

Public Policy Committee Annual Report, 2018
8 July 2018

Public Policy Committee

Kal Tuominen (Chair)
Krissa Skogen (Chair)
Andre Naranjo (Secretary)
Benjamin Blackman (Honorary)
Steven Callen (2018)
Meagan Philpott (2018)
Charlotte Germain-Aubrey (2018)
Ingrid Jordon-Thaden (2018)
Muriel Poston (2019)
Larry Huford (2019)
Sandra Knapp (2020)
Amy Litt (2020)
Andrew Pais *Student Representative* (2018)
Timothy Batz (20)
Tanisha Williams (2021)

Report Topics for 2017-2018

- Plant Science Bulletin Public Policy Quarterly
- Botany2017 Committee Meeting
- Skype Meeting Lists and Topics 2017-2018
- Letters that were signed
- Awards: Congressional Visits Day and Botany Advocacy Leadership Grant
- Congressional Districts Visits
- National Plant Systems Initiative
- Nagoya Protocol

Plant Science Bulletin Public Policy Quarterly

The Public Policy Committee has contributed pieces to the Plant Science Bulletin on the activities of the PPC, with the goals of increasing visibility of the Committee's activities and engaging the BSA membership policy items that are relevant to them.

Botany 2017 EPPC-ASPT/PPC-BSA Joint Committee Meeting

- Elected a joint Secretary for EPPC/EPC – Andre Naranjo, University of Florida
- Drafting 5-year plan, to be approved at Botany 2018 meeting
- Botany Policy Network, how to structure it, lots of disagreement
- Planning a workshop for Botany 2018 vs. trying to become an official Section of BSA and ASPT. Looking for a more sustainable EPPC/PPC membership and activity. Need an annual budget and donations.
- Confirmed Policy Workshop with AIBS, Rob Gropp, went very well this year, but cost \$4000 to bring him here. Too expensive to do often.

Joint EPPC/PPC Skype Meeting Lists and Topics 2017-2018

- January 9, 2018
 - Transfer of institutional knowledge about PPC and EPPC for new chairs
 - Writing a 5-year plan
 - Creating an annual budget and monetary source for the joint committees
 - Promoting Botany Advocacy Leadership Grant and Congressional Visits Day Awards
 - “Climate change,” “Conservation,” and “Vegetation” also seem to be red flag terms for Dept of Interior budgets -- rationale for work must be expressed differently
 - Planning a policy workshop for Botany2018 in Rochester, MN.
 - Botany Policy Network: how to make it happen??
- April 18th, 2018
 - Botany 2018 Policy Workshop planning
- June 21, 2018
 - Botany 2018 Policy Workshop planning
 - Agenda for Botany 2018 committee meeting

Signed Letters

- Composed by March for Science against the Trump Administration removing the terms “science-based” and “evidence-based” from documents written by the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

Awards

- 2018 BSA Public Policy Awards went to Timothy Batz and Tanisha Williams for traveling to D.C. in April for AIBS Congressional Visits Day; covered all expenses.
 - Both the BSA Public Policy Award and ASPT Congressional Visits Day Award winners wrote a testimonial for the Plant Science Bulletin.
- 2018 Botany Advocacy Leadership Grant recipient: Roland Eberwein of Carinthian Botanical Center in Austria, to assist in purchasing a new microscope camera to help with his outreach and educational programs for the garden.
 - We only received two eligible applicants this year. Need to advertise more about this \$1000 opportunity.
- Jackeline Salazar, BSA member and recipient of the BAL 2017, held the workshop entitled "Plant Conservation and Sustainable Management by women in the Jaragua-Bahoruco-Enriquillo Biosphere Reserve, Dominican Republic: Community Workshop and Local Capacity" August 31, 2017 in the Dominican Republic. Despite the terrible hurricane shortly after the workshop, the attendees, plants, and program put in place from these funds were not affected.
 - A summary of the workshop goals and accomplishments was included in the Plant Science Bulletin Spring 2018 Vol. 64:1.

Congressional Districts Visits

- Ingrid Jordon-Thaden, Chair of ASPT met in conjunction with UC Berkeley's public outreach office and another scientist on campus, Stacey Frederick, with a staffer from California State Representative Barbara Lee in October 2017 on UC Berkeley Campus. Dr. Jordon-Thaden focused on the needed funds for natural history museum and herbaria within the UC system as an educational and public outreach resource.
- Marian Chau of Lyon Arboretum visited the local Hawaiian office for Sen. Mazie Hirono and advocated for the importance of federal funding both for research and for the Endangered Species Act (as nearly all plant conservation programs in Hawaii rely on ESA funds).
- ASPT and BSA both agreed to continue supporting this nation-wide coordination effort led by AIBS with both contributing \$750 a year.
- EPPC/PPC has difficulty getting people to be interested and to participate.

National Plant Systems Initiative

- Request for feedback in October 2017 from the organizers of the NPSI
- Kal Tuominen read the NPSI document, wrote a rough draft of personal feedback, and sought additional comments from the committee via e-mail.
 - Deadline for feedback was very short (<1 month) and we did not have full feedback within the deadline. Final comments were received in January 2018.
- The general consensus was that NPSI needs to be more inclusive of all plant sciences. Currently, it has a very applied focus and appears to largely exclude plant systematics, plant ecology, and plant conservation. This is a concern, as its stated aim is to represent a comprehensive, 20-year agenda for all plant research in the US.
- The draft document has been substantially restructured in response to comments from the committee and will be sent to all committee members in mid-July for discussion at Botany 2018.

Nagoya Protocol Scientific Society Meeting

- Dr. Rachel Meyer (represented BSA) and Dr. Ingrid Jordon-Thaden (representing ASPT) by attended an ESA and NSF funded meeting in Baltimore, MD in October 2017. The meeting organized American scientific societies for a two-day discussion on how the Nagoya Protocol will affect research across our borders.
- The Nagoya Protocol, which has been adopted by many countries, excluding the U.S.A., establishes a system of communication regarding biological materials used for research which ultimately could be of economic importance.
- The role of the Nagoya Protocol for systematics is difficult to pinpoint as our research is often not resulting in economic value that can be measurable by currency.
- Drs. Jordon-Thaden and Meyer will be presenting a flash-talk on the Nagoya Protocol at Botany2018.