

# OBFS

## Organization of Biological Field Stations

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September 20, 1984

TO: Members of OBFS

FROM: Dick Coles, Secretary/treasurer and Principal Investigator

RE: Enclosed Questionnaire and upcoming workshop on the research needs of Biological Field Stations

As you may recall, our proposal to N.S.F. to hold a workshop on the research needs of Biological Field Stations has been successful. Planning for this proposal and the workshop has been done by your executive committee, especially George Lauff (who serves as Co-Principal Investigator), Dave Parmelee, Jim Layne and Dick Hartman.

The workshop will be a gathering of about fifteen directors of field stations with research programs and representing the biotic, geographic and institutional diversity of field facilities in North America. Many are not members of OBFS. We will meet at the W.K. Kellogg Biological Station, October 21-25. Our purpose is to compile a prioritized assemblage of the needs of Biological Field Stations and to generate a report to be submitted to the Biological Research Resources Program at N.S.F. On the basis of this report it is hoped that N.S.F. will be encouraged to establish a "special competition" to which field stations may submit proposals for support of research activities conducted at field stations.

The latter represent a peculiar and diverse array of facilities which may on occasion suffer from neglect by parent institutions and may be overlooked in the process which generates federal support for scientific research. In any case, we have received encouragement from the Research Resources Program and are hopeful that the efforts to be expended will prove fruitful and beneficial to many field stations in the United States.

At the workshop we will rely on input not only from the fifteen participating facilities but also from the broader spectrum represented by the OBFS membership. Because research activity at field stations may be influenced by financial, operational, administrative and other factors, we intend to consider these dimensions to field facility operations as well as the more narrowly focused areas of research needs.

To encourage thought and input and to gather facts, a questionnaire will be used. A draft is included here in hopes that members of OBFS will devote the time and effort required to participate in this process. From the respondents and through discussions to be held at the upcoming annual meeting we hope to achieve improvement in the questionnaire as well as approach the objectives mentioned above.

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An improved version of the enclosed draft will be used to gather input from the workshop participants in advance of their meeting.

I hope you will respond to this mailing and return the document to me in early October. Those attending the annual meeting are asked to bring their questionnaire along. Perhaps the questionnaire can be used to fill idle time during air travel to the meeting. Those not attending the annual meeting are asked to apply the stamps attached to the return envelope and place it in the mail. We hope all can understand that we need to proceed in this process and it may be impossible to include delayed responses in the deliberation.


Two final thoughts:

1. As viewed by N.S.F., thesis research being performed by graduate students is considered to be research, but course work is not. For the purpose of this survey, please draw the distinction in this way.
2. N.S.F. has a rejuvenated interest in education. It is our fervent hope that the OBFS will be able to stimulate the educational arm of N.S.F. to establish programs of support for educational activities as pursued at field stations as we all recognize that, in addition to their role in fostering research, field stations have a major involvement in education.

We earnestly solicit your assistance and cooperation in this enterprise and your patience with the imperfections of this questionnaire.

Thank you very much.....

Sincerely,

  
Richard W. Coles

