

MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 20 PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING

20 February 2024 Hybrid Meeting and Conference Call

9:00am-12:00pm (Pacific Standard Time – UTC-8)



Present: Dick Viet (Chair), Juliet Lamb (Chair-Elect), Rachel Sprague (Past Chair), Lara Brenner (Secretary), Lindsay Adrean (Vice Chair for Conservation), Sarah Ann Thompson (Northern California Regional Representative), Amelia DuVall (Washington/Oregon Regional Representative), Kerry Woo (Canada Regional Representative), Pamela Michael (Treasurer), Julia Gulka (Non-Pacific U.S. States Regional Representative) [10].

Absent: Jaime Ojeda (S. California, Latin America, Hawaii Regional Representative), JB Thiebot (Asia/Oceania Regional Representative), Tegan Carpenter-Kling (Europe/Africa Regional Representative), Karen Lau Alarcon (Student Representative), Alexis Will (Alaska/Russia Regional Representative) [5]

Others present: Kirsten Bixler (Former Treasurer), Jackie Lindsey (LoCo Committee Chair), Roberta Swift (Former Chair), Anna Vallery (Communications Committee Co-Chair), Dan Barton (Future Chair-Elect), Ariel-Micaiah Heswall (Future AS/OC Representative), Jane Dolliver (Elections Committee Co-Coordinator), Patrick O'Hara (PICES Delegate), Doug Forsell (Ornithological Council Delegate), Beth Flint (ACAP Delegate), Lauren Lescure (Membership Committee Co-Coordinator), Jerome Fort (Future EU/AF Representative), Laney White (HELPS Committee Co-Coordinator), Anne Schaefer (Future AK/RU Representative), Alyssa Eby (Future Student Representative) [15].

REVIEW DECEMBER 7th 2023/ JANUARY 16th, 2024 ACTION ITEMS

- Dick will send out a poll or email asking folks about their interest in receiving a discounted rate for the PSG meeting
 - **Remove**
- Treasurers will begin the process of creating document retention and reimbursement policies
 - **Keep**
- Lara will reach out to the Board of Trustees to ask about updating the investment policy
 - **Lara reached out and they are reviewing now. Keep until complete.**
- Dick will reach out to the OC to let them know we plan to cut back to \$2500 unless we receive further justification to keep the increased annual contribution
 - **Done**
- Dick is going to let Lora Leschner know how much we have decided to charge her for her partial attendance at the meeting
 - **Remove**
- Reach out to LoCo and Justine if you have ideas for potential sponsors or silent auction items, or if you can serve as a mentor or a session chair.

- Remove
- Kristen and Pam will resubmit the two endowment fund proposals to be voted on at the annual meeting
 - Done
- Submit your annual reports!
 - Done

SUMMARY OF PSG EXCO ACTIVITIES IN 2023 – REPORTS #2A – 2G

- Brief review of the 99 pages of committee meetings and EXCO activities, highlighting major achievements over the last year.
- We've continued with Oxford Abstracts and Wild Apricot programs for abstract submissions and meeting registration, which are working well.
- Realizing our management of our organization's finances required additional help, we hired a financial manager, Emily Pentilla, who started in August and has been a major help.
- Juliet Lamb, this year's program chair, chose the theme of the Pacific Seabird Group meeting: 'The Faces of Seabird Conservation,' focusing on underrepresented groups.
- We have two new proposals for a vote during this meeting: a second endowment fund and expanding the scope of the Publications Endowment Fund.
- The Pacific Seabirds newsletter has been revived as an online publication by the Communications Committee.
- The Ornithological Council, with an annual budget of \$37,000, produces useful reports, such as on avian flu, which we want to continue supporting.
- We received 55 applications requesting \$70,000 for student awards, demonstrating increased interest from diverse regions.
- We awarded \$20,000 to individuals from 5 foreign countries, with support from a Packard Foundation grant and private contributions.
- 46 student presentations are scheduled for this meeting, with six applications for student research grants, four of which will be funded.
- The British Ornithological Union will present an award to Dee Boersma at the banquet.
- Lindsay Adrean wrote letters to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management regarding offshore wind farms and Environment America regarding the protection of Cash's Ledge.

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE UPDATE & APPROVE CANDIDATES – REPORT #17

- Ballots closed on February 9th; they were sent out on January 11th.
- According to the PSG bylaws, ballots are open for 30 days, closing two weeks before the change of office.
- New 2024 to 2025 ExCo members: Dan Barton as Chair-Elect, Alyssa Eby as student representative, Anne Schaefer as Alaska and Russia regional representative, Ariel Micaiah-Heswall as Asia and Oceania regional representative, and Jerome Fort as Europe and Africa representative.
- Northern California representative Sarah Ann Thompson was reelected.
- The Elections Committee typically sends out multiple reminders, but this year, only 40% voted due to lack of reminders.
- We're looking for more volunteers for the Elections Committee."
- Question: Are there any particular regions where turnout is low?

- The turnout is similar across regions, but students and new members may need more reminders.
- Lost ballots may be due to spam filters, but we try to resend them.
- We need more reminders next year to increase turnout.
- Question: What is the maximum voter participation?
 - Just slightly over 50%
- Regional reps do not currently send reminders, but they could.
 - Comment: It might be awkward for candidates to remind people to vote.

Motion to approve the member-nominated candidates to the 2024-2025 PSG Executive Council. The 2024-2025 ExCo members are the following, assuming the responsibilities of the positions below on 20 February 2024:

Past Chair: Dick Veit

Chair: Juliet Lamb

Chair-Elect: Dan Barton

Vice-Chair for Conservation: Lindsay Adrean

Treasurer: Julie Skoglund

Secretary: Lara Brenner

Alaska and Russia Regional Representative: Anne Schaefer

Washington and Oregon Regional Representative: Amelia DuVall

Northern California Regional Representative: Sarah Ann Thompson

Southern California, Latin America, and Hawaii Regional Representative: Jaime Ojeda

Canada Regional Representative: Kerry Woo

Asia and Oceania Regional Representative: Ariel-Micaiah Heswall

Europe and Africa Regional Representative: Jerome Fort

Non-Pacific US States Regional Representative: Julia Gulka

Student Representative: Alyssa Eby

Moved and seconded.

Abstentions, 0; Nays, 0; Yes, 10, motion passed unanimously

TREASURER'S REPORT – REPORT #3

- I want to provide an opportunity to review how things turned out in fiscal year 2023 (October 1st, 2022, to September 30th, 2023).
- We had a deficit of approximately \$45,500 in unrestricted funds for fiscal year 2023, which seems like a lot.
 - However, this includes a \$40,000 down payment for the 2024 meeting, so the deficit is not as severe as it seems.
 - We actually did fine and even exceeded expectations, considering we anticipated a larger deficit.
- There was an annual surplus of over \$62,000 in restricted funds, mainly due to the endowment funds recovering from losses in 2022 and successful fundraising efforts by former chairs.
- We passed a budget for fiscal year 2024 on September 25th, 2023, just in time. The budget includes an expected surplus of over \$5,000 in restricted funds and an expected deficit of about \$13,000 in unrestricted funds.

- Our operating costs are increasing due to rising expenses everywhere, so we've increased membership fees to account for this.
- Highlights of accomplishments since last February include filing taxes, hiring a new financial manager, staying up to date on invoicing, reimbursements, and bookkeeping, renewing critical registrations and accounts, streamlining the chart of accounts in QuickBooks, and adding the meeting budget to QuickBooks for better organization.
- We closed separate bank accounts for restricted funds to simplify tracking and reduce errors.
- We approved the budget, a membership fee increase, and have four proposals pending.
- Our bank account balance is over \$218,000 as of February 1st, but with expected expenses of \$175,000, our actual standing will change after reconciling post-meeting.
- The Student Travel Fund has over \$10,000, the Former Chairs Fund has over \$30,000, and the Conservation Fund has about \$21,000.
- There was an error in reporting the Conservation Fund balance, which has been corrected.
- Our total assets, including the endowment fund, are approximately \$670,000.
- Unrestricted income primarily comes from membership fees, general fund donations, and meeting registration fees.
- Sponsorships exceeded expectations, contributing significantly to total unrestricted income.
- Total unrestricted income was about \$211,000, largely due to sponsorships.
- Restricted income sources include donations, marine ornithology income (mostly page charges), and endowment fund withdrawals for specific purposes.
- The endowment fund has performed well, recovering half of its losses from 2022.
- Admin operations costs increased by over \$15,000 in fiscal year 2023 due to unbudgeted items.
- Unrestricted program services include special projects, annual meetings, and grants paid through unrestricted funds.
- The largest expenses for the meeting include travel, meeting planner, rental equipment, conference venue, and food and beverage.
- There were deviations from the budget, including higher expenses for bookkeeping, Wild Apricot fees, and QuickBooks due to unanticipated circumstances.
- Restricted program services, covered by restricted funds, include grants and publications, which were mostly covered by the endowment fund.
- There were deviations from the budget for student travel and publications due to increased expenses.
- Overall, there was a deficit of approximately \$45,600 in unrestricted income and a surplus of approximately \$11,000 in restricted income. With investments, there was an overall surplus of almost \$63,000 due to endowment fund recovery.
- There are no real surprises in this year's budget, but final numbers won't be known until after meeting expenses are settled.

ENDOWMENT FUND REPORT – REPORT #4

- The PSG endowment account holds positions in three equity-based mutual funds, all with the brokerage firm Neuberger Berman.
 - The three mutual funds are the Guardian funds, large cap funds, and international equity funds.
- Among these, the Guardian and large cap value funds primarily invest in stocks representing US-based companies with large market capitalization values.
 - In contrast, the International Equity fund invests in large capitalization stocks primarily in Europe and Japan.

- Fiscal year 2023 represented an improved year for performance in all three funds, with the endowment fund's value increasing by 11.3%.
- The December 31st closing net asset value was \$374,799.
- Unfortunately, due to the conservative nature of our Neuberger Berman North American funds, which represent approximately 90% of our endowment, they performed lower than the S&P market index for the year.
 - Our large cap value funds lagged the index by a significant 12 percentage points during the fiscal year.
- The recommended maximum withdrawal for the year is \$19,350, calculated based on the average of the mean net asset value of all investments combined for the most recent six years.
- The historic performance of the funds has exceeded expectations, with the endowment growing at a rate more than covering annual expenditures and far exceeding the minimum value established by EXCO.
- The committee is open to increasing the annual draw to an annual value of 9% to 10% per year for a defined period, given the expanded needs for education and publishing.
- It's strongly recommended to closely monitor the overall endowment value to ensure that annual distribution and expenditures do not exceed the fund's ability to provide long-term growth.
- Question: is it better to withdraw money even if we don't need it so that it's in liquid reserves, or should it be left in the endowment.
 - Answer: Unsure, but the trustees would like the endowment point to work hard for PSG.
 - Comment: When the endowment was created it was for publication expenses such as Marine Ornithology. So you can't take out money and reinvest it.
 - Comment: Could use the extra money to remove page charges from MO, support Pacific Seabirds – none of these charges should be coming out of the actual budget.
- Lifetime memberships might still be contributing to the endowment, which could be reconsidered to allocate elsewhere.
- The process for approving changes in withdrawal amounts involves 75% of ex Co's approval with the support of the trustees, who are currently supportive of the idea.

PROPOSAL TO CREATE A SECOND ENDOWMENT FUND – REPORT #5

- We have many applications for travel awards and membership awards, and that need is increasing every year.
- We are raising donations internally from our membership and then spending that money annually. There's no opportunity for it to accrue. So, we want to create a long-term funding source for travel awards and membership.
- The purpose of this endowment fund would be to support membership, registration, and travel expenses for students, early career scientists, international students, and indigenous scientists.
- Creating the endowment fund requires a majority vote from EXCO and agreement from three trustees on the investment approach. The Executive Council must also determine the purpose of the endowment fund.
- The requirements to create the endowment fund are surprisingly low.
 - We need to fund it initially.
 - We expect it to take several years to grow the fund.
 - We will specify a minimum amount to be reached within two years of its inception.
 - The maximum annual withdrawal can exceed 6% if we substantially exceed the minimum fund value specified within two years.

- The funds would be placed into the same accounts but tracked separately.
- Lifetime memberships are still going to the endowment fund. We can decide whether to continue that and where to allocate the funds.
- We have additional money in our general fund that could be contributed to the new endowment fund, but we need to be cautious as our operating expenses currently exceed our membership money.
- We can offer to match funds with the General Fund for internal fundraising to start the endowment fund.
- We may be able to get an external grant specifically for the creation or expansion of an endowment fund. Alternatively, if we receive a grant to cover travel funds for a year, we can redirect membership money to the endowment.
- No changes to our bylaws are needed to create a second endowment fund. We need a majority vote from EXCO to proceed.
- Question: National Science Foundation has a program suitable for funding scientists of underrepresented groups to attend meetings and conduct science projects. Can we take a grant and stick it in an endowment fund?
 - Answer: possibly
- Comment: Creating an endowment fund would provide long-term stability in meeting our greatest financial assistance requests for membership and travel.
 - We need to be strategic about where we allocate funds to meet the changing needs of PSG – can't have 5 endowment funds.
- Question: Is there any way we could just increase the percentage we're taking out of the current endowment? E.g. 6% for publications and 3 to 4% toward travel?
 - Creating two separate endowment funds would be easier to manage than one fund with multiple purposes.
- It's challenging to build an endowment without impacting current funding needs.
- Comment: Changing the purpose of the current endowment fund would require a membership vote. We need to be cautious about changing endowment purposes. If we make a motion, need to ensure the wording of the motion is specific and captures all necessary details.
 - Comment: Consider establishing a committee to ensure the motion captures all necessary details and avoids unintended consequences.
 - Response: A lot of discussion and planning have gone into this proposal behind the scenes, including input from multiple stakeholders.

Motion to create a new endowment fund in order to support PSG participation (such as by supporting membership costs and meeting expenses) for students, early career professionals, and groups underrepresented in PSG with the purpose, minimum value, and maximum annual withdrawal as specified in the proposal.

Moved and seconded.

Abstentions, 0; Nays, 0; Yes, 10, motion passed unanimously

PROPOSAL TO EXPAND THE PURPOSE OF THE PUBLICATION ENDOWMENT FUND – REPORT #6

- As we know, the value of the publication endowment is now around four times the \$100,000 baseline value specified in the handbook (but adjusted for inflation, it's twice that amount)
- Currently, we use the maximum withdrawal available for the operating budget of MO, the honoraria for staff of MO, and to cover additional publication costs incurred by PSG, including the website.

- We anticipate having leftover funds in some years due to lower expenses than the funds available.
- The bylaws stipulate that expenditures from the publication endowment must be used only for publication purposes. We propose to expand the purpose of the Publication Endowment Fund, but only for the portion of the maximum available withdrawal not needed for publication expenses, ensuring protection for our publication expenses.
- To enact this change, we need a majority vote of the Executive Council to initiate an amendment to the bylaws and then a majority vote of the membership to approve it.
- I am proposing the following change to the bylaws: If you go down to clause E, expenditures from the Publications Endowment Fund, determined by the trustees to be available for expenditure, must first be used for the production of Pacific Seabird Group sponsored publications, including marine Ornithology. Then, add that if the amount needed to sponsor publications is less than the amount available for expenditure in a given year, the remainder may be used to sponsor special projects defined in the handbook and approved by a majority vote of the Executive Council.
- For the handbook, I suggest adding a sentence: If expenses for publications in a given year are less than the maximum withdrawal available for the publication endowment fund, then the remaining amount may be used to support special projects approved by a majority of the Executive Council, which do not include operational expenses but should contribute to the conservation of seabirds or increasing participation in PSG.
- We've received feedback that our endowment is substantial, and some prefer funds to be utilized rather than solely added to the endowment.
- This change would allow us to allocate funds more effectively, potentially supporting projects like our EID committee.
- Question: Instead of creating a second fund, could we expand the current one to cover student participation and related expenses?
 - Answer: if we just have one big fund, publications will always be funded first, so we can't protect the other things we care about like increasing participating
- Comment: There might be legal implications to consider before modifying the restrictions on the current endowment fund.
 - California law requires court approval for modifying restrictions on endowments over \$100,000, but we might justify the modification based on unforeseen circumstances furthering the fund's purpose.
- COMMENT: Could seek legal advice from the Church Law Center which provides free aid to non-profit organizations.
- Comment: Perhaps we should postpone the vote until we gather more information and ensure legal compliance.
- Comment: Redirecting some funds to support other communications tools or publication-related expenses might align with the current purpose of the endowment.
- Comment: Publication costs continue to go down so we will need to address this at some point.
- Let's postpone the vote until the next meeting and aim to resolve the issue by then.

PROPOSAL TO CREATE TREASURER-ELECT POSITION – REPORT #7

- I would like to propose that we create a new EXCO member: the treasurer elect position.
- We currently have a treasurer managing funds, budgeting, accounting, invoicing, paying bills, dispersing awards, maintaining our 501c3 status, etc.

- We have hired a part-time financial manager, which has really helped us, specifically for managing transactions in QuickBooks.
 - That person will help us not miss deadlines and could assist us in maintaining our 501c3 status with the state of California.
- However, there are still many time-consuming and time-sensitive tasks with a steep learning curve, especially during the onboarding process.
- When we change signatory authority on the banks from the outgoing to the incoming treasurer, there's no overlap, so we have a period of up to three months where neither treasurer has a credit card and signing authority.
- This comes at a bad time, right at the end of meetings when we have many bills to pay.
- We have a second signatory on the account, generally one of the chairs, but they have limited time and are not as involved in finance, making us vulnerable.
- We're suggesting creating a treasurer elect position that would start in 2025. So the Treasurer position would now be a 3-year commitment.
- The person would then automatically move to the two-year treasurer position, similar to the chairs' rotation.
- In odd years, we would have a full year of overlap between the Treasurer and Treasurer elect, allowing the elect to become a signer and familiarize themselves with all accounts.
- Once in February, the Treasurer is taken off the accounts.
- This change requires an amendment to the bylaws, needing a majority vote from the EXCO to initiate and a majority vote from the membership to approve.
- This might impact the quorum, but only in odd years.
- The bylaws would state that the EXCO would consist of six or seven officers in odd years.
- Every mention of treasurer elect would be in odd years.
- I propose adding clause H that the treasurer elect is elected for a term of approximately one year in odd-numbered years and shares the responsibilities of the Treasurer. The Treasurer elect succeeds to the office of Treasurer without further election by the membership upon the completion of the Treasurer's term of office.
- Question: could we make the treasurer elect a non-voting EXCO member until assuming the treasurer role, reducing the added complication with quorum numbers.
 - Answer: possibly, but they might need to be a voting member to have signatory authority and be covered by our insurance.
- Question: Does this force a treasurer out after 2 years? Sometimes we've had treasurer's stay on for many terms.
 - Answer: No, they would just run again and we wouldn't have a treasurer-elect. If the Treasurer wants to run again, they may serve four years as Treasurer and one year as treasurer elect.

Motion to create a treasurer-elect position within the PSG ExCo as specified in the proposal. Voting or non-voting status to be determined pending questions about insurance coverage.

Moved and seconded.

Abstentions, 0; Nays, 0; Yes, 10, motion passed unanimously

PROPOSAL TO COMBINE TRAVEL AND MEMBERSHIP ACCOUNTS – REPORT #8

- The number of travel and membership award categories and their overlap has increased in recent years.
- Managing these multiple restricted funds has become increasingly time-consuming for the treasurer and awards committee.
- Current restricted accounts include student and early career scientist membership and registration, student travel awards (US and Canada, international), international travel awards (non-US, non-Canada), ECS travel and registration, and corresponding international memberships.
- Donations are also received for specific purposes, leading to multiple restricted buckets.
- Some categories like International Travel Awards and corresponding members lack specific fundraising efforts and are consistently underfunded.
- Proposal is to create a single account for travel and registration funds.
- Funds would be split among groups with the following suggested increments to start with: students (40%), ECS (25%), international researchers (25%), and indigenous speaker travel (10%), with 10% for membership of all categories.
- We would have a single application for all of these awards at the silent auction. Proceeds would all go to this travel fund.
- This would simplify the application process and fundraising efforts.
- Existing donations will be allocated according to their initial intents.
- Question: This would mean that the HELPS committee is absorbed. Maybe we just have an awards committee that deals with registration and travel.
- Comment: It doesn't help PSG to have people fundraise separately for all of these needs. Should be a single pot.
- Comment: This might involve some reorganization of the EID, HELPS, Corresponding Members, and awards committees
- Comment: It would be nice to see a timeline to review the percentage designations, because I could see the proportions of need changing over time. Would be good to have an annual or biannual review of that.
- Question: What are the criteria for deciding the percentages? Number of applications, amount of money requested, or something else?
- Question: If we decided to deviate from those suggested distributions, would that effect the eventual distributions from the new endowment fund, because they would go into this spending fund?
- Comment: Would be good to have a certain amount of flexibility in the percentages.
- Comment: Need to also consider that may have 50 applications from students and only 1 from another group, so percentages might not be the best way to think about it.
- Question: Are these proposals based on merit as well or just need?
 - Answer: Both
- Question: do people self-identify in these categories?
 - Answer: Yes

Motion to create a single account to support travel and membership awards as specified in the proposal.

Moved and seconded.

Abstentions, 0; Nays, 0; Yes, 10, motion passed unanimously

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT – REPORT #10

- Our biggest change this year was that we were able to revamp and relaunch Pacific seabirds all online.
 - There was a big group of people who worked on an ad hoc committee to help figure out what we were going to change it to
 - We also have a new Pacific seabirds editing committee that got the first issue out in November.
 - This also revamped how we receive and publish regional reports. The spring issue will be the first regional reports issue, and we're just going to see how this new process goes.
 - Regional reports used to go to the regional reps, and the regional reps would compile based on very specific outlines and then submit to us.
 - This would kind of remove the regional reps from that responsibility, but we're still going to be relying heavily on the regional reps for requesting the various reports and making sure that they have a lot of information coming from the regions.
- We worked really closely with the Membership Committee, Local Committee, and ExCo to get everything related to the meeting on Wild Apricot. W
 - We assisted with abstract submission registration
- We're continuing to keep our comprehensive Communications Committee handbook up to date with the goal of that being like the landing place for future Communications Committee members or Co-chairs.
- We supported some of the PSG HELPS webinars about federal employment that were very well attended by hundreds of people.
- We had a couple of committee changes: Katelyn Gulley joined the Facebook team, Kamyra Patel joined our X team (formerly Twitter). We have Lila Marie Bowen, Lara Brenner, Amelia Duval, and Sharon Thompson as the editing committee now along with myself and Wieteke.
 - We're going to get started after this on issue two of the new Pacific Seabirds
- We are still looking for volunteers, particularly for Twitter.
- The big thing we'll be working on this year is a transition for the PSG listserv.
 - We saw in the budget that the listserv costs have gone up substantially, and Verena is stepping down.
 - We're going to potentially use Google Groups as the new listserv platform.
- We're also hoping to continue to grow and coordinate the use of PSG Slack for various needs.
 - Amelia has moved a lot of communications for the Washington, Oregon region on Slack, so there's a channel for anybody interested in chatting there.
- Myself and Wieteke finish our terms after the next meeting and are going to officially not sign on for another two years. If you know anybody who wants to work with communications, send them our way.
- We want to increase how we use Pacific seabirds as a tool for ExCo membership.
 - We would love to look back at how Pacific Seabirds was used before, where people would share reviews of books, opinion pieces, or reviews of field gear, and submit content to us so we can publish it and share with other people.
 - If you have any ideas, we would love to see them.
- We're going to try to do some live tweeting and other social media communications during the annual meeting.
- We're also going to be doing a full website-wide update following this meeting.
- In the last two years we have added the seabird labs tab and the Jobs Board.

- Question: How close are we to making a decision about moving the listserv from Bluehost? Because we have to decide by the 25th of February, which is when we get billed.
 - Answer: We have decided to move away from our current platform. The decision of where to move it wasn't finalized so we can finalize that quickly by the 25th. But for now we're going with Google.

HELPS COMMITTEE UPDATE – REPORT #13

- We had 15 sponsored memberships this year, totaling over 90 sponsored memberships since the program began in fall 2020, split roughly 50/50 between students and early career scientists.
- This year, we expanded the committee and put out a call for new volunteers. Sonya Pastran stepped up as my new Co-Chair a few months ago, and Emily Reynolds, who recently joined the committee, agreed to also step up as Co-Chair after this meeting. I'm really excited to have them take on these roles, and I'll stay on the committee to help out.
- Fundraising-wise, thanks to everyone who's been pushing the conversation forward about how to streamline donations and further support early career scientists and students. We've put out calls for donations, but it's hard to maintain that donation stream when there are many areas people can donate to within PSG.
- We hosted the USA Jobs webinar in early January with over 400 registered attendees.
- We're hoping to expand our programming over the next year, with new committee members suggesting other ways to support early career scientists and students within PSG.

LONG-TERM ARCHIVING OF HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS – REPORT #9

- When I assumed the position of Secretary, I received a trove of documents dating back to the mid-20th century.
- Primarily, these documents contain membership rolls for PSG, along with some correspondence related to the formation of the group, which is quite interesting.
- Some documents contain personal information such as people's addresses. I inherited these documents from the previous secretary, who I believe received them from a previous chair.
- I'd like to start a conversation about a more sustainable way to ensure their preservation.
- Perhaps not all documents need to be archived, but some may be deemed necessary. I noticed a mention of long-term documentation being stored at the Museum of Western Vertebrate Zoology in Camarillo.
- If anyone has information on how to proceed with that, please let me know. I'll leave this topic open for discussion, especially for those with more historical context within PSG.
- COMMENT: We now have a Google Drive folder for archival documents. People can scan and upload documents there, and there's a submissions folder. Eventually, these documents can be moved to permanent storage on Google Drive.
 - Response: That's a great idea. It provides accessibility while also preserving physical copies, especially for documents containing personal information. Some documents may not be suitable for the Google Drive folder due to privacy concerns, but others could be archived there.

LOCO COMMITTEE UPDATE – REPORT #16

- As of last week, we were up to 285 registered attendees, exceeding the 262 reported earlier.
- We raised \$31,200 for conference-specific sponsorships, and an additional \$8,000 was secured for student travel by the local committee.
- Our silent auction has about 80 items and will open tomorrow morning. We're closing on silent auction donations, but people can still bring items. One notable donation is a large block of cheese weighing 8 lbs.
- We have T-shirts available, with only a few extras left to sell, as most attendees are picking them up. Additionally, we have stickers and pins available.
- The last count for banquet tickets is 102. Though we refer to it as a banquet, it's just a dessert bar since the conference technically ends at 3:30 PM. There's plenty of time before the conservation meeting opening at 6:30 PM for attendees to have dinner.
- All field trip registrations are closed. We have a small group going to the aquarium on Saturday, approximately 30 on the bird-watching tour, and around 14 on the Burke Tour.
- Question: Last year Nacho in San Diego secured some extra money to get Justine an additional gift for her work. Beth, Jackie, and I are willing to find an extra gift for her, but I need guidance on the price range and funding source. Could we discuss a post-meeting bonus approved by the EXCO later, or should we pool personal donations to support her?
- **Action Item: LoCo committee will determine if there is budget available to provide Justine with another bonus this year.**

ACAP DELEGATE UPDATE – REPORT #2N

- ACAP is a multilateral agreement, like a treaty, established to achieve favorable conservation status for 31 species of procellariiform seabirds listed on Annex I of the agreement.
- It has been in effect for 20 years and has facilitated coordination and information sharing between nations, significantly improving conservation status for several species.
- ACAP focuses on coordinating international activities to mitigate threats such as fisheries interactions, invasive species, climate change, light pollution, and contaminants.
- The organization comprises diplomats representing member nations, who convene every three years for a meeting of the parties. While the US isn't a member, it actively participates, along with other nations like Canada.
- PSG members often contribute as technical experts in working groups, which make recommendations to the Advisory Committee for formalization.
- ACAP engages in international efforts such as attending regional fisheries management organization meetings to protect albatrosses and petrels.
- Question: Why is the US not an ACAP member?
 - Despite recommendations from several administrations, the US has not ratified its membership due to the financial and legal commitments it entails.
 - Other nations like Canada and Japan also haven't joined yet due to similar concerns.
 - ACAP's formal international agreement status necessitates governmental commitments, which may pose challenges for some nations.
- I encourage you to visit the ACAP website, an invaluable resource for information and best practices. It may serve as a model for international cooperation in seabird conservation.

PICES DELEGATE UPDATE – REPORT #2O

- PICES stands for the Pacific version of ICES, the International Convention for the Exploration of the Seas, originally centered over the North Atlantic. PICES evolved into the North Pacific Marine Science Organization (NPMSCO), though we still refer to it as PICES.
- It's an organization comprising the five countries surrounding the North Pacific, integrating science and conservation efforts across the region. PICES fosters collaboration across various disciplines, including climate science, marine biology, and fisheries management. Pisces initiatives offer comprehensive solutions to common problems in the North Pacific.
- The next annual meeting will be held from October 26th to November 1st in Honolulu, with the theme "Science for Sustainability 2030."
- Last year's meeting, a hybrid event held in Seattle, included a topic session on climate change discussing anticipated and realized effects on predatory fish, birds, and mammals. We also held a workshop on using bioindicators for marine pollution. Summary reports of these sessions are available on the Pisces website.
- For the upcoming meeting in Hawaii, we are planning another topic session on the social, economic, and ecological implications of marine species' recoveries and range expansions. Additionally, Bill Sydeman will lead a workshop on puffin diet samples as indicators of forage availability and community structuring in marine ecosystems.
- We aim to examine decadal changes in species distribution and their implications, including social and economic consequences.
- We'll continue discussions on these topics, and presentations will be made available online and in future reports.

WSU DELEGATE UPDATE – REPORT #2Q

- The WSU has confirmed their next meeting dates: September 7th through the 11th, 2026. For those unaware, WSU organizes the World Seabird Conference, a significant event.
- Unfortunately, the previous meeting had to shift to a virtual platform. However, the organizers have agreed to host the upcoming meeting in Hobart, Tasmania.
- A new website for WSU is in development.
- Lindsay Young, the chair, couldn't attend today but wishes to discuss the possibility of the 2026 WSU meeting being a joint event with PSG before EXCO at an upcoming meeting.
- COMMENT: The previous conference in Victoria essentially functioned as a PSG meeting, as the World Seabird Conference hadn't formed yet. It ended up as a joint meeting, but financial issues caused complications for PSG. PSG also co-sponsored the conference in South Africa, providing seed money from leftover funds from the Victoria conference.
- **Mark will coordinate with Lindsay and they can prepare a report for discussion at a future EXCO meeting.**

OC DELEGATE ANNUAL UPDATE – REPORT #2R

- Doug and Pat have been the delegates for 30 years. We've been trying to recruit new members for the OC and have been posting information on the listserv to raise awareness.
- Despite losing some funding from AOU and other organizations, OC remains an organization of eight scientific societies with increasing numbers of supporting members.
- The significant accomplishments this year include releasing the 4th edition of guidelines for the use of wild birds in research, which serves as a valuable resource for research proposals involving wild birds.

- OC also took over a portion of the Ornithological Exchange, ensuring it continues to operate despite funding changes.
- The funding breakdown shows PSG contributing \$5000, equivalent to about 11% of the total funding.
- There was a discussion about possibly reverting to the previous contribution level of \$2000, as the increase to \$5000 was initially intended for only one year.
- COMMENT: any decision to maintain the current contribution level should be officially voted on by EXCO to ensure it's recorded as a deliberate decision. The issue is that the initial decision to increase the contribution was considered temporary but has continued without formal reevaluation.
- COMMENT: Would be great to maintain the \$5000 contribution level to align with inflation adjustments and the contributions of other organizations.

REVIEW OF NEW ACTION ITEMS

Eight new action items from this meeting:

- Everyone should help recruit more volunteers for the elections committee
- Treasurers and chairs will investigate legal ramifications of changing purpose of the publication's endowment.
- Treasurers will investigate whether non-voting members of ExCo can be covered by our insurance.
- Everyone should help recruit volunteers to help the Communications Committee with Twitter and other social platforms, as well as new co-leads for the committee
- Comms committee will move the listserv to Google Groups by February 25th
- LoCo will investigate if there's room in the budget for a bonus for Justine
- Lindsay Young will submit a report to discuss a joint meeting between WSU and PSG in the future
- Doug will submit a proposal to permanently increase PSG's contribution to OC to \$5000

Two action items carried over from last meeting:

- Treasurers will begin the process of creating document retention and reimbursement policies
- Board of Trustees will review and update the investment policy