



# Organization of Biological Field Stations

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## **The Organization of Biological Field Stations Supports Passage of the “National Science Foundation for the Future Act”**

The Organization of Biological Field Stations (OBFS) strongly supports the passage of HR Reauthorization Bill 2225, known as the “National Science Foundation for the Future Act,” which solidifies the nation’s interest in, and support of the essential scientific infrastructure represented by field stations and marine labs. OBFS’ 250 member stations represent thousands of scientists, teachers, land managers, and students, millions of acres of land, and billions of dollars in physical and digital assets. In addition, OBFS is dedicated to increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion in the biological sciences and supports the bill’s provisions for broadening access to research opportunities for underrepresented groups.

If enacted, the “NSF for the Future Act” would significantly reinforce the support system for scientific achievement and boost technological development to help address pressing societal challenges. Additionally, this legislation would create the diverse US STEM workforce necessary to tackle the scientific challenges and embrace the innovative opportunities facing the country.

Biological field stations and marine labs have been centers of environmental science for over a century. They are the places where scientists go to study environmental processes in their natural context. They are crucibles of innovation and discovery, storehouses of increasingly critical historical information, and hubs of integrated research; they house the infrastructure to support complex experiments and to maintain long-term projects. Field stations act as sentinels for identifying future societal and environmental challenges.

Approximately 400 US field stations and marine labs host thousands of individual scientists and work behind the scenes on many of the nation’s environmental initiatives. These place-based research sites are a tremendous national resource for understanding, managing, and adapting to dramatic environmental change. They also act as outdoor classrooms for hundreds of thousands of students and members of the public who participate in educational and outreach events.

“Operating at the interface of the environment and society, field stations and marine labs work to understand, protect, and conserve our natural resources, while safeguarding public health. Research, education and outreach are at the heart of our operations, and the National Science Foundation is the lifeline to support such activities,” Chris Lorentz, President of OBFS. “On behalf of the Field Station community, I would like to offer our thanks and appreciation to Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson, Ranking Member Frank Lucas, and the entire House Committee on Science, Space, & Technology, for their efforts to secure and strengthen the future of NSF. OBFS is encouraged by the Committee’s passage of the Bill and we look forward to a positive vote in the Senate.”

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OBFS President (2020-2022)

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*Supporting environmental research, education, and public understanding*