

Field Naturalist and Ecological Planning Alumni Association
Board of Directors First Quarterly Meeting

Thursday, September 7, 2-4pm
Jeffords 326, University of Vermont

Hannah Phillips, Chair

Sean Beckett, Secretary/Treasurer

Lydia Menendez-Parker, Alumni Representative

Lauren Sopher, Current Student Representative

Jeffrey Hughes, Faculty Representative

Agenda:

2:00-2:45p: *Vision*

2:00-2:15p: Review Mission & Vision Statement

- *Discussed the steps we've already taken to further the mission and objectives of the FNEPAA, including building our digital presence, migrating and revitalizing ecoblog, and making ongoing updates to our alumni contact database.*
- *Discussed possibility of using FNEPAA communication channels to disseminate job postings that Jeff or member organizations are receiving/advertising. Agreed that actively searching for job postings is beyond the capacity and goals of the FNEPAA at this point, but we will share job postings as part of our communication strategy as we develop it.*

2:15-2:30p: Discuss-- *"In what ways can the FNEP-AA support FNEP Alumni?"*

- *The greater the FNEP presence (at UVM and professionally), the better. FNEPAA can increase reputation, prestige, and "brand" of the program. FNEPAA can work towards banners, table covers, business cards, and other promotional materials for use at professional conferences and others.*
- *While the FNEP Program will require double-branding with UVM logo, the FNEPAA will craft a logo that can serve FNEP and FNEPAA.*
- *There is a need to carefully address how FNEPAA intends to advocate for the FNEP Program to UVM, as well as in the professional landscape.*

Discussed opportunities for a 2018 FNEPAA Symposium:

- *Agreed that the Northeast Natural History Conference in April will be an ideal opportunity to harness for an FNEP reunion and alumni activities. We want to capture the "magic" of last year's symposium in the alumni events associated with this conference.*
- *We officially agreed to co-sponsor the conference to the extent of Bryan Pfeiffer's communications (organizing workshops, speaker sessions, field trips, etc.).*
- *Current FNEP Students will be relied upon to accomplish a large part of this organization, with FNEPAA Board of Directors overseeing this.*
- *Discussed possibility of crafting a FNEP session into the schedule, and using the first day of the conference (Friday) as an opportunity to have FNEP alumni lead field trips/workshops.*
- *We will seek registration discount for FNEP alumni as compensation for sponsoring the event.*

- We intend to have FNEP/FNEPAA logo prepared in time for the Conference publication deadlines, and other promotional materials prepared in time for the conference itself.

2:30-2:45p: Discuss-- “In what ways can the FNEP-AA support the Program” (Jeff)

The overall goal is to raise the profile of the FNEP program as much as possible. This may include:

- Increasing recruitment, and leveraging alumni to help do this. The more applicants to the program, the better.
- Seeking advertising partnerships with Historic Preservation and Matt Kolan’s M.S.L.S program, and resuscitating the “Conservation Leadership” umbrella title. A goal is to design pamphlets that reflect each program individually, and side-by-side in a tri-fold pamphlet, etc.
- Seeking student sponsorship from companies like Orvis, LLBean, Ben & Jerrys, Patagonia, Seventh Generation, Write in the Rain, Arborwear, Forestry Supplies, etc.
- Identifying relevant conferences and creating a plan for supporting student attendance and FNEP/FNEPAA presence at these. This also includes identifying alumni who reside near conference locations and creating a guest lodging plan.

2:45-3:00p: Discuss-- “In what ways can the FNEP-AA support current students in the Program?” (Lauren)

- Students would like FNEPAA to clarify what “Professional Development Opportunities” entail. Discussed historic precedent for Grad College and CALS to provide \$200-300 for conference attendance in instances where students are presenting. If not presenting, FNEPAA or FNEP Program would like to commit to providing funding for students to attend in return for representing the FNEP Program with promotional materials at the conference.
- Students would like free membership to FNEPAA while enrolled, and for 1 year following graduation. The FNEPAA supports this request.
- Students would like a more robust system for connecting students with sponsors and alumni: for instance, a column in the database that indicates the alum’s project sponsor. This will now be included in our work to further develop the alumni database.
- FNEPAA should have a presence at the New Student Orientation day.
- Discussed how Friday Field Walks will be hosted moving forward. FNEPAA is interested in having the walks advertised on the FNEPAA website and social media channels. FNEPAA is interested in sponsoring/designing one of the walks, but will leave the FFW series up to the current students as usual. Agreed that there is a huge potential to leverage alumni to provide field walk events to FNEPAA members in the future.

3:00-3:15p: Identify goals for Year 1 of the FNEP-AA

TO DO before FNEPAA meeting:

- Logo – Lauren will create a document to put ideas for logo designs elements, phrases, etc. Give to Lauren by Friday, 9/15.
- Information Pamphlet – Jeff will create a “one-pager” draft for the FNEP Program. We will use the same document that Lauren creates to place ideas and contributions to this informational material. Send Jeff buzzwords by 9/15; Jeff will complete final draft by 9/22.

- *Northeastern Natural History Conference – Hannah will confirm our co-sponsoring of Northeast Natural History Conference.*
- *Conferences – Lydia will create a document for all to contribute relevant conferences and meetings that FNEPAA and the FNEP Program will prioritize. This list will ideally be populated with 30 events by October 1st.*
- *Student Membership – Lauren will communicate with current students that membership fees for current FNEP students will be waived until 1 year post-graduation.*
- *Contacts – Hannah and Lydia will work on populating and polishing the alumni database. All FNEPAA board members will reach out to their respective alumni contacts via social media.*
- *Email – Sean will create an email address for FNEPAA.*

These items are all precursors to our goal of using the next FNEPAA board meeting to plan an official first communication and announcements to alumni and prospective members.

To be accomplished by the end of the academic year

- *Announcement and communication with alumni.*
- *Co-hosting of Northeastern Natural History Conference*
- *Create framework for addressing fundraising and advocacy moving forward.*
- *Create payment system to accept alumni membership fees and other finances.*
- *Create promotional materials to represent FNEP Program and FNEPAA.*
- *Add two additional members to the FNEPAA board of directors.*

2:45-3:15p: Action

- Discuss: What will it take to achieve the goals outlined in the first part of the meeting?

See above agenda item

- Identify actions steps, timeline, and responsible parties

See above agenda item

- Discuss project management platform

tabled until next meeting

3:30-3:45p: Bylaw Review & Ratification

- Discuss edits to bylaws
- Review Officer positions
- If ready, ratify bylaws

Agreed to table edits and ratification until next meeting. Board members will make suggestions and changes to the bylaws electronically between now and then.

3:45-4:00p: Other business

None

4:00p: Adjourn

Adjourned at 4:05 PM

What we said we'd do:

- ① Host Symposium / gatherings for others
 - ✓ FNEP gatherings elsewhere
 - ✓ Digital presence add project
 - ~ Alumni database project sponsors
- ② Scholarships
 - ~ Cultivate relationships w/ orgs
- ③ ~ Ecoblog
 - ~ host events
- ④ ~ connect projects to program
 - ~ solicit RFPs

Ways that we can support alumni:

Job board → communication
Reputation, prestige, "brand" 
informational/promotional material

- ~ table cover
- ~ business cards
- ~ pamphlet
- ~ 2 versions
- ~ conference attendance

To Do:

- * logo (LS)
- email (SB)
- confirm NENHC (HP)
- 1 pg pamphlet (Jefé) - bio/words - 9/15 → 7/22
- alumni list - Facebook/LinkedIn - (HP)
- current student (LS) membership (LS)
- conference list (LM) Oct 1-30
- promotional materials (HP)
- table cover
- business cards
- payment system (SB)

Within year:

- ~ Announcement Alumni available
- ~ Conference
- ~ Recruit 3rd board members
- ~ Contact 3 businesses
- ~ Conversations about ① Advocacy

Support the Program

① Advocacy

② Promotion

③ Alumni as recruiters

④ Schwag

- Tshirt competition

⑤ Business Sponsorships for students

- Orvis - DGE - Sun Trust
- Ben & Jerry's - TIAA - Ben & Jerry's
- Patagonia - L.L.Bean - L.L.Bean
- Archean -
- Finsbury -

⑥ Jobs to support AA for current students