approach to identify learning of students in the program. Post-test scores increase over pre-test scores by about 14%. The instrument is available on the NCSR website.

NCSR Curriculum Products

- Entire courses enhanced syllabi. Lectures, textbooks, lab exercises, etc.
- Individual modules (discrete instructional units). Portions of courses on specific topics.

Example labs:

- o log decomposition in forest ecosystems
- o an evaluation of the edge effect
- o evaluating human impacts (lecture support, not a typical lab)
- o Impact of land use on water quality (use Google Earth and NASA World Wind for remote Willamette Valley land use change (computer modeling) evaluation of media coverage of an environmental issue

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- o global climate change

Future efforts:

NCSR Fire Ecology Series (soon to be released), Genetically-modified Organisms, How to Present and Interpret Environmental Data, Illustrations of Inter-connectedness in Ecosystems, Marine Fisheries and Wetland Mitigation are down the road.

Professional Development Institutes

- ~15 faculty in a week long workshop (ex. Fire institute and land use impacts institute, marine fisheries in 2009)
- Presented >40 institutes with >600 faculty participating. There are immediate surveys and follow-up for several years to see if modules are being implemented.

How do FSML's fit in?

- o venues for faculty development institutes
- o venue for full undergraduate courses and portions of courses
- o venue for visits by funding agency
- o current research as model for curriculum development
- o field station scientists as resources

How might field stations foster a working relationship with educators?

- Make educators aware of what biological field stations have to offer. Link with community colleges and other schools without the resources.
- Identify interested faculty and field station scientists. Pair them together.
- Know your audience (graduate vs. undergraduate, community college faculty are "generalists")

They have a directory of community college faculty that teach in the area of natural resource sciences. This directory is also available on the website and OBFS stations may be able to locate interested faculty in their area.

William Ehmann presented a recap of an NSF-AIBS meeting they attended on undergraduate education. Discussion points:

- o What are the main goals and learning outcomes for 21st Century Biology?
- o Do Biology departments want to go the route of chemistry and be accredited?
- o What are the changes that need to take place in teaching (pedagogy, lab needs, technology)?

- o How do foundations and professional societies support efforts in undergraduate biology? Discussion of US competitiveness in STEM fields.
- o McGraw-Hill Publisher was telling his editors that they might get one or two new print editions and then it would go to a web-based text.

The discussion moved into a brainstorming session to discuss how OBFS can participate in these efforts.

- How can we use the OBFS platform for undergraduate biology education? Can we give students a more continental/global scale - like multiple field stations in a season. Sort of a super-REU experience.
- Increase networking among stations. Using technology to keep researchers, faculty, and students in touch.
- Can OBFS reach out to other professional organizations so they can hold meetings at field stations?

OBFS must take the opportunity now to promote ourselves. All of this might tie into the NSF call for proposals in Research Coordination Networks - Undergraduate Biology Education.

The membership discussed opportunities for OBFS to pursue these ideas.

- o Field stations are generally too small to host professional meetings (except for very small ones.)
- o The super-REU idea might work for peer-review exercises, modular courses (course hopping), etc.

Social networking can be done by email lists, Facebook, MySpace, public radio in your area, speaker series, etc. Anything that will connect stations to interested individuals and organizations.

Judy and Peter provided comments from NSF. RCN is designed to encourage collaboration between organizations that would not normally work together. Because of a need to pursue an aggressive approach to biology education, the RCN-UBE was created. This might help some of these undergraduate education activities to become more national in scale. We need to think big for this proposal to be successful. We should not compare this to NEON. NEON is an infrastructure program, education comes from other avenues. Something we might develop here might guide NEON as they develop their education outcomes.

The NSF-IRES (International Research Experiences for Students) might be another avenue for a super-REU if a portion of it was international.

Education/Diversity Panel Part II (2:45 pm - 3:30 pm)
(Bill Schuster)

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Bill Schuster introduced the "School-in-the-Forest" Program. K-12 education for urban students, reaches out to dis-advantaged children, particularly from urban settings, including New York City. Norman and Joyce Baron described the program that they helped create in conjunction with Blackrock Forest.

Why is this important?

- o Many schools in NYC do not have science teachers, much exposure to science.
- o The program focuses on observational skills which leads directly to questioning.
- o They do field work, data collection, and lab work.
- o They study chemistry, geology, biology (including classification of plants and animals, etc.)
- o There are emotional gains in the students, particularly in their self esteem. They also develop socially.
- o The students are also engaged in a lot of physical activity. Outdoor experiences are extremely limited for these children.
- o In the future, these kids might make a positive impact for the environment, even as citizens.
- o Field stations should connect to schools. Most school programs are essentially extended field trips. Scientists can introduce different skills to the students.

How was this program created?

- Decided on grades 4-5, an age in which kids are very altruistic. They are very hopeful and want to try and do something good for the world. Principals at schools asked to include more grades, eventually grades 3-8.
- Schools offering this program were sought after by parents.
- Programs must fit within the already existing school structure. The administration and teachers must be supportive.
- The program has worked with two different schools for 6 years now.
- Funding was provided by various trusts and foundations and state government. It was difficult to interest foundations in a small-scale program. BRF covered some of the costs when funds were low. A bike-ride fundraiser ("green ride") raised enough money to support the program for one year.
- Curriculum was linked to NY State Learning Standards.

Advice for those that want to get started with a similar program.

- Be prepared to do a lot of hand-holding with the public schools.
- If you use existing field station staff, make sure they want to participate.
- Getting scientists into the classroom to supplement the field work is beneficial.

The program is continuing, being run by Blackrock Forest staff now. The program has not been able to track students after they leave the program due to privacy laws. But they have done pre/post testing.

Committee Reports - Block 2 (3:30 pm - 4:30 pm)

Diversity (Amy Whipple)

A number of new faces in the diversity group. Discussed the award process for the year and suggestions for the future. While evaluating this year's applications it was difficult to decide on a winner since the awards were so diverse (K-12, higher ed., adult, etc.). The committee asked the membership, "Should there be flexibility for such diversity as they review awards?" For example, they might decide to give two awards, with the monetary award being split. The membership discussed the value of each approach but ultimately decided to stick with one award. As Peter McCartney said, "Turning people down gets easier over time." Nominees from previous year's that did not win will be contacted and asked to resubmit with an update. Tom Arsuffi will handle the evaluation process this year. The committee will also work on updating the RFP on the web. They will also work on video(s) for the web that paints field biology in a positive light and promote field stations to a diverse audience. The committee also discussed planning another diversity workshop at the 2010 meeting.

Small Field Stations (Bo Dziadyk)

Sixteen people attended the meeting with many new faces. The new steering committee is Bo Dziadyk, Linda Wallace, Holly Akeson, Mac Hardy, and Isabelle Kay (recorder). Given the diversity of small/new stations, the group discussed that the leadership should not continue indefinitely but rotate over time. This will involve many more people in OBFS leadership. The group also discussed the possibility of a regional small/new stations meeting every 2-3 years. This would provide more time for in-depth discussions of topics of interest. There just doesn't seem to be enough time to accomplish business at the main OBFS meeting. There does seem to be overlap with Member Support and perhaps these committees should work together more closely. The committee has begun to develop a questionnaire to assess needs of small/new stations.

Organizational Development (Ian Billick)

The Committee discussed how to develop resources for OBFS. There is a need for core messages: facts,

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individual stories, etc. Began to take steps toward developing a donation mechanism. The committee will begin by looking for small grants to offset meeting costs for next year and will consider an invitation to ESRI and Trimble to next year's meeting. This will help establish collaboration with corporations that provide equipment and software that many of us use. Stations with contacts for other equipment providers should contact Ian.

OBFS Business (4:30 pm - 5:30 pm)

Congressional Visits Day Update (Philippe Cohen)

Philippe Cohen, Bo Dziadyk, and Greg Smith attended. It was a very positive experience and eye-opening. Many of the congressional staff had a Ph.D. staff member. Staffs expressed the importance of continuing to be heard.

LTER Update (Brian Kloeppe)

Each quarter Briand contacts Bob Wade just to discuss the LTER network, since several of the sites are OBFS members. One point of discussion was avoiding conflicts between the OBFS meeting and the LTER All Scientists meeting. The LTER meeting is open to the whole scientific community, September of 2009 in Estes Park, CO. They recently had an LTER site review.

AIBS/NSF Update (Eric Nagy)

OBFS is an AIBS Member. AIBS provides numerous services and support to their members. As an institutional member we get to send a representative member to the council meeting. This year they met on May 14, 2008. There is a full report in the foyer and on the AIBS website (AIBS.org - called "Briefing Book"). We are mainly interested in the AIBS Public Policy Office and the Education Office. Rita Colwell is the current President of AIBS and wants to focus effort to get people on the Hill and at NSF. Important projects are the Encyclopedia of Life (Eol.org) and BioOne (BioOne.org). There is an interest within EOL to catalog collections as well as live organisms. Rob Gropp runs the Public Policy Office: evolution/creationism issues, email activity bulletins, legislative language to help support funding for science, esp. NSF. They also provide a "Communicating Science: A Primer for Working with the Media" that can be downloaded from the AIBS website. OBFS is involved in Congressional Visits Day, NSF Conversation in Undergraduate Biology, and the Year of Science 2009. Year of Science resulted from a proposal stemming from an AIBS Council Meeting. Find out more at COPUS (www.copusproject.org) = Coalition on the Public Understanding of Science, celebrating Darwin's 200th birthday. Field stations could host Year of Science events. Register at the website, it is free to join. Eric presented a PowerPoint presentation sent by Sheri Potter of COPUS. BioScience will publish a series of papers focusing on field stations and what they contribute to science education. This resulted in 6 manuscripts that will appear in various editions beginning as soon as February 2009.

Discussion of 2008-2009 Budget (Shorty Boucher)

Shorty clarified that the BOD approves the budget but the membership at large must approve changes to the dues. There was a question about the status of IOBFS and if money would be budgeted to it. That appears to be in a state of limbo at the moment. The line item was removed because there was no longer work being done on the website. It was again suggested to combine the committee lines into a single line. The line for this year's poster development will stay but that money can be used for other things since the poster will not be created this year. There was discussion of dues increases including: what is being done to get stations to pay delinquent dues or encourage lapsed stations to renew. There were issues with repeat notifications so some stations may have missed this. The BOD will entertain requests for stations or individuals that could not absorb the dues increase. This would be determined on a case-by-case basis. MOTION to increase station dues to \$150/year and individual member dues to \$50/year, seconded, passed unanimously. MOTION to give BOD the power to provide hardship waivers for stations or individuals as they see fit, seconded, passed unanimously.

By-laws (Eric Nagy)

Eric reminded the membership about substantive changes to the by-laws and explained. Everyone should review and comment on the by-laws. Discussion continued. It was asked why individual members cannot vote? The tradition has been the stations are the members, the members are actually stations. Hearing no more concern, the by-laws changes will be placed on the ballot for vote by the membership.

OBFS Auction (7:30 pm - 10:00 pm)

"Woodstock 1969 Revisited"

The Gerald Selzer Memorial Gong rang in this year's auction and >\$6,000 was raised. A good time was had by all!!

Sunday, September 21, 2008

Nominating Committee Update

Eric announced the nominees for upcoming open offices:

Vice-President

Amy Whipple

Bill Schuster

Treasurer

Philippe Cohen

Vince Voegeli

Director-at-Large

Deedra McClearn

Sarah Oktay

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There were no nominees from the floor. The ballot will appear at the end of the year with a by-laws vote. New officers take over April 1, 2009.

OBFS Website Session and Information Management/Website Enhancement (9:00 am - 10:30 am)

Faerthen Felix led a discussion on the OBFS website and database. The website is currently functioning as a management tool for the organization. There is a desire to create a more public face for the website. The website is currently a bit of a hybrid. At the moment the focus is on creating a useable database but there is an increasing desire to make the site more attractive to the public. This part of the design is not that complicated. An important part of the public side will be the course updates. Reminders about updating your course information are going to be more automated. There are some issues with updating course information, mainly how to do this are not obvious.

The membership was asked what they would like to see on the public portion of the website. Suggestions included

- access for the public just "visiting" and access for the scientific community
- more aesthetically appealing
- logos for all OBFS partners (NSF, AIBS, for example)
- organize navigation for user groups (scientists, teachers, general public, etc.)
- useful links to sites that OBFS might associate
- historian page (posting photos, information, etc.)
- description of who we are, who are our members, what we do
- how to join, benefits of membership
- announcements, such as annual meeting
- lists of stations with various programs (volunteers, K-12 programs, etc.)
- all student opportunities (courses, internship, volunteer)
- public outreach events
- searchable (by offerings, by location, by habitat, etc.)
- message board or forums
- obvious information about the upcoming annual meeting
- obvious link to the online "Operations Manual." Maybe rename it on the webpage to "How to run a field station."
- link to NSF abstracts of importance to members (FSML, planning grants)

- species lists.

By launching this public portal we might be creating a two-headed monster. It will be up to the individual OBFS stations to make sure their information is up-to-date.

Faerthen is developing a "wish list" as we move forward. The database work is basically done, just working out some quirks and adding some functionality. John Kim continues to work on these issues. The database is built on open-source software. There is a need to update the PostNuke software, now called Zikula.

The PayPal link for next year will need to be updated to reflect the approved dues increase.

The static face of the public side of the webpage would not take long to create, but might take some time to get it to something that all agree on. Faerthen will work on a more public page to present to the membership.

Bill Schuster led a discussion about individual website issues. Websites are increasingly important in disseminating information. Station websites vary across the board, all are mostly static trying to provide information very easily. Very few are interactive with tools available to all that visit. Bill used the Blackrock Forest website as an example. They have information on the site broken out by user groups (teachers, scientists, students, etc.). There is a content management system in place that makes it easy to update via templates. They are also advancing their "Virtual Forest" program using Google Earth and photos of the forest to link to real-time stream data and other information that will allow students to collect information remotely. This can be coupled with on the ground measurements. To the extent that stations can network and link together, we will all benefit.

There is also value in funneling updates through one person that makes sure everything works and is accurate before publishing on the web. Coordination is critical.

In order to address all of these issues for the OBFS website, it might require hiring someone to create and manage our website. This might be someone that could also do some work for individual member stations. Stations could put some money into the pot to "buy a share" of this web programmer. We should determine what the going rate for this kind of help is and determine who is willing to contribute to this effort.

Peter McCartney suggested contacting Nicole Caplan in the LTER Network about some ways we can continue to coordinate with them on database management and accessibility. She might have some advice for decreasing the learning curve for member stations.

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Concluding Remarks (Brian Kloepfel) (10:30 am - 11:00 am)

President Kloepfel thanked Bill Schuster and all of the staff at Blackrock Forest for a great meeting! He also thanked Vice President Weider and the Annual Meeting Committee for their hard work and a great meeting. With that, President Brian Kloepfel officially closed the Annual Meeting of the Organization of Biological Field Stations at Blackrock Forest, Cornwall, NY.

Board of Directors Meeting (10:30 am – 12:25 pm)

Joined by Jan Hodder.

Committee Reports (continued)

Outreach (Philippe)

Decisions were made on the layout and still working on permissions. Print ~10,000 but does not want to do so until the website is more attractive. The brochure point people to the website. Faerthen suggested printing but not distributing. Jasper Ridge will print it and handle mailing out of requested copies. It will be a very attractive brochure.

The poster will not printed this year, RMBL will not be able to do it this year. We will reconsider the poster next year. We can use the poster money for other things this year. The posters will actually continue to hang in various places until we can print it again.

Nina will be transitioning from Kellogg and we need a new display leader or other plans for the OBFS display. The BOD should continue to work to identify someone to manage the traveling poster.

Web Site (Faerthen)

Faerthen will update the wish list and will continue to work on database bugs. She will also begin to work on a more public face for the webpage. There are two databases: our field station information database and the database that drives the web access. Marshall is out of the picture, Faerthen and John will work on this. Without a full-time person to do it will take some time. Shorty suggested that there is an additional \$1500 that John has not been paid. As we move forward, we should make sure John has time to continue to work on the OBFS database. Faerthen said that John is definitely the one to upgrade the software, he knows the software and our system and can work with it. There is an additional \$5000 for John (although not committed to him) in next year's budget. It might be ideal to find someone who could prioritize the OBFS webpage. John may not have the time to devote to it. OBFS is not his priority. Philippe suggested the Jasper Ridge IT guy might be willing to help with various website duties. But we still need to find someone who can prioritize OBFS.

Brian asked if we move forward the idea from the membership of a shared web design person. This is for something completely different than the OBFS webpage

but will focus on individual stations. OBFS could be one of the clients for this person. Faerthen said that this is essentially the LTER model that we were involved in initially. Jan suggested we put a committee together to explore the possibilities and the interest of members. The committee could put together a business plan to present to the membership. Eric will chair this subcommittee and Hillary, Philippe, Amy, John, and Sarah Oktay (if she agrees) will help develop a needs assessment and a plan.

Member Support (John)

Sarah Oktay led the member support committee in John's absence. The committee is working on a needs assessment of members via a survey.

Diversity (Amy)

The committee discussed adding first-generation college students to the list of qualifications of the award. The committee will try to link to "No child left inside" and other programs for increasing interest in science and the outdoors. The group will pursue a video presence showing "science in action." Jan asked if the award winners and what they do is publicized. Amy will work on developing something for the newsletter and/or website from the nominees and winners. Tom Arsuffi will lead the award subcommittee for next year. We should lump sum the committee budgets and give a separate line item for travel for the winner of the Diversity Award (\$1000). This amount will be \$1000 and will be available for expenses associated with running committees.

International (Deedra)

Hauyk Preserve still has the IOBFS database but we do not own this database. It has nothing to do with OBFS. We should ask Rick Wyman what he would like to do with it. Do we want this database? It would be useful, certainly for next year's meeting, but in the future as we move toward a more international focus. We will ask Art to work with Deedra to contact Rick and try to obtain the database. Deedra will put together a subcommittee to help organize an international symposium for next year's meeting. OBFS can help support this symposium and Deedra can asked for financial help.

Small Field Stations (Bo)

The small stations committee presented the idea of regional meetings to increase attendance by stations in those regions. This might follow the format of the 2005 small stations meeting in Ohio and could focus on specific issues with more time than is devoted to this committee at the Annual Meeting. Philippe suggested that this would create disincentive for these stations to attend the Annual Meeting and structures the notion that small station issues are different than big station issues.

OBFS should encourage regional gatherings of stations but these meetings should not be OBFS functions. These meetings could bring useful information to the general

2008 OBFS Annual Report

membership at the Annual Meeting. The committee does not want to create a separate culture of small stations that wants to meet separate from OBFS. It also might make stations that do not attend Annual Meetings more interested in attending the larger meeting.

There is a difference between a regional OBFS meeting and a meeting devoted to "small field stations." Regional meetings can focus on more local issues. A subcommittee is working on ideas for such a meeting. The BOD can certainly consider a proposal from the Small Stations Committee to support the regional meeting.

We could also add a session to the Annual Meeting in order to have more time to address small station issues. It can be hard to work the extra time into the program but there is nothing stopping the committee for asking for time on the agenda.

Organizational Development (Brian for Ian)
Questions from this committee.

Q - What is the process if we want to submit a letter to a potential donor?

A - The letter should come from the BOD with the President's signature.

Q - Is it ok to invite potential vendors to the 2009 Annual Meeting in La Selva (Trimble and ESRI)? This might allow OBFS members to cultivate a relationship with these groups that might provide software and equipment at discounted rates. We should have a policy for vendors attending the Annual Meeting. We might also work to identify vendors that might be more likely to form partnerships with us. Vendors are normally asked to provide some sort of partnership for the meetings they attend. Can we propose a sponsorship fee for these vendors that are willing to attend? They are trying to sell a product.

A - OBFS should develop a vendor policy. Various small meetings have charged as much as \$300/table. We had previously discussed \$200/table on top of the registration fee. Do we even want vendors at the Annual Meeting? If we are selective about vendors, there might be advantages to the members to be exposed to those vendors. We also receive money for their attendance. We would also need additional space and additional beds for vendors. This plan might work as an experiment in OBFS's ability to solicit corporate support for our efforts. Jan suggested the committee go ahead with this plan and charge a fee for their attendance. Eric asked how involved the BOD would be in negotiations with these corporations. The BOD will be involved in these negotiations. For next year, Deedra must agree that this is ok for La Selva. We will propose a fee on top of registration of no less than \$250.

How do we handle big donor approaches? Is there money for travel to visit donors or have donors visit?

These are perhaps best done on a case-by-case basis. A proposal could be submitted to the BOD should the need arise and the BOD could decide on the value for the effort. The BOD meets quarterly and proposals can be considered then. Proposals should be submitted at least 2 weeks in advance of the meeting.

What is OBFS trying to accomplish? What are some specific goals that might be used to court potential donors? This is difficult for us to respond to right now. For example, a paid staff member is something that came out of the strategic plan. Also, build an endowment, provide networking services, cooperative education programs, etc.

The Committee wants each member of the BOD to donate \$25 to the annual operating budget. They would like to see 100% buy-in of the BOD for development and this will make the process of donations transparent: what is the process, where is it mailed, who do you make checks out to, and who sends out thank-you letters if a donation is received. The amount is not important, the process is. If the BOD is willing to give money to the organization, potential donors see that we are serious. We should probably have separate accounts for restricted and operating money. The BOD decided to proceed with this buy-in, with an amount determined by the individual member. Brian will send out an email reminder. There should be a donor list that can be made available and the President will send thank-you letters.

Other Business

Greg distributed copies of our official 501(c)(3) notice letter to the BOD and the BOD should keep this copy in a safe place.

Shorty said that we must have a representative in Missouri, where we are incorporated. It is very difficult to change the state of incorporation at this point. We have not yet identified such a person. Should we approach Tyson Research Center in St. Louis about serving in this capacity? If we can identify someone that would help us, we could provide them an individual membership. Shorty will approach Tyson to see if they are willing.

Shorty and Peter discovered that OBFS has 3 tax ID numbers. We need a cost basis for tax purposes. In order for Peter to help Shorty sort this out we need a resolution by the BOD, on letterhead, naming the officer or trustee that the BOD has approved to act on behalf of the organization. This must be dated within 60 days of this transaction. They also need a letter of instruction from Peter stating what action is to be taken and it requires a signature guarantee stamp (not a notary). In order to change the tax ID number, Shorty can just petition the change. The BOD asked her to do this.

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The BOD must approve the 2008-2009 budget. Shorty will put together a clean version (see Appendix A) and the BOD will vote by email.

The next board meeting will be the 2nd week of December (12/11/2008, 12:00 pm EST), then March, then June. This meeting will occur by conference call.

Larry will compile the exit surveys.

President Brian Kloeppe adjourned the meeting at 12:25 pm EST.

Philippe said he will only be Treasurer if his Administrative Assistant can help. If not, he will remove his name from the nomination.

Respectfully submitted,
Greg Smith

Treasurer's Proposed 2008-2009 Budget

I. Operating Funds

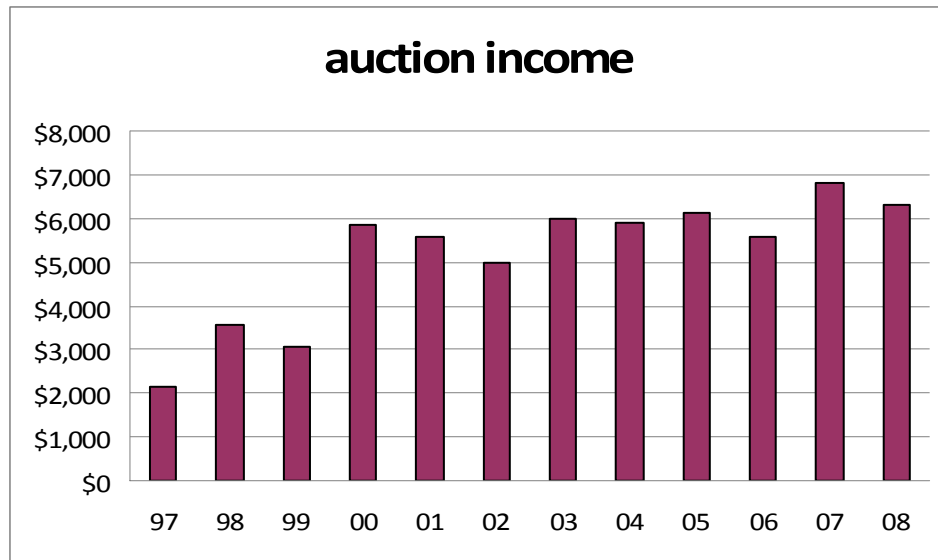
	2008-09	2007-08	
	Budgeted	Actual	Budgeted
Operating Fund Balance Aug 31, 2008:		\$44,462.60	
(\$30928.62 in CDs; \$12791.73 in checking acct; \$742.25 in Paypal acct)			
Income:			
Membership dues	\$30,000.00	\$18,095.00	\$20,000.00
Interest (CDs, checking)	\$500.00	\$1,046.97	\$500.00
Reimbursements	\$0.00	\$367.00	\$0.00
Total Income:	\$30,500.00	\$19,508.97	\$20,500.00
Expenses:			
Regular Operating Expenses			
AIBS dues and public policy initiative	\$2,695.00	\$2,625.00	\$2,695.00
NEON dues	\$1,000.00		
Bank charge	\$30.00	\$28.00	\$30.00
Missouri corporation registration	\$10.00	\$0.00	\$10.00
Travel OBFS committee	\$3,000.00	\$1,221.10	\$3,000.00
Congressional visits day	\$6,000.00	\$2,637.97	\$6,000.00
OBFS traveling exhibit shipping	\$700.00	\$0.00	\$700.00
Shipping			
Brochure			
Field studies poster		\$5,045.14	\$4,000.00
Office and website			
Treasurer support and supplies	\$11,000.00	\$18.21	\$1,800.00
Paypal charges	\$400.00		
Secretarial and database support	\$500.00	\$109.04	\$500.00
Website editing charges	\$1,000.00	\$168.06	\$1,000.00
Tax preparation	\$1,000.00	\$1,385.00	
Taxes and registration	\$25.00	\$35.00	
Newsletter	\$300.00	\$262.56	\$300.00
Committee Expenses - Expendable Materials and Supplies	\$1,000.00		

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Governance	\$0.00	\$500.00	
Annual Meeting	\$0.00	\$500.00	
Member Support	\$0.00	\$500.00	
Common Interests			
Diversity - travel	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
International		\$0.00	\$500.00
Small Field Stations		\$0.00	\$500.00
Organizational Development		\$0.00	\$500.00
Outreach		\$0.00	\$500.00
Website		\$0.00	\$500.00
Subtotal Regular Operating Expenses	\$29,660.00	\$13,535.08	\$24,535.00
Committee Proposals Contingent Upon Review by EB			\$13,250.00
Governance committee - atty for non-profit	\$500.00		
Common Interests			
Diversity - workshop			
International - travel			
Small field stations			
Outreach Committee - brochure	\$8,000.00	\$221.56	\$5,000.00
Website - update			
membership database	\$6,500.00	\$3,500.00	
Other Non-Budgeted Expenses			
Selzer Memorial		\$675.00	
NSF-AIBS Conference		\$1,012.44	
NEON annual membership fee		\$1,000.00	
Paypal charges		\$282.75	
Subtotal other expenses	\$15,000.00	\$6,691.75	\$18,250.00
Total Expenses:	\$44,660.00	\$20,226.83	\$42,785.00
Transfer to Restricted Fund:	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Net Gain/Loss	\$14,160.00	-\$717.86	\$22,285.00
Projected Operating Fund Balance August 31, 2009	\$30,302.60		

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ANNUAL AUCTION INCOME BY YEAR



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2008 OBFS Annual Report

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MINUTES OF THE QUARTERLY MEETINGS OF THE OBFS BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

OBFS Board of Directors Meeting

Conference Call

April 16, 2008 – 1:00 pm (EST)

In Attendance: Tom Arsuffi, Shorty Boucher, Philippe Cohen, Bo Dziadyk, Jan Hodder, John Kim, Brian Kloeppe, Claudia Luke, Eric Nagy, Greg Smith, Larry Weider, David White

Welcome New Board Members: Brian Kloeppe - President (2008-2010), Greg Smith – Secretary, Philippe Cohen – Member at Large (2008–2010)

Discussion of Minutes of Dec 10, 2007 Meeting

Eric Nagy clarified a point of order that the Board rather than the Executive Committee should appoint the Editor. MOTION: To appoint David White as OBFS Editor. The Board unanimously approved the appointment.

1. Philippe made MOTION to accept the December 10, 2008 meeting minutes. Made by Philippe Cohen. Seconded by Bo Dziadyk. Minutes were unanimously approved.

Old Business

Status of IOBFS – Jan

1. Rick Wyman (IOBFS President) and Deedra McClearn (Chair of International Committee) would like to work with OBFS to bring international attendees to the next OBFS meeting. Deedra will get in contact with Larry and Brian on conference call to discuss how IOBFS and OBFS will work together to have international attendees.
2. IOBFS needs to more clearly present activities to OBFS and determine more clear formal relationships. Larry will send follow up email. OBFS will withhold financial support of IOBFS until IOBFS has a strategy in place for the future. OBFS has provided \$1,000 annually.
3. As Bo Dziadyk is the Chair of the Common Interests Committee and since the International Subcommittee falls under the Common Interests “umbrella,” Bo should be cc'd on international correspondence.

Report from Adhoc “Greening OBFS” committee – Jan Green Workgroup (Jan, Philippe, and John Kim) discussed options and suggested adding a \$5 surcharge per participant to the OBFS annual workshop registration fee as a carbon offset. This should be rolled into the registration fee and included in the literature to participants. John Kim will take this year’s travel information to calculate the effects of meeting travel. Philippe will provide information in the meeting

announcement about what the money will be used for. MOTION: That the Meeting Hosts add \$5 surcharge to the registration fee for this year’s OBFS meeting in New York. Motion made by Eric Nay. Seconded. Unanimously carried.

IRS Update – Claudia

1. IRS Application: David Atkin called Claudia 3/20/08. He needed an OBFS officer on the phone to talk to the IRS. After an hour on the phone with various IRS employees, we determined that the reason our application is delayed is that they can't find our EIN number, which is the tracking number they use for our application. After exhausting all efforts to find our existing EIN number, we determined that OBFS needs a new number. I obtained one that afternoon. Our brand new number is 71-1047817, which I sent to David. His next step is to call IRS back to determine if the application can be found (physically) and associated with the new EIN. This new EIN replaces our old EIN (43-1518153), and is the third EIN for the organization! Jan will follow up with David.

2. Missouri Representative: Shorty Boucher noted that we need a Missouri representative to maintain our incorporated status in Missouri. Jan will talk to David Atkin about what the best approach will be to identify a long-term representative in the State.

Committee Reports

Annual Meeting – Larry

Talked to Black Rock Forest and sent out a draft agenda to Board. Theme this year is greening at field stations and will have several sessions this year targeting green facilities. Auction theme is “Woodstock.” Food will be as much as possible locally grown. Board provided feedback and discussion on topics and scheduling (time for committee meetings, discussion of NSF-FSML, and slide show/poster sessions). Bo Dziadyk will recommend to small station committee that they become mentors for new attending members at OBFS. The meeting dates are Sept. 17-22.

Outreach – Philippe Cohen

Hope to have first draft of OBFS Brochure to Outreach Committee on May 19th. Will contact individual field stations for high-resolution images that they want to use and permission to use them.

Governance – Eric Nagy

Plowing ahead with Policy and Procedures manual. Priority for this next meeting is to define what the auction rules are.

Membership Support – John Kim

Sent out request for information and have sent information to folks who are collating information.

Common Interest – Bo Dziadyk

Small Stations, International, and Diversity Committees. Because Brian is President he can report on Diversity Committee. Amy is taking lead on Diversity Award which is main focus for year. Bo hasn't heard from Deedra regarding International Committee. Small Stations – Linda Wallace and Bo are putting together questionnaire to find out what needs are for Small Stations. They will ask for details on station, OBFS contact person, primary needs, how can small stations committee help? Will circulate to the Board and then plans to post on web.

Organizational Development – Kari O'Connell (- absent-)

Kari has resigned because she is leaving Andrews. Ask one of the attendees from last year, or an attendee at this year's meeting, to act as interim chair.

Treasurers Report – Shorty Boucher

More than half of dues are coming through PayPal. Crisis right now is that we don't have access to the database. Shorty sent the spreadsheet to the Board during the meeting (attached). Request from Jan to have Excel spreadsheet prior to the Board meeting.

New Business

NSF-FSML Facility Workshop Update – Jan Hodder and Brian Kloeppe

No update yet from Hilary. The general focus is to hold a series of workshops to highlight the value of NSF bricks and mortar funding, now limited only to FSML. NAML (National Association of Marine Labs) will be working with us on this. BioScience articles will be coming out soon and may be complimentary to this process. We will include an hour session at the Black Rock meeting in September (as part of the overall NSF session) to update the membership about this initiative.

LTER Liaison – Brian Kloeppe

The LTER network office has completed their renewal proposal to NSF. The LTER "All Scientists" meeting is held every three years and the next meeting will be 13-17 September, 2009 in Estes Park, CO. OBFS members are welcome and encouraged to attend. One topic of the meeting will be reinvigorating the activities of the LTER International Committee.

** Jan hangs up. **

Mailing Lists – Greg Smith

Request from Rice Creek for OBFS mailing directory. Board decided to recommend using the list serve or

posting information to the website and directing folks there.

Vendors Attending Meetings – David White

Shall we allow vendors to attend? A vendor has requested advertising in the newsletter and attending the meetings. We declined advertising in the newsletter and are considering attendance for registration + \$100 table fee during mixers or breaks. Board needs to discuss this policy further at the next conference meeting.

Other Business

Conflict of Interest Discussion – Claudia

1. Name of Person Who Disclosed: John Kim
2. Nature of Financial Interest (Disclosure): In 2006, Mark Stromberg put together a project description to the Board to have John Kim develop an interactive map showing field stations with membership in OBFS. The rate charged was \$75/hr for programming. That work was completed. Additional unrelated issues came up with the OBFS database. Because John had familiarity with the LTER-OBFS database, he was asked to help resolve the problems. (Project proposal attached.)
** John hangs up after clarifying his position. **
3. Action Taken to Determine Whether A Conflict of Interest Was Present: The Board engaged in a discussion regarding the possible conflict of interest.
4. Governing Board's Decision Regarding Whether Conflict of Interest Exists: Governing Board decided that no conflict of interest exists.
5. Names of Persons Present for Discussions and Votes: All Members in Attendance listed above except Jan Hodder and John Kim.
6. Content of Discussion, including Alternatives to Proposed Arrangement: The Board determined that a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible:
 - Based upon the experience of Board members, John Kim is charging very reasonable rates.
 - OBFS has immediate critical needs to get the OBFS administrative database up and running (i.e., in the next couple of weeks).
 - John has been very responsive to OBFS needs and is an easy person to work with.
 - Start up costs for a programmer to become familiar with the LTER database and OBFS needs would be substantial.
7. Record of Votes Taken: MOTION: John Kim's work on the OBFS data is not considered by the Board to be a conflict of interest (made by Eric Nagy)

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Seconded by Philippe. Motion adopted by unanimous consent.

Management of IT Needs for OBFS

MOTION: Add line item of \$5,000 to 2007-08 budget line (Eric Nagy). Seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Next Conference Call in July.

Meeting Adjourned 3:18 pm (EST).

Respectfully submitted,
Claudia Luke (and Greg Smith)

OBFS Board of Directors Meeting Conference Call July 23, 2008 – 12:00 pm (EST)

In Attendance: Tom Arsuffi, Shorty Boucher, Bo Dziadyk, Faerthen Felix, Jan Hodder, John Kim, Brian Kloeppe, Greg Smith, Larry Weider

Meeting Action Items

- properly document all auction proceeds at the Annual Meeting (Jan, Shorty, and Greg)
- provide Shorty with 2007 officer information (Greg)
- locate a Missouri contact at the Annual Meeting for our incorporated status (entire Board)
- create a poll on the OBFS webpage asking visitors how they found us (Faerthen)
- send Larry all financial information for audit (Shorty)
- prepare estimate of time and money needed for an assistant to the Treasurer (Shorty)
- obtain a second signatory for accounts (Shorty)
- prepare estimate of amount for a second contract for John to continue his database work (John and Faerthen)
- ask Bill to update direction information on Annual Meeting webpage (Larry)
- prepare needs assessment for remote viewing of Annual Meeting (John)
- collect information about travel to the Annual Meeting (John)
- identify a new chair of the Diversity Committee at the Annual Meeting (entire Board)
- identify time in the education sessions at the Annual Meeting for William Ehmann (Larry and Jan)
- register with COPUS and distribute COPUS information (Eric)

- hire UC science writer to re-work brochure (Shorty)
- establish dates for a regular meeting rotation (Brian and Shorty)

Approval of Minutes of April 16, 2008 Meeting

No additions, corrections, or clarifications were requested from the minutes for the Board of Directors Meeting on April 16, 2008 or the Database Discussion Meeting on May 5, 2008. MOTION to accept the April 16, 2008 meeting minutes (made by Jan, seconded by Bo) passed unanimously.

Financial Items

1. Non-Profit Status – Jan

Our non-profit status has now been approved...we are officially a 501(c)(3) organization!! Greg has received an official packet of information as well as a formal letter stating completion of our application process. Several other officers have copies of the letter as well but Jan suggested that all officers have copies calling this "...the most important OBFS document" and we need to make sure there is always a copy available. Greg will make copies and mail to each member of the Executive Committee. Jan said that we now need to make sure we act like a 501(c)(3) and properly document all financial transactions and duties of the governing Board. As such, we will need receipts for all auction items and donations at the Annual Meeting. Jan, Shorty, and Greg will take responsibility for properly documenting the auction.

Thanks again for all involved that made this happen!!

2. Tax Return – Shorty

Shorty is working with the accountant to provide the necessary information to complete our tax return. One piece of information needed is a list of OBFS Officers as of December 31, 2007. Greg will provide this information. Other than this, there is nothing OBFS can do to aid the process. A tax deadline extension was filed and received.

We still do not have a Missouri contact for our incorporated status. Jan suggested we pursue this at the Annual Meeting. We will look for a participant from Missouri at the meeting and ask if they would be willing to serve as our contact in the state.

3. Treasurer's Report – Shorty

Shorty presented the 3rd Quarter Financial Report and the floor was opened to discussion.

Larry asked about the OBFS field studies poster. How much does it cost? Is it continuing to be a valid investment? Jan suggested this was hard to know because we have no assessment of its impact but it seems to be a reasonable way to advertise our field

courses. We should bring it up again at the Annual Meeting. Past discussions have not produced strong arguments for continuing it or dropping it. Presently, the poster simply directs people to the website. Larry asked if there was a way to find out how people are finding www.obfs.org. Faerthen suggested a poll that asks visitors how they found the website, including as an option referral from the poster.

Larry will be doing the OBFS audit again and Shorty said she could send him the financial information after the close of the fiscal year on August 31. Larry agreed that that would be fine, still giving him enough time to prepare his report for the Annual Meeting.

4. Treasurer Reimbursement Budget – Shorty

The amount allocated to Treasurer duties has not changed in many years (currently \$1,800). This number should be higher to accommodate the increased costs of managing the fiscal responsibilities of OBFS. Increased money could be used for supplies, paying for a tax preparator, or hiring an assistant. Shorty estimated she spends ~10 hours per week on Treasurer duties. At least the amount should be increased to accommodate the accountant that does the taxes. If we had some ballpark numbers to discuss at the Annual Meeting we could then form a suggestion and bring a recommendation to the general membership. Shorty will put some estimates together.

We need a second signatory for the OBFS accounts. Jan suggested this should probably be someone in Shorty's office so that we eliminate the need for shipping documents around the country for signatures. The Board agreed and Shorty will move forward.

5. Status of Database – Faerthen and John

John has been working with Shorty and the database work is basically complete. The map is also complete. There are just a few pages that need some work. John has a few outstanding requests from Shorty and Faerthen that he needs to attend to. A few minor glitches remain, but John's initial contractual work is basically done. The next big issue (not part of John's initial contract) is linking PayPal to our database. We also need to upgrade our software to allow for more efficient storage of documents, among other things.

John is willing and interested in continuing to work with OBFS as a contractor. What amount of money should be placed in the budget for next year that would allow John to continue to work for OBFS to troubleshoot problems? John and Faerthen will work on some numbers and produce a draft budget for what John will require for his continued services. They will provide a number to Shorty for her budget to be presented at the Annual Meeting.

6. OBFS Executive Board Travel Funding – Brian

In the past, Brian has had funding from Coweeta to attend the OBFS Annual Meeting. In his new position he no longer has access to such travel funds. Brian requested reimbursement from the OBFS Executive Board Travel Fund for his attendance at this year's Annual Meeting. The Board agreed that this was an acceptable use of these funds and it is obviously important to have the President in attendance at the Annual Meeting. MOTION to reimburse Brian for his travel expenses for this year's Annual Meeting in New York (made by Greg, seconded) passed unanimously (Brian abstained).

Annual Meeting Items

1. Agenda, Scheduling, and Registration Update – Larry
Everything is online now, linked from the OBFS website, and ready for registration. There is also a PayPal option. The agenda is posted. The only thing Larry has not confirmed is the attendance of Deedra McClearn as the facilitator of the Friday night nuts-and-bolts session on International issues. The Board agreed that everyone is looking forward to a great meeting and thanked Larry and Bill Schuster for their work on the agenda!

Jan asked about travel to Black Rock from somewhere other than Stewart International Airport. She would like more information on how to get to Blackrock from the other larger airports in the area (directions, modes of travel, etc.). Larry will ask Jack and Bill to update the meeting information posted on the registration page.

2. Annual Meeting Remote Participation – John

John provided a remote link (www.ustream.tv/channel/john-kim) with a live video/audio feed that would allow access to meeting sessions if you were not physically in attendance at the Annual Meeting. There would be options available for remote users to interact with meeting attendees via email or chatroom. Facilities at Black Rock appear to be adequate for sending and receiving high-speed data. Brian asked if such remote access would limit attendees at the meeting? The Board agreed that this would be a good test of the system to see if we get remote participation. Tom asked if we would have remote users register. It was discussed and agreed that at this point, we should just test the system and consider it a registration item for next year. Should we charge for it? Perhaps this money could be used to purchase equipment for the future. John asked for feedback as to which sessions should be broadcast. Larry suggested the general business meeting, nuts-and-bolts sessions, FSML information session, greening sessions, education diversity panel, and the web enhancement and database management session. John said that we need a dedicated person at the meeting to make sure the equipment is working and respond to

emails and chats. This could be an IT person at Black Rock if they will be available for the entire meeting. Greg asked if the PowerPoint slides would be available? John said it would cost money to display them live and it was agreed to make them available for download by remote users. John will put together an outline of what we need to do to make this happen and will work with the folks at Black Rock to secure the necessary resources.

3.) Green Committee Report – John

Several green items were built into this year's meeting registration. Eric and Bill are coordinating the carpool website. We also included carbon offset payments for registrants. John volunteered to collect information about how folks arrived at the OBFS meeting to continue looking at how OBFS can reduce its meeting footprint. John may not be attending the Annual Meeting in person but will put together a questionnaire (probably web-based) to find out how people are traveling to NY.

4. OBFS By-Laws – Brian

No updates on potential by-laws changes were presented. Brian will follow-up with Eric about this.

Other Business

1. Diversity Sub-committee – Brian and Bo

For the moment Brian is still the chair of the Diversity Sub-committee. Because he has moved into the role of OBFS President, we need to appoint a new chair to this sub-committee. Amy Whipple expressed interest in these duties and her name was brought forward. Bo and Brian highly recommended her to this committee. MOTION to appoint Amy Whipple as chair of the Diversity Sub-committee (made by Tom, seconded) passed unanimously. Brian will inform Amy of the Board's decision.

2. Organizational Development Committee – Brian

The former chair of this committee, Kari O'Connell, has taken a new position that does not have a field station component. As such, she has resigned her chair position. Brian asked for suggestions on someone to fill this seat. Jan suggested waiting until the Annual Meeting and see if anyone steps forward for this post at the scheduled meeting of this committee. The Board agreed to wait.

3. AIBS / OBFS Education Initiatives – Jan

Jan and William Ehmann attended the AIBS Education Summit in May. They came up with four suggestions that OBFS might want to pursue as education initiatives (see Appendix). William will attend the Annual Meeting at Black Rock. Jan suggested giving William time at the meeting to begin discussion of these ideas to gauge the interest of OBFS. The Board thought this was a good idea but Larry needs to check with Bill to see if there is

time available. There were some local groups that also requested time at the meeting. Larry will coordinate with Jan to try and find space at the meeting for this education discussion.

4. AIBS, COPUS, and Year of Science 2009 – Brian (in Eric's absence)

Jan updated the group on "The Year of Science" for 2009. Organizations are signing on as supporters. It is up to the organization to hold events but COPUS will provide some direction and ideas. Field Stations might use this as an avenue for advertising their events and promoting science in general. COPUS stands for Coalition for the Public Understanding of Science and further information can be found at www.copusproject.org. Eric had previously asked for support in registering OBFS as a supporter of COPUS (email dated May 15, 2008) but OBFS could not be found on the participants page. Jan will follow-up with Eric to see if OBFS was already registered. If not, we will register as a supporter. Brian said that Eric will distribute COPUS information to the group at a later date.

5. OBFS Brochure Progress – Brian (in Philippe's absence)

Shorty expressed her discontent with the current text of the brochure. She has discussed this privately with Philippe. The UC Natural Reserve System has a science writer and he is willing to redo the text of the brochure for a nominal fee. The writer can do the work quickly for ~\$1000-\$1500. The Board agreed that we do not want to do an end-around on Philippe, giving the amount of effort he has put into getting us to this point, but Shorty assured the group that Philippe was in agreement with this strategy. Shorty's writer can meet Philippe's deadline – second week in August. They can then work it into the layout to present at the Annual Meeting. Faerthen also recommended the writer as a good choice. MOTION to allow payment up to \$1500 to this writer for re-working the brochure text (made by Bo, seconded by Faerthen) passed unanimously.

6. Sustainable Facilities Manual – Brian (in Philippe's absence)

Philippe previously provided an attachment with a draft of the Sustainable Facilities Manual. Bo asked if this was a provisional document or a final draft. Given that Philippe was not available to answer questions, there was no further discussion.

7. Board Meeting Schedule – Brian

The Board of Directors will not meet again until the Thursday evening of the Annual Meeting. As usual, this meeting will be open to the general membership. Brian will begin scheduling the next conference call for sometime in early November. Jan suggested a regular rotation of quarterly conference calls. That way everyone will know when they will happen and can plan

for them, even if they can't attend. This also reduces the work required to schedule the meetings. Shorty requested a time 3 months past the end of the fiscal year so that her quarterly budget reports will be more in-line with our meetings. This time-frame might push the next conference call back to early December. Brian will follow-up with Shorty to produce a schedule for Board consideration.

International Committee – Bo

There was no discussion about this committee during the conference call. After the meeting, Deedra McClearn presented Bo with an update of recent committee activities in preparation for the Annual Meeting Adjourned 1:10 pm (EST)

Respectively submitted,
Greg Smith

Appendix_ – OBFS Education Initiatives

EDUCATION ACTIVITIES ON BEHALF OF OBFS Report by William Ehmann, Empire State College, New York and Jan Hodder, University of Oregon

On May 15-16, 2008, OBFS Past President Jan Hodder and OBFS individual member William Ehmann participated in two national conversations about the future of undergraduate biology, sponsored by NSF, AAAS and AIBS in Washington, DC. Some of the pre-summit questions posed were:

- What are the main goals and learning outcomes for the 21st century undergraduate biological sciences curriculum, including suggestions about knowledge and skills needed for undergraduate biological sciences majors and non-majors?
- What changes need to take place in undergraduate biological sciences teaching and learning, including laboratories, pedagogy, and learning technologies strategies?
- How to best prepare faculty and structure departments and institutions for changes in undergraduate biological sciences education?
- How foundations and professional societies can support efforts for change in undergraduate biological sciences?

Professional biology societies were encouraged to send two members, and approximately 75 people attended. Speakers included Rita Colwell, Diane Ebert-May, Gordon Uno, Jay Labov and others. A web-based communications network was established for all

participants to start and continue conference conversations.

Jan and William sensed at least four possible intersections between these conversations with the ongoing work of OBFS and projects that individual stations are already doing:

1. We all know about the “magic” of field stations and marine labs in forming communities of scientists/learners, but these great connections can dissipate just as quickly at the end of a course or season. Can OBFS pursue new ways to extend these rich field station communities using e-resources or hosting social networking sites? In particular, students could stay in touch with research projects and results, co-investigators, and continue dialogues with possible future mentors/advisors. Thereby, we capitalize on a strength of FSMLs, extended by technology, instead of technology being framed as a replacement for field immersion. Perhaps Faerthen Felix and others can help us approach this topic?

2. Numerous members have realized the educational and research benefits of working on an organism or question at multiple FSMLs. Could we bundle a “supra-REU”-style experience for undergraduate students, where an interest in salamanders (for example, or a particular species) would be supported by experiences at multiple field stations in the same year, or over several years? This could bring together research labs, the field stations themselves...some similarities to what NEON research platform could do, but focused on undergraduate education and building community. In this regard, we note that NSF has posted a letter describing a new program (RCN-UBE) at <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2008/nsf08035/nsf08035.jsp>

Although it would be highly unlikely we could do anything this year, interested OBFS members could explore this RFP for an '09-'10 pilot submission. William is particularly interested in discussing this item and plans to attend the September OBFS meeting.

3. OBFS has been discussing diversity and outreach and Jan notes that a presentation on community college education opportunities is planned for the September annual meeting. We would like to note that the same grant program noted above asks for proposals to 'improve the transition of students from two-year to four-year institutions.' Likely members know of adjacent community colleges that have been/could be considered strategically as potential partners in getting associate's degree-oriented students interested in 4-year science/biology degrees through selected FSML experiences they might otherwise miss out on. Also, some of these community colleges enroll high numbers of diverse students.

4. Finally, referencing the national discussions described above, OBFS could take a proactive stance with one or more position papers. For example, regarding national biology standards, on behalf of all stations we could affirm the need for authentic, hands-on experiences...these don't have to preclude instructional technology, but we could stick up for the "-ologies" (maybe invite kindred societies as co-signers?) and immersion/mud-on-the-boots methods. Included in that could be the argument that field studies allow more degrees of freedom than many classroom or simulated environments, and consequently present numerous, unplanned and highly valuable teachable moments. No doubt members could contribute many success stories that would support our assertions.

Appendix – OBFS International Committee

24 July 2008

Note to Bohdan Dziadyk

From Deedra McClearn

Re: OBFS International Committee

We had a few e-mail messages among officers of OBFS last March and April regarding the International Committee. The sense I got from those messages was that we could use the 2008 meeting in Black Rock Forest to discuss issues about the International Committee and then use the 2009 meeting at La Selva in Costa Rica to highlight the theme of internationalization through some special events.

For a meeting at Black Rock Forest in September, we could cover the following topics:

- history of the international committee and original goals
- review of current international membership establishment of current goals
 - o do we want to increase international membership?
 - o do we want to increase participation of international members at meetings?
 - o do we want to encourage membership participation from particular geographic regions?
- depending on the answers to the questions above, we could then discuss what the mechanisms to increase membership and participation would be

Based on the outcome of the meeting at Black Rock Forest, we could then devise a plan to reach our goals at different time scales, such as 1 year, 5 year, long-term. For the 1 year set of goals, that would include planning the events for the La Selva OBFS meeting. I can fold

the planning of those events into the planning for the 2009 meeting.

Any further suggestions about how to proceed will be most welcome.

OBFS Database/Website Discussion Conference Call May 5, 2008 – 2:00 pm (EST)

In Attendance: Shorty Boucher, Faerthen Felix, John Kim, Brian Kloeppel, Claudia Luke, Eric Nagy, Greg Smith

Purpose:

This conference call is being held to bring the Board (or a sub-group of them) up-to-speed on website and database issues related to the transfer to the new system. Of particular interest is the function of the Treasurer and her need to have an efficient interface to streamline her efforts. As a pre-cursor to this call, Faerthen submitted an email providing a progress update, and the remaining outstanding needs. John added to this in a follow-up email. Both of these emails are pasted at the end of the minutes. This was not a formal meeting. No motions were made and no votes were taken.

Database/Website Discussion:

Database Issues

Shorty says the database is not functional at the moment. John is responding to case-by-case requests from Shorty. John can continue to fix problems, eventually bugs will be worked out. The design of the database and interface is not conducive to working efficiently with the data. The database does not reflect the complexities of field station management. Even if the database worked flawlessly, it is not designed to handle the workflow of the Treasurer. Also, some data are missing from the transfer. John constructed an interface for Shorty that is working but is not ideal.

Often, dues arrive with incomplete information and it is difficult to find the station to which it belongs. This could be a question of writing some queries to help find information. However, the data may not be in the database. For example, a check received from a university may not clearly indicate the station name. This is not a database issue per se, but the database should be more easily searchable. The PayPal link makes it easier to identify the station but it is not perfect. PayPal payments can eventually be linked to the database such that payment information will automatically be updated.

Since it will be difficult to make everyone submit their contact information every time this will continue to be a

problem. John will provide Shorty more tools for querying the database to locate stations with incomplete information. As a rule, we should encourage payees to clearly identify the station they are representing. The database can include a field for contact information and/or managing institution, as well as the actual station location. This will make some of the data much more redundant but perhaps more useful in searches.

Some entries in the old database are not in the new database. It is unclear exactly how this happened. Perhaps a result of the old database staying active while the new one was being populated with data. It was recommended we move the old database to a new site and “disconnect” the old database.

It was suggested that we might need some trials (beta testing) as we move forward. Faerthen pointed out that we are basically doing that right now. Members seem to be responding well to the online data entry.

General Website Issues

Faerthen has been forwarding issues with the website to John and John has been fixing them along the way.

The actual look of the site will be dealt with after we are satisfied the site is working.

Brian asked John about the potential need to have the website hosted somewhere else given the slow response from LTER in the past. We do have the money to pay for site-hosting. It was decided that moving to a different site would just complicate the matter and this would not be a viable option until we have our site fully functional. Perhaps this would be a real option at some future time.

Do we want or need service from LTER? Should Brian contact Robert Waide to determine where OBFS fits into LTER’s priorities? It was suggested that it might be best to not ask LTER for technical support unless someone other than Marsh would serve as our liaison.

Our software needs to be updated. We are using a version of PostNuke that is no longer supported by the manufacturer.

Broken links have been fixed.

John’s Contract Work

Given that John is serving as Board Member and a contracted “employee” for OBFS, we need to be very clear that John is to work on specific tasks, not respond to every request along the way.

At this point, we have approved \$5,000 for contract work from John. John indicated that the GoogleMaps work that he did cost \$3,500. With additional work beyond

that, he has used ~\$4,000 of this amount. John indicated that he had the time (and funds) to help Shorty finish her current tasks. Once those are done, things should work, save the occasional glitch. He is willing to continue to help.

We need a strategy for database and website issues, set priorities, and then hire for additional contract work to solve those issues. We should have a discussion at the July Board Meeting about allocating funds to make sure Shorty has the help she needs to create a functional database. This would probably be in additional contract work, most likely from John.

OBFS Taxes:

Taxes are due May 15.

Hiring an outside contractor to do the taxes would be beneficial to make sure that we do our taxes correctly for our first year as a non-profit organization. Taxes for future years could be done in-house using this year as a guide. The group was in agreement that this was a reasonable strategy and could be done for a minimal amount of money.

OBFS Paid Staff:

This is a discussion that comes up again-and-again. Does OBFS need paid staff? As a volunteer, the workload is great and might be better served by people paid to handle these issues.

Hiring staff opens up another level of tax reporting and complexity (e.g. benefits). In the past, the Treasurer has been someone who already had staff and those staff could be supplemented by OBFS. Therefore, those people could work for OBFS without being employed by OBFS. This would be someone that could devote ~10 hours/week to OBFS issues, but there is definite seasonal variation to the workload. There are periods of intense activity so this would not need to be someone available year-round.

This should be discussed at the next Board Meeting and addressed at the Annual Meeting. Shorty will put a line-item in the proposed budget for next year that can be discussed by the membership as a whole.

Summary Tasks:

Shorty and John will keep everyone up-to-date on their progress and let us know of other major issues.

Everyone should continue to forward issues related to the website to Faerthen. That way, as Network Coordinator, she can stay current on what the website issues are. She will send things to John that require his attention.

If Shorty, John, and Faerthen can keep up with costs associated with website and database upkeep, we can then have a better idea of what hired help might cost.

The original budget amount set aside for supplies and hourly support for the Treasurer (\$1,400) was established 20-25 years ago.

Meeting Adjourned 3:05 pm (EST)

Respectfully submitted,
Greg Smith

Email from Faerthen 4/29/2008

Here's where I think we're at:

Website update...

I know everyone is really irritated & annoyed by this website change process, but this is premature & more than a bit unrealistic given the realities of getting the system up, the entire membership trained & moved over using volunteer labor: mine & Marsh's.

We had discussed a year to get this process finished but the pressure to have it completed began almost immediately. Some unanticipated problems also emerged:

1. It became obvious that Marsh was unable to provide the technical support we require, so John Kim was pulled in as he needed to address database issues related to his previously contracted Google Map project.
2. Unfortunately, getting an outside contractor involved required a level of access to the entire LTERNET server system that they were understandably not comfortable providing. We had to extract the OBFS web & database presence from the LTERNET system via a virtual server so that we can get unrestricted access to our assets without exposing LTERNET to unacceptable risk.
3. There was resistance to changing over to some of the new OBFS web systems & some very significant delay in doing so. Hard to fix what you don't know is broken since it wasn't getting used.
4. Additional unrelated issues arose, like the disappearing documents.
5. I experienced a lot of distraction & pressure to provide new features & secretarial services on the website, rather than simply focusing on coordinating the implementation of systems & training that allow members & officers to update the website themselves. This was a huge drain on my time & energy.

Progress to date...

We are making excellent progress addressing these problems, although much of it is invisible to the members:

- We now have a qualified database administrator [John Kim] focused specifically on our issues;
- John is now up to date on Marsh's database design & understands the technical construction of the website backside;
- As of last week, we have gained complete access to & control over our website & databases for the first time ever;
- We have a new database with a single log-in point that combines all the old scattered databases & spreadsheets;
- We have completely stopped the membership using the old fragmented systems;
- Members now have the ability to access & control their own information records;
- We have a large portion of the membership moved over to the new database & trained to update their own station information;
- John finished the database-tied Google Map that has been under development for years.
- We have extensive help documents on-line to aid interactive use of the website.

These are major accomplishments that address the desires & requests that members & the board have been making for many years & into which Mark Stromberg invested a huge amount of development effort over the years. These changes have extracted LTERNET staff [James Brunt, Marshall White] from OBFS website functions. Most importantly, however, they provide the required foundation in order to move forward with new feature requests & functions.

Outstanding needs...

This is what I can see needs to be done next, now that we have successfully resolved the underlying centralization & access issues. Please refer to the previous website white paper for specifics. John Kim will hopefully correct me, expand &/or clarify this list as needed:

- Database code repairs to address error messages & improve administrative access to website by Treasurer, officers & board members;
- Database structural changes as needed to improve function;

- Changes &/or additions to web data input forms to improve clarity, reduce errors & repetition, expand text fields to accept longer e-mail addresses, etc. including changes to Treasurer functions;
- PostNuke software updated to correct disappearing documents;
- Repair linkages to e-mail system broken during virtual server changeover;

Unless I am very much mistaken, these needs do not constitute a major technical challenge for John, & are far easier to accomplish than the centralization & access issues we have just recently completed. The biggest problems here are finding enough time in John's schedule, & allocating funding to pay him. John can probably provide the board with an estimate of how much time he needs for these repairs.

After these repairs are made & the system is working smoothly, we can begin to add new features to address additional requests & needs. At present, expressed pending needs include:

- Calendar integration with database;
- Organizational e-mail addresses to maintain consistency & long-term accuracy of web pages & publications;
- Listserv integration with database;
- PayPal integration with database;
- Expand officer site-editing permissions;
- Improvements to website appearance;

I imagine that having John provide an estimate per project is a reasonable way to proceed with these goals in the future. If there are other web-site needs that are not included here, please let me know & I'll add them to the list.

I hope this document is useful & helps us define & focus our website efforts & discussions.

Follow-up Email from John 5/1/2008

I'd like to add a few comments to Faerthen's comprehensive status report. (Thanks Faerthen).

1. The idea of moving the website to a commercial host came up because there was a long period when LTER did not respond to OBFS requests to fix problems and simultaneously did not allow OBFS to fix the problem itself (albeit for understandable reasons) -- LTER was an active impediment. Although huge progress was made recently when LTER gave OBFS "full control" over the

website, I don't think that ends the story on web hosting. There will be times when a webmaster (OBFS) will need some services from the webhosting service (LTER). A good commercial web hosting service is likely to provide better service, but at a cost (\$). I personally do not think it's time to switch to a commercial host, but I think we should remain aware of the option.

2. When data was moved from the "old" database to the "new", (it appears to me that) the transition was not done very completely or cleanly. Some information was not moved, and the old system was left running so data was entered into both systems. There should have been a clean break. I've worked w/ Shorty extensively to fill in missing information in the new database.

3. The database and web interface do not appear to be designed to reflect A) the organizational structure of field stations. For example, there is no way to represent several field stations as being run by a single office/manager (e.g., Shorty's stations and ours in San Diego). B) the workflow process by frequent users (e.g., Shorty).

The consequence is that users have to find ways to make it work, rather than there being easy-to-use tools that fit what you're trying to do.

4. Finally, I think OBFS website looks unattractive. It looks very amateurish. I think we can make it look like this <http://sio.ucsd.edu> with some effort.

OBFS Board of Directors Meeting Conference Call December 11, 2008 – 12:00 pm (EST)

In Attendance: Tom Arsuffi, Ian Billick, Shorty Boucher, Jan Hodder, John Kim, Brian Kloeppe, Deedra McClearn, Eric Nagy, Greg Smith, Larry Weider, Amy Whipple, David White

Meeting Action Items:

- amend the budget and send to BOD (Shorty)
- identify a representative at Tyson willing to serve in MO (Brian)
- email OBFS listserv to remind membership about dues increases (Brian)
- locate information on dues increase history (Greg)
- investigate electronic voting for member elections (John)
- investigate details of field trips surrounding the LaSelva meeting (Deedra)
- ask Outreach Committee to find a member willing to maintain the OBFS traveling display (Brian)

2008 OBFS Annual Report

- continue work on Policies and Procedures Manual (Eric and Greg)
- provide information on Diversity Award to David (Tom)
- circulate a draft of the Annual Report to the BOD (David)
- follow-up on Executive Board decisions (Brian)

Approval of Minutes of September 2008 Meeting

No additions, corrections, or clarifications were requested from the minutes for the September Board of Directors Meeting at Blackrock. MOTION to accept the September 2008 meeting minutes (made and seconded) passed unanimously.

Announcements

Brian announced the list of participants for the 2009 Congressional Visits Day: Jeff Brown, Hilary Swain, Knute Nadelhoffer, Susan Cordell, Mark Stromberg, and Faerthen Felix (paid for by Sagehen). CVD will take place 20-21 April, 2009.

Financial Items

1. Treasurer's Report – Shorty

Jan asked if there was a column for actual expenses, Shorty will amend and resend. Jan wants to see the expenses for the quarter. Shorty will get that to the Board. Brian noted that the Field Studies poster would not be done this year and those printing costs (\$5000) would be moved to the brochure line. Shorty will correct that.

Ian asked if Shorty had started using the Treasurer's support money and how much she thinks the Treasurer will need. Shorty said she is working on transition to the new Treasurer and is not spending much of it, she will definitely not spend it all before April 1.

2. Missouri Registered Agent Update – Shorty

OBFS was originally incorporated in Missouri. Brian will be at Tyson next week and will ask if someone there would be willing to serve as our representative. Eric reminded the Board that there is a fairly normal solution to this problem. We could pay a small fee (\$200-\$250) to a company that will handle our incorporation in any state that we choose. He learned of this through AIBS. If we have an individual in MO, we would pay \$10. Eric's solution would take the burden off of us. Shorty said it was not a problem until Tyson faced some uncertainty in its future. If it is in good shape we might want to stick with the individual representative. Jan suggested that the state laws do not change frequently enough that we need to worry about a service. The new Treasurer just needs to stay on top of who the representative is. Shorty said that the Treasurer can actually pay, so the

representative does not have to do anything. Ian supports Eric's approach. His experience has been that it is best to keep up with our legal status. Jan said this has nothing to do with our 501(c)(3) status. Ian was concerned that an audit might bring up problems with our incorporation. MOTION to identify a representative at Tyson (made by Jan, seconded by Larry) passed unanimously.

3. Annual Dues – Shorty and Brian

New dues will go out with renewal notes in mid-January. Brian will send an email to the OBFS listserv to announce the new rates. The new rates are \$150 for institutions and \$50 for individuals. Greg will try and find the date for the most recent dues increase. Shorty suggested that some stations pay dues in December and may not be aware of the dues increase. We will raise dues on January 1, 2009. If a station pays early, we will not penalize them if they pay the old rate.

4. OBFS Board of Directors Monetary Donation – Brian

The Board discussed this at Blackrock and following the meeting by email. Four Board members have already provided donations (Ian, Bo, David, and Greg). Ian is trying to determine what the Development Committee is supposed to do. Following the Strategic Plan he wants to develop a Business Plan, which includes ways to donate to OBFS. If we are asking for money, we should be able to show that the Board has buy-in to OBFS. Eric said that this request does not have a place in a formal motion, that might border on ethical issues. Shorty asked if auction donations count as a Board Member donation. Ian said the standard would be that 100% of the Board would donate for unrestricted operations. It is not unusual for boards to talk about it, even if they do not pass motions to require it. Some donors may never ask, others might think it important before they give. We now have a system in place for the Treasurer to receive funds and the President to provide a letter of thanks for those donations. Eric asked if this could be done using our PayPal link and make a contribution instead of paying dues. Shorty said that someone paid their auction fees with PayPal. We will not have formal motion or requirement for donations. Ian said we need to have a more formal discussion of what we are trying to accomplish. Are we seeking larger donors? Brian will add that discussion to our March meeting agenda.

Eric went to PayPal during the meeting and he found no way to make a note of what the contribution was. This type of payment may require some follow-up.

5. OBFS Treasurer Support from AIBS – Eric and Shorty

Eric talked with Brett Burke who manages finances for AIBS. He is willing to provide treasurer services to OBFS. He is familiar with organizations like ours and can provide consulting or services at any level we want or need. Some of these will be free through our AIBS

dues. Eric recommended that we initiate some relationship with Burke and Associates. They know how to do all of this stuff. This may save us hours of effort. Shorty said that the Treasurer duties have become increasingly complicated, with a lot to keep track of. Someone who does this for a living would better serve us. Brian suggested that the new Treasurer might have additional support that we are not aware of and should be part of this discussion. Eric suggested we not get in a position of only electing Treasurer's who can provide staff. Shorty said the best way to make the transfer to a new Treasurer would be to do everything at once. However, starting that process now would allow Shorty to help plan this transition and make the new Treasurer's job easier. Eric suggested just talking with Burke to determine if they can help and how much help we would need. Jan said this would be a good move and we should wait for the new Treasurer so they can learn in the process. Ian identified two Treasurer duties: oversight and staff. Typically you do not elect staff. Brian asked when the election results would be available. David does not have bio. information from Deedra or Amy to put in the ballot. David asked if the ballot would go out by mail or if we would vote electronically? John will look into how to set-up an electronic ballot and get back to the Board. David said it was not that expensive to just send off the ballot by mail. Election results would probably be available by late Jan. / early Feb. We could then have some information about Treasurer duties for the March meeting.

Amy will likely not have travel support for the 2009 Costa Rica meeting. She is running for Vice President and wondered if she should still run for office. Eric said she should still run for the office. None of us knows for sure if we will be able to make the meeting. Amy was concerned that the role of VP in planning the Annual Meeting could be limited if she was not there. Tom and Larry agreed she should run. OBFS money might be available for travel next year. Amy has agreed to still run and David needs her bio. and picture. Ian offered to help with meeting plans and preparations if Amy can't make the trip.

Committee Reports

Annual Meeting – Larry

The 2009 Annual Meeting is set for 23-27 September 2009. Larry asked that this information be updated on the OBFS website since members are asking about it. We should do that soon since this meeting will require more planning to attend. David asked for a short blurb for the newsletter. Deedra asked about a symposium on international field stations – would it be part of the main agenda or would we extend the meeting to accommodate this? Would attendees stay after the meeting for longer field trips? Brian asked Larry to work with Deedra to iron out the details. David and Larry

suggested that we really need to get this information out so people can plan. Details can change but we need specifics for the main meeting. Larry asked Deedra to look into details of field trips, especially if she needs a minimum number for field trips. Eric suggested a regular meeting length and structure and then have the post-meeting trip separate from the main meeting. They might be advertised as separate things, including in payment. Eric supports the symposium being part of the main meeting, not a separate time block.

The 2010 Annual Meeting will be held at the University of Michigan Biological Station. James Farmer at Indiana University has tentatively asked about hosting the 2011 meeting. Larry suggested the Board would need to discuss if we want two meetings in a row in the upper Midwest. Larry said the new VP might want to make a new push for volunteers to host meetings. We also received a request from a station in Brazil to participate. Deedra has filed that request away for possible inclusion in the international symposium. Kruger (in S. Africa) might also participate but no specifics have been discussed. Deedra would like to have global coverage, not just the Tropics. Deedra will work with a committee of 4-5 people to organize this symposium. We might want to approach NSF about support for the meeting and symposium. Deedra mentioned an NGO in Costa Rica that might be a possible source of support.

Organizational Development – Ian

Ian wants a clear directive for development before moving forward. We will discuss this further at our March meeting.

Outreach – (Philippe via email)

Philippe is shooting for the brochure being ready for printing by mid-March. We will print 10,000 copies once it is available. The Board seemed pleased with the design.

Nina Consolatti will no longer be shepherding the large OBFS traveling display. We need to find someone to maintain it. Jan suggested sending this to the Outreach Committee and let them handle that.

John said the website is up-to-date in terms of transitioning to the new database and functions are available. The next major step is an upgrade to the new software. This might take 3 months. Brian asked about John's contract services. John suggested it would be a good idea to have a long-term strategy for website management but has not had much discussion with Faerthen on this.

Member Support – John

John received 21 responses to the carbon footprint survey at the Annual Meeting, almost 1/3 of attendees. This may or may not be incorporated into the Costa Rica

meeting. Many people drove to the meeting at Blackrock. According to the travel survey results, the average carbon emissions per attendee was 549.4 kg. In the current survey, 5 out of 21 people traveled only by ground. At \$8/ton, the cost to offset the travel per attendee is \$4.40.

Governance – Eric

The by-laws and election information has been passed on to David for posting in the newsletter. Greg will continue to work with Eric on the Policies and Procedures Manual. Ian suggested the Board needed a conflict of interest agreement. Eric will follow-up on this.

Common Interests – (Brian, in Bo's absence)

Human Diversity – Amy contacted her committee to work on a press release for the award. The main initiative is to obtain outcomes from previous awardees. David asked if the newsletter information needed to be updated. Tom will update the information and get it to David. David also asked for information on last year's winner. Tom will include information about his group with his info. to David.

International – We received a request from Huyck Preserve asking for guidance on hosting IOBFS website. Shorty said we should reimburse them for the expenses in 2008 (see Appendix B). The reason it was hosted there was because Rick was there. He is no longer there. IOBFS is a separate organization that we are not part of. Ian suggested if they are separate, they should deal with the website issues. Eric said that this support of IOBFS is an OBFS tradition but there is currently nothing happening with IOBFS. Jan said the organization is currently defunct. We need to decide if we are going to continue to support IOBFS. Larry suggested this would be a good discussion at the LaSelva meeting. We should sever ties with IOBFS now and reorganized later. MOTION to pay for services in 2008 (\$632) but we will sever ties with IOBFS and not provide additional support (made by Larry, seconded by Eric) passed unanimously. Brian suggested we discuss this in March or earlier so Deedra has some guidance for the Annual Meeting. Deedra mentioned a new BioScience article about the value of international field stations that might help drum up support for a functional organization of international field stations. (See Annual Meeting discussion (D1) also.)

Small Field Stations – Bo reported (via email) that the Small Stations Committee voted to expand its steering committee at the annual meeting at Black Rock. They will revisit some revised and increased goals for our operations in order to get business done more effectively before and/or during annual meetings. Regional meetings of the steering committee could profitably be held during summer or other times, but no meeting has been set for this academic year.

Other Business

David reminded the Board of what was needed for the upcoming newsletter. David asked about including minutes on the Annual Report. The Board agreed this would be a good idea as long as we pay attention to make sure they are accurate and that we are careful about confidential information in the meetings. David will send a draft to the Board for us to review.

Eric asked the Board be ready to work hard toward the Annual Meeting so that we can pull off something very good on an international stage. Members-at-large can also be asked to participate in such endeavors.

Eric asked the Board to follow-up on vendors at meetings. At Blackrock we decided vendors will pay at least \$250 on top of registration fees. Ian needs more information about the Annual Meeting so he can craft an invitation to potential vendors. Deedra said there would be no conflicts with vendors at LaSelva.

Shorty and Brian reported on a student that is completing a Master's thesis on sustainable development and asked to have some portion of his thesis on the OBFS website (see Appendix). Mike Palmer has also written a report on sustainability that could also be posted and archived on the OBFS website. We will revisit this in March when there is more information available.

Eric will continue working in the idea of pulling together a group of OBFS members who wish to participate in a "web support" co-op.

Executive Committee Session

Brian, Shorty, Jan, Greg, Tom, David, and Larry discussed the structure of and the personnel involved with OBFS committees and subcommittees.

Next Board of Director's Meeting

The next Board of Director's Meeting will be held via conference call on Thursday, March 12, 2009 at 2:30 pm EST (11:30 am PST).

Meeting Adjourned 2:10 pm (EST)

Respectively submitted,
Greg Smith

Appendix

Strategies for the Enhancement of Biological Field Station Sustainability

~A survey of Central American and Caribbean Field Stations and Marine Laboratories~
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Synopsis:

Biological field stations and marine laboratories, (BFSMLs), are on the frontier of biological scientific research and inquiry. BFSMLs provide an essential link between the researchers and the natural ecosystems in question, a link that has historically been the privilege solely of researchers. Yet, a variety of pressures are dictating that BFSML operators consider additional sources for the generation of revenue. Where many BFSMLs have previously catered only to students and researchers, some are now considering outward involvement in their local communities for support and collaboration. Many operators feel, in fact, that this move to incorporate surrounding communities is the next logical step in BFSML evolution. Many stations are involved with various conservation projects, youth/adult education programs or actual scientific research. These same operators are also investigating what initiatives may be taken to improve station operations; specifically, in what ways BFSMLs can operate more efficiently, effectively and environmentally sound.

The goal of this study is to determine how BFSMLs are developing sustainable initiatives for energy and material conservation and what they are doing in order to enhance their community outreach, their **social sustainability**. These ideas represent two different but related themes concerning BFSMLs today. The first theme describes not only what initiatives BFSMLs are taking in the way of sustainable practices to improve station operations, but also how they can provide an attainable model for surrounding communities. This theme dovetails into the second: community outreach and education.

For some stations, operational costs are generated through visitor fees or other sources of station generated revenue. However, many more stations struggle to meet even the most basic operational costs, let alone those additional costs for station improvements and program development. This second theme focuses on BFSML enhancement of community outreach and educational programs and how they may realize additional income that will help ensure their long term survival. The improvements made in station sustainability can provide one basis for community education and outreach. Furthermore, by striving to engage local communities in these projects, BFSMLs may increase support and knowledge for more environmentally sound policies and decision making for their specific regions. Other

examples of other community initiatives vary from youth camps and training seminars to place based research and conservation programs.

Project Description and Methodology:

This project focuses on two means of information gathering. First, a series of site visits were scheduled to sixteen BFSMLs throughout Mexico and Central America. These site visits were intended to provide four perspectives: A “hands on” understanding of BFSML operations; an understanding of what the guest experience would be like firsthand; a glimpse of the surrounding communities and the local perception of the specific BFSML; and, lastly, would allow for direct conversations with station managers, employees, volunteers and other guests.

The site visits were scheduled between September 20th and October 25th 2008. Unfortunately, difficult travelling conditions limited the original sixteen intended site visits to only five.

The majority of the information, therefore, will come from sixteen surveys that were e-mailed to all of the BFSMLs originally slated for site visits throughout Mexico and Central America and twenty-two other surveys that were sent throughout the Caribbean islands, Florida, Louisiana, Texas and Peru. The stations were chosen from lists generated by The Organization for Biological Field Stations and The Association of Marine Laboratories of the Caribbean. Those stations not listed with the above organizations were found through internet searches and conversations with various individuals. In total, thirteen countries are represented.

The survey requests information from station managers and owners in eight categories: **Section A.** Basic Station Information; **Section B.** Energy Consumption/Production; **Section C.** Purchasing Policies; **Section D.** Waste Management; **Section E.** Station Information, (General); **Section F.** Station Amenities, (Guests and Social Groups); **Section FII.** Station Amenities, (Researcher); and **Section G.** Community Out-Reach and Station Based Research.

