

**Biometrics Working Group
Annual Meeting
November 10, 2008**

DRAFT MINUTES

These minutes must be reviewed and approved at the next annual meeting before they are final.

President Gould called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM. Other board members introduced themselves. President Gould recognized Duane Diefenbach a new TWS fellow (congratulations!).

Approval of the Minutes from the 2007 Annual Meeting: Minutes were distributed to all members. Robin Russell noted that she was not involved in the *Estimation of Population Change from Count Data* workshop. This was the only change made to the minutes and they were approved.

Review and Approval of the Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Clint Moore presented the annual treasurer's report. The treasury decreased by a net of \$1719.24 and now stands at \$12,552. Income included dues from the Working Group membership which had increased by 25 members from 2007. Expenses included in the 2008 report included student travel grants from both 2007 and 2008. The treasurer's books were audited and approved by Krishna Pacifici.

Review of 2008 Workshop/Symposia:

Workshop: Regression modeling for habitat selection using GPS data –Ryan Nielson, Hal Sawyer, Lyman McDonald. Ryan stated that there were ~35 attendees and that the workshop went smoothly.

Workshop: Structured Decision Making and Adaptive Management – Clint Moore, Mike Conroy, Ken Williams. The 'instructors' attempted to make the workshop as realistic as possible. Role players included biologists and managers from Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Spirited discussions occurred during the event. Materials will be made available on the website. The workshop was scheduled to be video taped, but the video failed during the day and only 2/3 of the workshop was recorded. Portions of the workshop will be salvaged and eventually posted online (details will be provided in the future).

Symposium: Biometrics in Wildlife – Past, Present, and Future – Organizer Steve Sheriff thanked his co-organizers Christine Ribic and Gail Olson. Approximately 120 people attended the symposium. Steve had received many positive comments from members of the audience.

Recognition of recent publications from previous BWG symposia – President Gould acknowledge that BWG symposia often lead to published papers in Journal of Wildlife Management. Examples include the special section on Observational Studies in JWM issue 1 of this year and Doug Johnson's paper on indices presented at the 2006 BWG symposia, *Objectives and metrics for Monitoring Wildlife* (JWM 72(4):857-868).

2009 Workshop/Symposium Proposals: Presented by Brett McClintock

Workshop: *AIC Model Selection and Multimodel Inference*

Proposed by: David Anderson

Brett McClintock provided an overview of the 7-page proposal.

Key components: Full-day workshop. Every participant will receive copy of Burnham and Anderson (2002) book.

Original proposed cost: \$120 per participant

Min/Max number of participants: 50/70

Topics covered include:

- (1) Philosophy of Science
- (2) Importance of Models in Science
- (3) Kullback-Leibler Information
- (4) Science Examples
- (5) Likelihood Theory
- (6) Information Theory and Statistical Theory
- (7) Examples and Extensions
- (8) Other related topics

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the cost of the workshop. Stated cost (\$120 per attendee registration) includes travel costs and stipend for David Anderson. The initial proposal discussed by the BWG board suggested that the BWG would support the workshop up to a fixed cost (\$1000) if the enrollment was not sufficient to cover the presenter's expenses. Doug Johnson moved to advance the proposal under these conditions. Steve Sheriff seconded the motion. Several attending members suggested accepting the proposal would be setting a dangerous precedence for presenter(s) to profit. Mike Conroy suggested that the workshop could still be offered as it was initially proposed, just not sponsored by the Biometrics Working Group. Several alternative funding options were proposed. Lyman McDonald offered an amendment that BWG cover David's expenses but any additional income would go to BWG. Amendment seconded by Ryan Neilson. Motion to amend passed. A final friendly amendment suggested accepting the proposal under the following conditions: \$120 non-students, \$100 students, no minimum enrollment, with BWG covering David's travel expenses for 2 days + 1-day conference registration. Motion passed.

Workshop: *Statistical Modelling of Wildlife Survival and Other Event Processes Using WinBUGS*

Proposed by: Dennis Heisey, USGS-National Wildlife Health Center

Chris Bunck and Chris Ribic provided an overview of the proposal.

Original proposed cost: \$25 non-student, \$10 for students

Min/Max number of participants: 5/15

Key components: Full-day workshop. Participants will receive a copy of workshop notes and a primer to ecological examples.

The workshop is intended to be small and interactive. The target audience is BWG members rather than typical wildlife biologist. It is aimed at quantitative audience with some experience with WinBUGS and spatio-temporal models (Calculus is required). Basic idea is to introduce basics, provide hands-on, worked examples, and then demonstrate advanced topics. Presentor

requests additional help from BWG members experienced in these topics. Doug Johnson moved to amend the proposal to increase the maximum enrollment to 20, pending finding additional instructor support and increasing the cost to \$75 for non-students, \$25 for students. The amendment was 2nd by Mike Conroy. Amendment was passed. Amended proposal was accepted. Members were encouraged to contact Dennis Heisey with questions or if they wanted to help out with the workshop.

Workshop: *Mark-Resight Methods for Long-Term Population Monitoring*

Proposed by: Brett McClintock and Gary White

Key components: Half-day workshop.

Original proposed cost: \$40 non-student, \$25 for students

This proposal was withdrawn due to scheduling conflicts. The workshop will likely be proposed again next year.

Symposium: There were no symposium proposals for 2009. Bridgette Flanders-Wanner suggested developing workshops and/or symposia in cooperation with the Spatial Ecology and Telemetry Working Group. Ryan Neilson also requested a workshop for Graphics in R.

Newsletter Content Report: Recently an issue came up regarding what types of information should and should not be included in the formal business of the BWG presented in the Newsletter. It was unclear as to whether or not BWG should advertise non-TWS sanctioned workshops or symposia particularly those involving outside commercial entities in the Newsletter. Krishna Pacifici had prepared a draft summary statement of the issue that was circulated to BWG members prior to the meeting (available in the secretary's records). Four options were discussed including: (1) move all workshop and/or symposia announcements to a listserv or the BWG website only; (2) sell advertising space in the newsletter much like JWM does, (3) do both option 1 and 2; or (4) keep the policy as is. Gary White moved to support the policy as is, seconded by Brett McClintock. Duane Diefenbach suggested that it was in the membership's best interest to announce all workshops and the issue should be dropped. Mike Conroy supported Duane's statement. The motion did not pass and the issue was dropped.

Membership Report: Clint Moore reported BWG currently had 161 members in 2008, representing a ~20-25 member increase from 2007.

Student Travel Grants: Larkin Powell reported that BWG sponsored 2 student travel awards this year. The scholarship review committee, consisting of Larkin, Glen Sargeant, and Krishna Pacifici. Recipients were: Jake Ivan (Colorado State University) and Thomas Bohrman (University of Florida). Each received a \$1000 award. Larkin strongly encourage BWG members to have their students apply!

Results from the 2008 Elections: Nathan Zimpfer was not able to attend the meeting so President Gould announced the results of the 2008 elections. Approximately 1/3 of the membership voted. The following candidates were elected to the 2008-2009 term:

- Chair-Elect: Chris Bunck
- Treasurer: Bridgette Flanders-Wanner (1-year term)
- Secretary: Gail Olson (2-year term)
- Board Members: Mike Conroy, Chad Bishop, Khristi Wilkins, and Lianne Ball.

- Appointed Webmaster: Gary White

Bill Gould passed the survival whistle on to 2008-2009 President Terry Shaffer. Meeting adjourned.