

Minutes of TWS Biometrics Working Group Membership Meeting
September 20, 2004
Calgary, Alberta

1) Introduction: G. Pendleton provided an overview of TWS Biometrics Working Group (BWG) activities over the past year.

- There are currently 144 members, the largest number since its formation.
- This year the BWG supported 1 symposium (Collaboration of Biometricians and Researchers in Large-Scale Research: Lessons from Case Studies organized by D. Diefenbach and L. McDonald) and 2 workshops (Using MCMC in Winbugs and Python to Fit Random Effects and Hierarchical Models by M. Conroy, C. Fonneseck, and J. Peterson; and Linear and Non-Linear Mixed Models for Correlated Data: Concepts and Applications by M. Christman and L. Douglass) at the Annual TWS Conference in Calgary.
- G. Pendleton made membership aware of the book "Sampling Rare or Elusive Species: Concepts, Design, and Techniques for Estimating Population Parameters" edited by W. Thompson. The book will be published in November 2004 by Island Press. The book was developed from the BWG sponsored symposium held during the 9th Annual TWS Conference in Bismarck.
- For the third year, \$250 travel grants were awarded to students to help defray costs of attending TWS Conferences. This year, the BWG provided two \$250 travel grants. Paul Conn (Colorado State University; "A general model for the analysis of mark-resight, mark-recapture, and band recovery under tag-loss") and Debra Montgomery (University of Idaho; "Estimating age of Rocky Mountain elk calves from morphometric measurements") were selected to receive this year's grants.

2) J. Millspaugh moved to accept the Secretary's minutes of the 2003 meeting.

- M. Conroy requested that the MCMC/Winbugs/Random Effects workshop correctly identify Peterson as the third workshop organizer. That change was made throughout the 2003 minutes.
- D. Johnson noted that W. Thogmartin's name had been misspelled. That change was made in the 2003 minutes.
- A corrected hard copy and electronic version of the 2003 minutes have been placed in the BWG historical file.
- Pending changes to the 2003 minutes, G. Pendleton seconded the J. Millspaugh motion to accept the Secretary's minutes of the 2003 meeting. Motion passed.

3) Treasurer's report (G. Sargeant): Current balance of \$10,178.28. J. Millspaugh and G. Sargeant conducted audit on 9/18/04 and reported that accounting was accurate. B. Clark moved and B. Gould seconded motion to approve the report. Motion passed.

4) Election report (G. Pendleton):

- a. Chair-elect: Bill Thompson
- b. Secretary: Mary Connor
- c. Treasurer: Glen Sargeant
- d. Board members at large: Wayne Thogmartin, Paul Lukacs, Steve Dinsmore, and P. Doherty.

5) Student travel grants: G. Pendleton discussed whether the BWG should increase the amount awarded or increase the number available or both. He noted the limited response in previous years and the interest in making travel grants attractive to students. G. Sargeant moved to increase the award to \$500, B. Thompson seconded the motion. K. Williams offered a friendly amendment to increase the number of grants available, not the amount. S. Winterstein seconded the motion.

A discussion ensued regarding the amount and number of available student grants. P. Conn (one of this year's recipients of the travel grant) noted that the travel grant was helpful. W. Gould asked how much money was necessary to make this program attractive to students. W. Clark mentioned opportunities students have to match funds. G. Olson suggested we agree on a dollar figure first. M. Conroy asked how much money do we have available, then allocate accordingly; he noted that one size does not fit all. C. Moore suggested we set an objective for the student travel grant program. M. Udevitz suggested we identify a total amount, and then the review committee evaluates proposals, which includes information about need. W. Gould suggested we need an amount so we can inform students when they apply. D. Diefenbach suggested the award be up to \$500, then the review committee could determine the award amount. M. Runge asked whether students attended that were not funded. G. Sargeant offered a historical perspective on student travel grants. Noted we could allocate \$1,500 given current financial situation and outlook for group.

D. Johnson offered a friendly amendment of up to 3 awards for up to \$400 each. L. McDonald seconded the motion.

A second discussion ensued. K. Williams suggested that our goal should be to get as many students as possible to conferences. He suggested keeping the amount smaller and increasing the number of total awards.

G. Olson offered a friendly amendment that we set parameters on the award, including the minimum and maximum amount awarded and leave the final decision to the review committee. She suggested we not specify the number of awards. M. Udevitz seconded the motion.

A third discussion ensued. S. Winterstein suggested the review panel should have flexibility. M. Runge noted that given student papers are already accepted at the time BWG grant applications are due, thus BWG does not influence whether students decide to attend meetings. D. Johnson suggested that BWG travel grants might help recruit in the future, should students be aware of the opportunity.

D. Johnson proposed awards up to \$400, totaling up to \$1,200 total. M. Runge proposed an amendment that we specify up to 15% of the total budget could be used for student travel grants. S. Sheriff noted that might take away opportunities should our balance decline and seconded D. Johnson proposal. All approved and motion passed.

6) 2005 Workshop/Symposium proposals: The membership discussed 1 workshop (Fundamentals of R organized by G. Sargeant) and 4 symposia (Statistics, Logistics, and the Estimation of Detection Rates from Aerial Surveys by M. Koneff and J. Sauer; Observational Studies: When You Can't Control Nature by T. Shaffer and D. Johnson; Overview and Treatment of Spatial Errors in GIS Applications by W. Thogmartin, C. Ribic, T. Sklebar, and W. Thompson; and Estimation Utilization Distributions: Methods and Applications by R. Nielson and L. McDonald). D. Johnson moved to support the Sargeant proposal. D. Diefenbach seconded the motion. Motion passed.

There was considerable discussion about optimum strategies for symposia, e.g., how many to propose to TWS, whether we should rank proposals, etc. G. Pendleton noted that we should be careful putting forth four symposia proposals because that would allow the Program Committee to decide; suggested we narrow the number. S. Sheriff suggested we would likely not have four symposia proposals accepted given space limitations. C. Ribic mentioned that next year's Program Chair (S. Lutz) suggested limited room on program. J. Laake suggested we prioritize them. D. Otis encouraged ranking.

D. Johnson asked whether the Nielson/McDonald proposal could be turned into a workshop. L. McDonald indicated that it could. D. Johnson moved that the Nielson/McDonald proposal be supported as a workshop. S. Winterstein seconded motion. Motion passed.

W. Thogmartin suggested that BWG be a secondary sponsor to the spatial error workshop. B. Kendall seconded the motion. Motion passed.

A discussion ensued regarding the remaining two proposals. C. Moore suggested we rank proposals. A. Franklin suggested we not rank proposals and that we should help make decision regarding which symposia to support. D. Diefenbach noted that the conference committee is not set up to evaluate based on rankings. C. Moore retracted previous comment about ranking.

G. Pendleton moved to support two proposals. T. Shaffer seconded.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Josh Millspaugh, secretary