

The origin for this newsletter lies in the study of inland field stations born in The National Science Foundation and delivered by Dale Arvey. In connection with this study various meetings were held, three of primary importance. The first, and the one largely responsible for creating interest in the activities and needs of the stations, was held June 22, 1963 at the Science Lodge Mountain Research Station in Colorado, on the occasion of the dedication of the Alpine Laboratory of the University of Colorado Institute of Arctic and Alpine Research. This meeting has been reported (Bio Science 14 (1964) 3), and need not be covered further. On May 14-15, 1964 NSF supported a Conference on Inland Biological Field Stations at Washington, D. C. Lists of participants and others attending were issued by NSF as well as a summary of the discussion which concluded with 11 basic points in regard to the role and needs of the stations. The eleventh point called for the preparation of a yearly newsletter.

Boulder Meeting

On August 26, 1964 a meeting on field stations was held during the AIBS meeting at Boulder, Colorado. The following notes are due primarily to John Marr:

People attending:

T. W. Porter, W. T. Tanner, M. Jhrde, J. R. Olive, L. S. Putnam, M. D. Arvey, P. Bowman, A. B. Williams, S. D. Gerking, P. Kannowski, T. C. Dorris, P. B. Dowling, S. R. Galler, W. S. Marshall, J. Doherty, W. F. Blair, R. M. Johnson, R. T. Hartman, N. M. Williams, G. Veronneau, K. W. Cummins and J. W. Marr. They represented 13 stations, NSF, Nature Conservancy, ONR, N I Hand AIBS.

Opinions and suggestions for the organization:

Publication of a survey of field stations, NSF support for another conference on stations, newsletter of information on stations, surveys of activities, status and needs of stations for use by granting agencies, solution to housing needs, reduce unnecessary course duplication, produce news column in Bio Science, study interchange of students, staff and fees.

An ad hoc- committee was created (C. Riggs, Chairman, C. Tryon and A. Williams) and given the following assignments:

1. Define nature of organization
2. Approach AIBS with a request for sponsorship
3. Issue a newsletter

Results of the Questionnaire:

Questionnaires were sent to 41 stations or station directors. Thirty-one were completed and returned, 1 was returned but not filled in (?). Of the remaining 10 stations, several were peripheral to the interests expressed in the questionnaire and it was to be expected they would not reply. However, 6 of the stations should have had an interest so the score stands 31 returned, 6 not returned (86%). Of the 31 returned, 9 expressed opinions or commented on the questionnaire. A few qualified their replies to the yes or no statements, but there was no way to indicate this in the returns.

Statistical Summary

Total Answers 31

I. It is assumed that the proposed organization of inland field stations will be a professional rather than a scientific one. Should such an organization:

	Institutions	Directors	All staff	No opinion
1. Represent	11	12	5	2
2. Help establish new stations		Yes 18	No 8	5
3. Produce surveys of				
Activities		Yes 27	No 2	2
Support		Yes 25	No 4	2
Status		Yes 26	No 2	3
Station Needs		Yes 24	No 4	3
Purpose		Yes 24	No 4	3
Justification		Yes 19	No 9	3
4. Develop program of interchange of				
Students		Yes 22	No 5	4
Staff		Yes 23	No 6	2
5. Arrange visits to stations of scientists, both domestic and foreign, on a cooperative cost basis.		Yes 24	No 4	3
6. Prepare a national program of development for new stations and of needed facilities for old stations.		Yes 21	No 5	5
7. Prepare a "policy" statement for field biology--its purpose and value to science and the scientific community.		Yes 26	No 2	3
8. Promote meetings for those interested in field stations at national meetings such as AAAS, AIBS, etc.		Yes 26	No 1	4
9. Take an active role in promoting symposia at national meetings.	-----	Yes 15	No 13	3
or at stations	-----	Yes 22	No 4	5
10. Promote integration of field research on natural communities and index species on a latitudinal-longitudinal basis.		Yes 20	No 7	4
11. Attempt to promote and to secure support for cooperative research on problems that need investigating on a regional or national basis.		Yes 22	No 6	3
12. Determine feasibility of a news column on field stations in Bio Science.		Yes 27	No 2	2

Comments:

- Putnam (Franz Theodor Stone Lab): meeting with national organizations means the busy time for station directors spring is better. keeping organization to directors for the most part is better as they encounter the problems and can benefit most from helping each other.
- Solberg (Montana, Flathead Lake): Definite annual meetings in early September at a different station each year, membership dues (\$25) for operational costs.
- Marshall (Minnesota - Itasca): should stress exchange of information between stations a viable newsletter is the immediate need could accomplish activities listed in #3 of questionnaire. - promotion of meetings at AAAS, AIBS, etc. would integrate cooperative research. A priority list for activities suggested on the questionnaire would be 8, 10, 11, 4, 5, 7, 9, 12 and 6.
- Porter (Kellogg Biol. Sta.): an organization which limits its membership to institutions and directors would have a limited number of members a biased outlook in regard to program research vs. student training vs. formal classes. Stations should be in unique ecological habitats or for non-duplicative purposes. New stations in areas of high student populations. More contact for directors to help in planning in all aspects.
- Stockard (Univ. of Mich. - Douglas Lake): - to avoid a heavy burden of busy work the organization should be kept simple.
- Marr (Colorado - Sci. Lodge): fine to be both "scientific" and professional. However, there may be better possibilities under societies such as Ecol. Soc. to nurture professional activities. Need we exclude marine?
- Enders (Colorado- Rocky Mt. Biol. Lab.): Meetings should not be held with AAAS, etc. due to time interference. Has the Ford Foundation lost interest? (C. A. T. : I think so - after presenting a proposal to them for housing, which was used for internal discussion--they informed me that a decision had been reached that this was outside their sphere of interest. I had the same response from foundations here in Pittsburgh.)
- Roth (Arizona - Southwestern Res. Sta.): organization should be for exchange of ideas for support, maintenance, operations, publicity, activities
- Lauff (Kellogg Biol. Sta.): favor an informal organization to determine the benefits to be obtained. periodic meetings--of station personnel would (foster) an exchange of information and discussion problems. The evolution to a more formal framework should be based on need. The term "field" may have undesirable connotations in some instances --it could be deleted without detracting from any proposed title. "Association" implies aformal organization that may not be desirable . . .

Austin B. Williams, Professor of Zoology, Institute of Fisheries
Research, University of North Carolina

Among many resources of this nation for training and research in life sciences are the biological stations. In an era of great emphasis on cellular and subcellular research, biological stations, in the view of many, have become almost a relict of days when descriptive biology was a companion to great geographical explorations of the 17th to early 20th centuries. Such assessment ignores a broad sweep of ecological training, research, and management programs fostered by these stations, and, more seriously, fails to recognize increasingly acute needs for these influences in an urban world.

Increased emphasis on oceanographic research in the past decade has elevated the marine station to a prominent place, but the inland station, though more accessible to many, has tended to enjoy a less prominent role. Marine research often has obvious commercial and military significance, gaining the generous financial aid accompanying such enterprises, and it deals with an environment which, though long known to man, has been explored in an incomplete fashion. On land, applied aspects of biological research are diffused into specialized fields such as agriculture, forestry, and game management. Pure ecological research is often left to field stations which may have to run on slim budgets.

Varied as the land itself, inland stations have at least one common feature--they are located in natural situations where field studies may be pursued with little chance of interruption by human activity. Among them an evolution has occurred, each station adapting to its own environment. The question of "goodness" of this unplanned diversity must be answered affirmatively; multiple opportunities for investigation have been opened.

The value of inland stations as working tools for professionals is granted, but students, whether they use stations as tools or not, hopefully may have their lives enriched by field experiences and thereby gain appreciation for and a sense of stewardship toward natural environments; it is in this intangible area that one of the most worthy contributions to society may be made.

Most stations are small enough to insure protection of habitat yet large enough to provide both general students and specialists with their necessities. Three general things may be lacking: (1) There is little provision for instruction of promising undergraduates or high school students who may be inspired at an impressionable age with desire to enter the field professionally. (2) There are few permanent inland stations having resident research staffs dedicated to long-term research. (3) There are, perhaps, major habitat types not presently containing field stations.

The existing complex of inland stations deserves more equitable support than it receives at present because its role in training and research provides the source of people and stimulus for many ecologically oriented programs. To improve their position, the structures and objectives of stations should continue to be examined by leaders of stations in concert. By such efforts, new emphases, ideas and support might be brought to disciplines served by the stations.

Notes

Name:

The choice of a name was not decisive.

	Votes
IFSO Inland Field Station Organization	8
AIBFS American Inland Biological Field Stations	11
Write-ins, as given below --	10
SBFS Society of Biological Field Stations	1
LIBS League of Inland Biological Stations	1
AABS Association of American Biological Stations	1
OIBS Organization of Inland Biological Stations	2
AIFS Association of Inland Field Stations	3
FSF Field Station Forum	1
AAIBS American Association of Inland Biological Stations	1

Several people suggested that American and Field be dropped from any title. Also that Organization implied a more formal association than was intended. And as one station pointed out--it was not a biological station. Following all these suggestions reduces our choice to the names given in question 1 below. Since it would seem necessary to have something to set the stations aside from weather stations, etc. the term inland has been placed in each. Is another term better?

Distribution of newsletter: A newsletter of four pages will cost 25 cents per copy to make and mail. If stenographic charges are added it would mean about 55 cents per copy for 40 copies, 35 cents per copy for 100 copies or more. If no dues are to be collected the Pymatuning Lab. will continue to produce the newsletter but limit it to 50 copies. This will mean distribution .only to directors and a few others.

If dues are to be paid by stations then copies could be sent to all staff members (as well as alumni?).

News: Dale Arvey (APO San Francisco 96503) in a letter from Tokyo, states that his NSF report on inland stations is to be printed. He did not know when and where.

Nature of Organization: The questionnaire indicates that the directors will approve a variety of activities for the proposed organization. So much so that the questionnaire is not too helpful in determining the nature of the organization or the direction it should take. There is apparently the feeling in some respondents that the development of the organization should be cautious and that for the present it should be concerned largely with internal swapping of information, hints, procedures, etc. It would be excellent if everybody would express themselves firmly on this point. See Question 4.

Next Issue: Please send your bulletins and information on anything new you are trying with courses, visitors, room and board, buildings, etc. We will provide a directory of personnel at the stations this summer, as well as notice of unusual activities, inovations and aspirations--if furnished immediately. We still lack about half of the station bulletins for 1966.

