

Biometrics Working Group  
Annual Meeting  
September 24, 2006  
Anchorage, AK

1. Introductions

Bill Thompson introduced the Board members of the Biometrics Working Group (BWG). Each attendee introduced himself/herself.

2. Approval of the Minutes from the 2005 Annual Meeting.

Chris Bunck noted that the minutes had been distributed electronically in a newsletter and also distributed prior to this year's annual meetings. No changes or revisions were proposed via email prior to this year's annual meeting or from the floor. The minutes were accepted.

3. Review and Approval of the Treasure's Report

Clint Moore reviewed his report. The treasury increased by a net of \$400 and now stands at \$14,145. Membership stands at 129, a decrease from 2005. After a short discussion, the report was accepted.

4. Recap of 2006 Workshop

Steve Dinsmore gave a brief overview of the all-day workshop on approaches for modeling avian nest survival. It was well attended. Participants had a variety of backgrounds. There were good questions and good discussions throughout the workshop. A last minute decision to switch rooms caused some difficulties in preparing for the start of the workshop. Also there were difficulties in getting copies of the registration forms from The Wildlife Society (TWS) office. TWS now takes \$25 from the registration fee for workshops, but the workshop organizers had difficulty getting information on those that registered from TWS. These concerns will be raised at the Working Group Leaders' Forum on Tuesday, September 26, 2007.

Duane Diefenbach suggested that organizers consider conducting this workshop at AOU conference and other similar venues. Workshop organizers agreed that this was a good idea and will evaluate opportunities.

A suggestion to post materials from this workshop on the BWG web page was made. Workshop organizers will evaluate what can be made available via the web page.

5. Membership Report

John Fieberg reported that membership now stands at 129. This number is in line with the membership in 2000 and 2002 but is somewhat lower than in 2004 and 2005. The membership in the parent society has been stable over the last year. The accuracy of the list distributed by TWS was questioned:

- Some individuals thought they had signed up for the working group but were surprised that their names did not appear on the list.
- Lists distributed by TWS were reported to be about 2 months behind.

- Some email addresses of members are not current or accurate.

Members were encouraged to be proactive in recruiting new members and a suggestion was made to distribute the BWG brochure at workshops and symposia. It was noted that we cannot tell if the small drop in membership is real or not at this time. It was suggested that membership lists over the last few years be compared. If the decline in membership continues, the Board may want to survey those individuals that have not renewed their membership to the BWG and evaluate factors that influenced their decisions not to renew.

#### 6. Results from the 2006 Elections

Larissa Bailey reported the results from the 2006 elections. Thirty-nine members voted. The results were:

- Chair-Elect – Bill Gould
- Secretary – Bridget Flanders-Wanner
- Treasurer – Clint Moore
- Board Members – Paul Conn, Sarah Coverse, Jon Runge, and Ryan Nielson

#### 7. Student Travel Grants

The competition for student travel grants was inadvertently skipped this year. It had been done on an ad hoc basis in the past and currently is not a specific duty for any board member or officer. It was recommended that this duty be assigned to one of the board members. A question was raised about whether the bylaws should be amended to include this responsibility. Further discussion of this issue was postponed until the next agenda item. It was also recommended that a summary of the duties/responsibilities (especially ad hoc responsibilities) of each officer and board member be developed. Bill Thompson volunteered to pull this information together.

#### 8. Proposed Bylaw Changes

Grey Pendleton gave an update on the proposed changes in the bylaws that were discussed and approved at last year's annual meeting. Some housekeeping steps are needed to finalize the changes that were reviewed and approved at last year's annual meeting. Bylaw changes do not have to be submitted to the TWS Council. We need to send a copy of the old ones with the new ones and state that the changes were distributed and reviewed by all members and were discussed and approved at the 2005 annual meeting of the working group. These changes should be officially implemented in a few weeks.

A motion was made to change the bylaws and designate the board member in charge of membership to chair a committee that will solicit nominations and select students for travel grants to the TWS annual conference. The committee members will be appointed by the Chair of the BWG. This motion was seconded and passed.

#### 9. Update on the BWG web page

Terry Shaffer reported on the status of the BWG web page which is now maintained by the TWS. He tried to get some things posted, but the TWS webmaster has not

accomplished these tasks. The web page is an important outreach tool for the BWG and also is a forum to provide information and summaries to members who are unable to attend the annual meeting. It can provide a venue for video release of workshops and symposia held at the annual meeting. Discussion touched on the value of including material on new developments with examples and a forum for internet discussion of topics. Others suggested that the web page be kept simple to keep time required for its maintenance at a realistic level. The committee formed at last year's annual meeting (Terry Shaffer, Steve Dinsmore, and Duane Diefenbach) was charged with defining a direction for the BWG web page and would like to hear from BWG members.

TWS is developing a template for working group web pages. Once the template is developed, each working group will be responsible for populating the template. TWS has not offered a timeline for when the template for working group web pages will be completed.

Much discussion followed. The perception is that TWS support for working group web pages is a low priority. Other options were suggested and included hiring a consultant to construct/manage the web page, recruiting a volunteer web master from the BWG membership, establishing a permanent committee for the web page so that the burden does not fall on one individual, and designating a board member to be responsible for oversight of the web page and to chair the permanent committee. Also it was noted that the BWG web page within the TWS web site is difficult to find.

The discussion concluded with recommendations to track TWS progress towards completing the template for working group web pages and to be prepared to pursue other options if no progress is made. Bill Thompson will be meeting with TWS folks later this week to discuss their template and the need to improve and expand the BWG web page.

#### 10. Dissemination of Information from Workshops and Symposia

Clint Moore discussed a suggestion for requiring that proposals for workshops and symposia address how information could be shared via the web when appropriate. Sharing the content of workshops and symposia via the web would be particularly beneficial to those who are isolated for other practitioners. Sensitive content could be password protected.

Much discussion followed. There was general agreement that sharing materials from workshops and symposia (e.g., PowerPoint presentation and handouts) was a good idea. Highlights from the discussion were:

- May encounter resistance from those who paid to attend the workshop.
- Free distribution of the materials could discourage individuals from attending workshops with fees.
- Template for working group web pages being developed by TWS needs to be flexible enough to accommodate the dissemination of such materials.
- Target audience is the BWG and TWS at large but could be larger than TWS members.

- Collecting fees for web access to these materials would be difficult and not likely worth the effort.
- A dynamic means of capturing the content of the workshop or symposium for the web would be more valuable than just a static site with PowerPoint presentations and handouts.
- There was general agreement that proposal submitters should be strongly encouraged, but not required, to address this topic in their proposals.
- This topic should be re-visited after we know more about the format for the BWG web page.

#### 11. Proposals for Workshops and Symposia at the 2007 TWS Annual Conference

Bridgette Flanders-Wanner led a discussion of the four proposals:

- Workshop 1 on modern methods for analyzing capture-recapture data
- Workshop 2 on estimation of population change from count data
- Symposium on 10 years of biometrics in wildlife: Past, present and future
- Round-table on sharing free wildlife and habitat data online: The good, the bad and the ugly

After lengthy discussions of each, motions to sponsor all were approved.

#### 12. Introduction of the New Chair

Bill Thompson passed the BWG notebook and Robert's rules of order on to Doug Johnson, the new chair of the BWG.