

THE BIOGEOGRAPHER

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BSG Executive Board

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President's Column

While hiking to a field site, you cross paths with a large, aggressive bear. It really scares you, but the field crew leader wants to continue...



Some of my best field stories involve a "near miss" that, luckily, did not become a serious emergency. Although amusing, many of these field stories include an element of risk that could easily have been prevented had I developed a safety plan before conducting my research.

Recognizing that safety is a key element of successful and efficient research, the UBC grad students initiated a process for ensuring all students have developed a safety plan before conducting their field work. Plans are tailored to individual needs and are unique to the environment and the activities of each research project. To assist students in preparing their plans, we have developed a "*Better Safe than Sorry*" workshop during which we discuss "field scenarios" (like the aggressive bear situation) to identify potential problems, discuss safe reactions, and develop proactive responses to reduce risk during field work. The following list identifies many (but not all) factors to consider when planning safe field work. I welcome your comments and additions to it (send me an email: daniels@geog.ubc.ca).

Finally, it has been my pleasure to serve as the BSG president for the past two years. Welcome to Lesley Rigg, our new president, and best wishes to all biogeographers for a successful and safe field season!

---Lori Daniels, BSG President 2007-9

Better Safe than Sorry: Steps towards safe and successful research in physical geography

1. Field Team

People - how many field assistants to meet your goals? for safety? to be cost effective?
Skills and training - required basic skill set, training for specialized research skills
- Safety training is an opportunity for team building

2. Identifying Risks and Hazards

a. Travelling to your study area and accessing study sites

Vehicles - rentals, insurance, maintenance, use of personal vehicle
- student drivers and responsibilities (do all team members have a license?)
Logging roads - access, etiquette, radios - general and emergency communications
Access by hiking - access on marked trails, off-trails, appropriate equipment
Access by skiing - snow conditions, avalanche risk, emergency beacons
Access by helicopter - required safety briefing, distribution/transport of equipment
Access by ATV - license or training, safety equipment, emergency response on the water, proper transport/storage of ATV and trailer
Access by boat - required operator's license, standard safety equipment, emergency response on the water, proper transport/storage of boat and trailer

b. Biological hazards

Plants, food, insects (bites, stings) - first aid supplies, epi-pen, topical/oral medication
Wildlife - bears (black, grizzly, polar), wolves, cougars - training, group strategy, bear spray, bear bangers/horns, rifle (certification, operation training, transport)

c. Physical hazards

Highly variable among projects and requires substantive forethought

- slope stability; avalanche risk; water hazards and flooding; hiking on/off trail, long distances, steep terrain; adverse weather, lightning; danger trees and windthrow; equipment use (boats, ATVs, chainsaws etc) etc.

Abatement - equipment, preparations and plans, exit strategy, emergency response plan

3. Safety Equipment

First Aid - basic kit, epi-pen, topical/oral medications, treatment of blisters and other foot injuries, insect repellent, sun screen

Vehicles- road side safety equipment, spare tire, repair kit

- maps of study area, roads, location and access to local hospitals

Communications - phones (cellular or satellite), radios, other devices

Basic day-pack requirements - food, water, clothing, other

Long-term equipment needs - provide a required/recommended list for field assistants

4. Communications During Research

Scheduled updates - by phone or email on a regular schedule

- Depending on your research, this may be daily, weekly, monthly
- Options for communication - check-in service, satellite phone, orange spot

Missed updates - what steps are taken if you do not check in?

- When should we start looking for you? 1-2 hours overdue? 1-2 days overdue? 3-5 days overdue? >5 days overdue?
- How and where do we look for you? With whom have you provided your schedule and places you planned to conduct your research? (e.g., local contact, family or friend, or both)

5. Emergency Contacts

Who must be contacted? Under what circumstances?

Who do you want contacted in the case of an emergency involving you?

Who do you contact if one of your field assistants is involved in an emergency?

How? Register names, phone numbers and emails of your emergency contacts with the appropriate person (local collaborator, your supervisor etc)

6. Leadership

Role as team leader - communications, inclusive/exclusive behaviours

Power relationships - identify the strengths and weaknesses of your team members, apply the principle of the "common denominator", listen to your field team, develop strategies for group decision-making, gender awareness

Field accommodation - length of field season and living arrangements, defining and dividing tasks (household versus field), personal time and space

7. Managing Self-Expectations

Research timelines and delays

- be prepared for inevitable unanticipated difficulties and delays

Flexibility and feedback

- know that few research projects go exactly as proposed and you must be flexible (prepare plan A, B, C etc)
- prioritize work tasks so that the core research is accomplished and additional components are completed as time/opportunity allows
- schedule an opportunity to get feedback from your supervisor during the first third of your research time to ensure that you are on track and they understand/agree with the changes you have had to make to meet your research goals

Time off

- self awareness, time off when it is needed to stay healthy and avoid burn-out

8. Travelling to Research Sites Overseas

Your Nation's Embassy

- location, access by phone or email
- registering and updating as your plans change

Logistics

- visas, passports, permits, insurance - plan in advance and have low expectations of bureaucracies and timely responses
- money - cash, currencies, credit cards, access to additional funds
- Local contacts or "fixer" = individual or organization such as an NGO or University who assists with local logistics, security and paperwork

Health concerns

- medical insurance and documentation to take with you
- vaccinations - timing, types, options, follow-up, documentation
- symptoms/prevention/treatment of common ailments (cold/flu to water-borne diseases) - be prepared with your own medications and advice from your doctor
- do you have a first aid kit and are you trained in basic first aid

Political stability and advisories

- registering with your embassy
- be aware of your government's policies
 - how do you learn of and respond to new advisories as issued
 - repercussions if you do not to adhere to advisory warnings

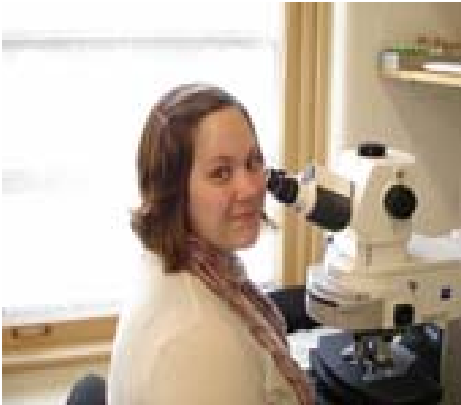
Risk of kidnapping/political instability

- realistic risk assessment
- worst-case scenario: line of communications with supervisor and family, how to ask for support from your government

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Graduate Student Representative Column

Biogeography in the Field: A Panel Discussion for Grad Students and Early Career Biogeographers (AAG Meeting, Las Vegas)



In the Northern Hemisphere, spring is quickly giving way to summer. For many of us, that means that when we're not busy throwing the barbecues, playing Ultimate Frisbee, or taking kayaking trips, we're in the field. Fieldwork can be a challenging aspect of graduate school (or even early professional research), and it can take years of trial and error to develop the skills for a successful season. Luckily, at the 2009 AAG meetings in Las Vegas, we had the opportunity to hear from a panel of true field experts, who shared their stories, advice, words of caution, and encouragement.

First, a heartfelt thanks goes out to our panelists, who were willing to share their experiences with us: Sally Horn (University of Tennessee), David Butler (Texas State University – San Marcos), Thomas Minckley (University of Wyoming), Carol Campbell (New Mexico State University) and Kim Diver (Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute). Our experts brought a broad suite of skill sets and experience, including work with animals, plants, and paleoenvironmental proxies, in settings that range from federal lands to remote international sites. Below, I have attempted to summarize the wealth of information shared at the panel.

Health: Make sure your crew knows in advance about health risks, and how you plan to prepare for those in the field (whether that means abstaining from salad greens when the water is of questionable quality, or carrying the emergency backpack into the field every day). Have a clear, firm policy about alcohol. Know and respect local customs. Prepare your workers for success by providing (or requiring) proper hydration gear and sun protection. Make sure you know about any health conditions or allergies (hypoglycemia, diabetes), and know the warning signs. Be aware of the symptoms of altitude sickness, and know how to treat it if necessary.

Morale: Feed your workers well! Don't try to skimp on food to save money, especially on long excursions. Organize break times, and schedule time off if working for many days in a row. Be sensitive to crew dynamics early on, and try to prevent large problems later by dealing with them right away. Even if you don't like confrontation, remember that it's your responsibility as the team leader to make sure the group functions well, and while everyone might not get along, people need to work together. Find ways to have fun, but not *too* much fun – remember that you still have a job to do in the morning.

Success: When organizing a field team, be honest and upfront about what your expectations are, and hold firmly to those. Remember that your team may not care as much about your project as you do, so it's critical to build a good group of hard-working, responsible individuals, especially if you're investing a lot of time and money in getting them to the field (i.e. international work). Have good language skills in the regions you'll be working in, if working overseas. Be prepared for things to go wrong, and have a backup plan (i.e., don't rely on one piece of equipment that could break and ruin the entire trip). Check, double-check, and triple-check one another for necessary gear, both when you leave *and* when you come home each night: build redundancies into your routines. Make sure every member of the team knows his or her role and expectations clearly. Organize your data and keep it safe! Make sure the person taking notes has legible handwriting.

Logistics: Know and respect all laws, permit requirements, and regulations. Apply for permits early, especially if transporting materials across borders. Federal lands (National Parks, etc.) require a lot of special permit work, so find out about those well in advance of your project. Ask for permission before working on private property. If working internationally, find out what the regulations are and which permits are required – don't assume that being an ignorant outsider will bail you out (language skills come in handy here as well). Learn how to use specialized equipment *before* you go into the field, and have a backup. Prepare for vehicle failures in remote conditions.

These were just a few of the concepts covered in the panel discussion; feel free to use the BSG Student List-Serv to continue the conversation (e-mail Chad Lane at chad.lane @ lawrence .edu if you haven't joined yet).

It's been a privilege to be the student representative to the BSG specialty group! Please join me in welcoming Stockton Maxwell (West Virginia University) to the committee as next year's representative. We had a productive discussion at the BSG business meeting about future panel discussion topics, including advocacy and ethics, publishing, active learning, working with the media, and teaching in the field. Please feel free to suggest more topics to either me (jlgill @ wisc .edu) to pass along or to Stockton (rmaxwell @ mix.wvu.edu) himself. Thanks again, and have a wonderful field season!

-- Jacquelyn Gill, BSG Graduate Student Representative 2008-9

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Awards

2009 James J. Parsons Award for Distinguished Career in Biogeography



Dr. William (Bill) Baker (University of Wyoming) is the recipient of the 2009 James J. Parsons Distinguished Career Award.

Bill is a landscape ecologist and biogeographer who has made and is still making an outstanding contribution to our understanding of disturbances and landscapes. A recent search on Research ID cited 67 publications that were authored or coauthored by Bill. His research has tremendous impacts on not only the field, but many practicing academic biogeographers and professional ecologists.

Parsons Award Nominating Letter (*full letter published with permission from author*):

I am writing this letter to nominate William Baker for the James J. Parsons Distinguished Career Award. I served as Bill's masters student in the 1990's and published several papers with him shortly thereafter. I have known Bill for more than a decade as I have continued to read his papers, share my proposals and manuscripts with him and look to him for support and guidance. Bill is without a doubt, imminently qualified to receive this award. Bill has published two books and more than 65 papers. He has advised numerous graduate students, many of whom are now themselves advising students. All of this he has done in a department without a PhD program and with a late start too (I think he was a botanist or maybe worked for Earth First! before he started his PhD – there are lots of rumors).

To write this letter, I of course prepared myself by visiting Bill's website. I have not looked at it for some time and I suddenly realized that I should probably be checking it monthly. His current level of productivity is frankly astounding given his career stage and I am overwhelmed by the amount of catch up reading I need to do, just on the topics he has published in my own research area, not to mention his other areas of interest.

Bill's contributions to biogeography as a discipline have been deep, broad, and influential. He literally changed the scale of research and management in ecology by defining the areas required to maintain natural processes such as landscape scale disturbance. His 1989 paper in Ecology on natural disturbance in the Boundary Waters of Minnesota has become required reading for anyone in disturbance ecology, landscape ecology, biogeography, reserve design or conservation. Bill wisely built on this work with several papers on large-scale disturbance – a topic that has nearly become a discipline unto itself. Bill's continued work on large-scale disturbance has encouraged land managers and planners to consider the grain and extent of processes like wildfire, wind and floods when planning nature reserves. This perspective lives on today in the work of many organizations and agencies such The Nature Conservancy, Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative, and many others.

In addition to his largely theoretical work on large-scale disturbance and reserve design, Bill has also made significant and highly controversial contributions to our understanding of fire ecology in the Rocky Mountains. He has worked on historical fire regimes throughout Colorado, Wyoming and South Dakota where he has argued that historical fire regimes may have been much more volatile and heterogeneous than previously thought. Though many of Bill's colleagues question his interpretations in this area, I strongly believe that Bill has made important contributions even if only by forcing other scientists to more carefully evaluate their methods and conclusions. In his new book, Fire in Rocky Mountain Landscapes (Island Press, expected 7/8/2009), Bill has made a case for a more hands off approach to managing fire in wilderness landscapes of the Rockies. I look forward to reading it.

Finally, Bill has made very large contributions to the methods applied in Landscape Ecology through his development of the R.le programs for calculating landscape metrics. He was an early adopter of GIS techniques for Landscape Ecology and much work has been furthered based on the foundations he laid with these programs. One of Bill's greatest strengths as a scientist is his willingness to tackle controversial questions that directly affect how natural areas are defined, perceived and managed. I think it is well known that Bill has tirelessly pursued scientific justification for a hands-off approach to wilderness management. In an era when human impacts on ecosystems are globally pervasive, it may seem at times that humans *must* intervene and "tend" ecosystem processes. Bill has resisted this notion and has instead encouraged all of us to hedge on the side of nature. By doing so, he has argued vociferously that wilderness persists, despite our best efforts as a species to regulate and control it.

While Bill might not attend AAG meetings east of the continental divide (!) and he may not be the most social animal, he has always been a fierce supporter of his graduate students, pushing us to our intellectual limits (I don't think I ever topped my publication record while I worked under him). Bill has been a tremendous role model for me personally. While my dissertation advisor taught me how to write a proposal, Bill taught me how to write a paper. I have him to thank for tenure!

To sum up, Bill has been an incredibly active and influential scientist in his short career. I would hate to condemn Bill by implying with an award like the Parson's that he is nearing the end of his career. This is by no means the case. What you can do on Web of Science is a bit scary and potentially meaningless, but in Bill's case it's just damn impressive. As of today, the 62 papers of Bill's I could find on WoS have been cited more than 1800 times, averaging more than 50 times per year (and I see several papers missing from this list). But what is most impressive is that the number of times his work has been cited and the number of papers he publishes per year are still going up (his work was cited more than 200 times last year)! Bill is in fact a "rising" star in our discipline. Beware: we might have to give this award to him again in another ten years.

Sincerely,
Amy E. Hessl, Associate Professor, Geography
West Virginia University

Henry Cowles Award for Excellence in Publication in Biogeography



David M. Cairns (*photo*), **Charles W. Lafon**, **John D. Waldron**, **Maria Tchakerian**, **Robert N. Coulson**, **Kier D. Klepzig**, **Andrew G. Birt**, and **Weimin Xi** were awarded the Henry Cowles Award for Excellence in Publication for their publication entitled "Simulating the reciprocal interaction of forest landscape structure and southern pine beetle herbivory using LANDIS" published in *Landscape Ecology* 23: 403-415 (2008).

Abstract:

The reciprocal interaction of landscape structure and ecological processes is a cornerstone of modern landscape ecology. We use a simulation model to show how landscape structure and herbivory interact to influence outbreaks of southern pine beetle (*Dendroctonus frontalis* Zimmermann) in a landscape representative of the southern Appalachian Mountains, USA. We use LANDIS and its biological disturbance agent module to simulate the effects of landscape composition (proportion of landscape in host area) and host aggregation on the size and severity of insect outbreaks and the persistence of the host species, Table Mountain Pine (*Pinus pungens* Lamb.). We find that landscape composition is less important in the modeled landscapes than host aggregation in structuring the severity of insect outbreaks. Also, simulated southern pine beetle outbreaks over time tend to decrease the aggregation of host species on the landscape by fragmenting large patches into smaller ones, thereby reducing the severity of future outbreaks. Persistence of Table Mountain pine decreases throughout all simulations regardless of landscape structure. The results of this study indicate that when considering alternative restoration strategies for insect-affected landscapes, it is necessary to consider the patterns of hosts on the landscape as well as the landscape composition.

-- Dave Butler, BSG board member and awards organizer

2009 Student Presentation Awards, National AAG Meeting, Las Vegas

This year's winners are of the 2009 student presentation awards are:



Evan Larson, Department of Geography, University of Minnesota
(Ph.D. competition: \$100)
“The relative roles of climate and fire suppression in driving whitebark pine forest structure.”



Joshua Wixom, Department of Geology and Geography, West Virginia University
(Masters/Undergraduate competition: \$100)
“Climatic, Edaphic, and Topographic Influences on the Radial Growth of Eastern Red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), Smoke Hole Canyon, West Virginia.”



Maria Caffrey, Department of Geography, University of Tennessee (Poster competition: \$50)
“A reconstruction of coastal paleoenvironmental change from Laguna Saladilla, Dominican Republic.”

We had 16 student presenters. The BSG thanks the judges for volunteering their time, as without them this competition could not occur. Thanks go to: Mathew Bekker, Chris Duvall, Sarah Finkelstein, Jim Hayes, Chad Lane, Travis Longcore, Scott Mensing, Jim Speer, Mark Welford, John Waldron and Susy Ziegler.

As you are aware this year was the first time we organized the competition into special sessions. The presentations were organized into a poster session and then 3 oral sessions. Requests for feedback during the BSG business meeting included the following comments on the current format and special session for the student paper competition:

- Coordinate with animal geography and paleoenvironmental change specialty groups to avoid overlap in the timing of these sessions
- Sessions were fairly well attended but an email sent out in advance announcing the competitors would ensure people did not miss the competition
- Honor students by putting the abstracts on line at BSG website
- Discussion about students competing in multiple specialty group competitions (grants and presentations):
 - Mixed opinions - spread the wealth or honor greatness
 - Similar problem with grant awards (but students now must identify current and pending support in their application)
 - Stay consistent with professional norms
 - Need to determine if there has been little/great overlap between grant competitions and discuss with other specialty groups

The BSG board would appreciate any feedback (positive or negative) regarding this new format. If you have comments please email them to me (mg254@cornell.edu).

-- Michelle Goman, BSG board member and student presentation awards coordinator

2009 Student Research Grant Awards

The Biogeography Specialty Group awards student research grants to a Masters and PhD student every year. The winners of the 2009 awards are:



William Flatley (Texas A.M University) Ph.D. competition \$1000 research grant for the proposal “Implications of an altered fire regime for forest dynamics along a topographic gradient in the southern Appalachian Mountains”



Yanan Li (University of Tennessee) Masters competition \$500 research grant for the proposal “The Impact of Oceanic-Atmospheric-Oscillations in the Southeastern United States from a Network of Tree-Ring Data”

The BSG board wishes to thank the reviewers who participated in this years grant competition: Karen Arabas, Mary Ann Cunningham, Gabriel Katz, Chad Lane, Kim Medley, Shelly Rayback, Valery Terwilliger, Jim Wanket, Susan Woodward and Stephen Yool. Without their help the BSG Student Research Grant competition could not have been completed.

-- Colin Long and Henri Grissino-Mayer, for the BSG Executive Board

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News

2009 BSG Board Elections

Thank you to all who were willing to serve on the BSG board and congratulations to the winners. The 2009 BSG board election results are:



Leslie Rigg (Northern Illinois University), President (2009-2011)

Lesley Rigg (Ph.D. University of Melbourne) is an Associate Professor, Department of Geography, Department of Biological Sciences, Women's Studies Associate, Northern Illinois University. My primary research interests are tree species population and regeneration dynamics. Current projects include; population dynamics in the boreal forest/deciduous forest ecotone in Lake Superior (Ontario, Canada) and range shifts associated with climate change (NSF funded); population ecology of *Araucaria laubenfelsii* associated with ultramafic soils in New Caledonia. I am dedicated to student mentorship and always include undergraduate and graduate students in research. I have published in regional, national, and international journals including; *Biotropica*, *Austral Ecology*, and co-edited (with A. Parker) a volume of *Physical Geography*. I have been active administratively on my campus including; Provosts Task Force on Student Success, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences Interdisciplinary Task Force, and the Provost working group on STEM. I was also an active member of the AAG committee on the Status of Women in Geography. As President of the BSG I would like to promote a greater international presence of our group. The mission of the BSG is to promote interactions between biogeographers, stimulate active research and teaching development in biogeography, and facilitate the exchange of ideas. At the most recent International Biogeography Society meeting, in Merida, Mexico, the opportunity for the exchange of ideas between the BSG and IBS was not as great as it could have been. While we are a strong and vibrant group within Geography and Ecology, we stand to gain from an even greater exchange of ideas. I would like to work towards a strong and formal showing of biogeographers from the BSG at the next IBS meeting in Crete, Greece, January 2011. As Geographers we are familiar with intra- and interdisciplinary work, and our ability to create knowledge bridges is one of our main strengths. The IBS meetings are not the only outlet for idea exchange and I would encourage a BSG discussion on this topic of international participation.

Amy Hessel (West Virginia University), Board Member (2009-2011)



Amy Hessel (Ph.D. University of Arizona) is an Associate Professor in the Department of Geology and Geography at West Virginia University. Amy is interested in the interaction between ecosystem processes and human activities in forested systems. She has studied the influence of climate and land use history on fire regimes in the Pacific Northwest and Mongolia and has been developing new millennial length hydroclimate reconstructions for the eastern United States using tree rings. Amy teaches courses in Physical Geography, Biogeography, and the Geography of Fire. She has published in *BioScience*, *Climatic Change*, *Ecological Applications*, *Journal of Biogeography* and the *Professional Geographer*, among others.

Gabrielle Katz (Appalachian State University), Board Member (2009-2011)



Gabrielle Katz (Ph.D. University of Colorado) is an Assistant Professor at Appalachian State University. Current research interests include impacts of groundwater pumping and hydrologic restoration on riparian ecosystems of the San Pedro River, Arizona, and urban biogeography of dry washes in Tucson, Arizona. Current graduate student research projects examine effects of stream restoration on riparian vegetation of headwater streams in northwestern North Carolina, and the contribution of rural land uses to plant diversity in the North Carolina High Country. Undergraduate teaching commitments include Introduction to physical geography, Environmental issues in Appalachia, and Geography of biodiversity. Graduate courses include Research themes and methods in Geography,

Biogeography and ecosystem management, and Biogeography of food and agriculture. Gabrielle has published in *Ecological Applications*, *Diversity and Distributions*, *Wetlands*, and *Ecological Economics*.

Stockton Maxwell (West Virginia University), Student Representative Board Member (2009-2010)



Stockton Maxwell is a PhD candidate at West Virginia University working under Dr. Amy Hessler. Richard has conducted biogeographical research in the US and Mongolia, and his current research focuses on hydroclimate reconstructions of the Potomac River Basin using tree rings. Through the Potomac River project, he is collaborating with federal and regional agencies and researchers from three universities to extend the hydroclimate record for water resource management. He has two

publications and is currently an Instructor in the Geography and Geology Department as well as a Graduate Research Fellow, NASA West Virginia Space Grant Consortium in Morgantown, WV.

Thank you also to outgoing President **Lori Daniels** and outgoing Board Members **Michelle Goman** and **Henri Grissino-Mayer** for serving two years each.
-- Colin Long, BSG Board Member and Organizer

2009 AAG Meeting, Las Vegas

The Biogeography Specialty Group sponsored 44 special sessions at this year national Association of American Geographers meeting in Las Vegas. Thanks to all who organized and participated in these sessions:

- (1) Biogeography in the field: A Panel Discussion for Grad Students and Early Career Biogeographers (Panel Session)
- (2) What is an NSF GK-12 Grant and How Would Getting One Help Me and My Department? (Panel Session)
- (3) Biogeography Specialty Group Undergraduate and Master's Level Student Paper Presentation Competition (Parts 1)
- (4) Biogeography Specialty Group Undergraduate and Master's Level Student Paper Presentation Competition (Parts 2)
- (5) Biogeography Specialty Group Ph.D. Student Paper Presentation Competition
- (6) Insect outbreaks and forest ecosystems: Patterns, causes, and impacts I
- (7) Insect outbreaks and forest ecosystems: Patterns, causes, and impacts II
- (8) Insect outbreaks and forest ecosystems: Patterns, causes, and impacts III
- (9) Insect outbreaks and forest ecosystems: Patterns, causes, and impacts IV
- (10) Sedimentary Perspectives on Paleoenvironmental Change: Part 1
- (11) Sedimentary Perspectives on Paleoenvironmental Change: Part 2
- (12) Advances in Paleoclimatology: Moisture Changes through Time and their Impacts I

- (13) Advances in Paleoclimatology: Moisture Changes through Time and their Impacts II
- (14) Advances in Paleoclimatology: Moisture Changes through Time and their Impacts III
- (15) Advances in Paleoclimatology: Moisture Changes through Time and their Impacts IV
- (16) Species Distribution Modeling Roundtable (Interactive Short Papers)
- (17) Forest Disturbance and Recovery: Monitoring Change and Assessing Impacts
- (18) Assessing Environmental Disturbance to Forest Ecosystems: Linking regional approaches to place based research.
- (19) Remote sensing of land surface phenology
- (20) Dendrochronology I Climate
- (21) Dendrochronology II Geomorphology
- (22) Dendrochronology III Paleo-reconstructions and Applications
- (23) Dendrochronology IV Fire
- (24) Landscape Ecology and Biogeography - Spatial Context
- (25) A Geographic Perspective on the Status of Whitebark Pine Communities in Western North America
- (26) The Mojave Desert: 1. Biogeographical Research
- (27) The Mojave Desert: 2. Threats and Restoration
- (28) Treeline Ecotones: I. Geomorphology and Soils
- (29) Treeline Ecotones II. Spatial Variability and Detection
- (30) Biogeography and Remote Sensing: Linking species, landscape and regional scales
- (31) Marine Geomorphology and Mapping for an Ecosystem-Based Management Approach to Marine Reserve Design + Planning I
- (32) Marine Geomorphology and Mapping for an Ecosystem-Based Management Approach to Marine Reserve Design + Planning II
- (33) Marine Geomorphology and Mapping for an Ecosystem-Based Management Approach to Marine Reserve Design + Planning III
- (34) Remote Sensing and GIS Applications in Biogeography
- (35) Biogeography Poster Session
- (36) Ecological Analysis using Presettlement Land Survey Records
- (37) Climate Change, Ecosystems and Research Agendas in the Lower Colorado River Basin
- (38) Ecological Responses to Landscape Variability
- (39) Riparian Ecosystem Dynamics
- (40) Vegetation Dynamics I
- (41) Vegetation Dynamics II
- (42) Land use and regional land-atmosphere interactions
- (43) Climate, Wildfire, and Woodland Dynamics in the Great Basin of North America I
- (44) Climate, Wildfire, and Woodland Dynamics in the Great Basin of North America II

2009-2010 MyCOE/SERVIR Biodiversity Initiative in Africa

We are pleased to announce a new initiative designed to build regional research capacity to use geography and the geographic information sciences for biodiversity initiatives in Africa:

2009-2010 MyCOE/SERVIR Biodiversity Initiative in Africa. Students from eligible countries in Africa who are currently enrolled in or completing studies at a university (undergraduate or graduate) will be competitively selected for their long-term potential to contribute to the region's biodiversity issues. They will be paired with in-country faculty advisors or other mentors as well as provided with mentoring from the program. Teams will receive stipends to conduct 6-month long research projects and support to attend a capacity building and GIS workshop to be held in Nairobi, Kenya in late 2009. Submissions from organizations to host students in projects are also encouraged.

A full call for proposals and further program details can be found online at www.aag.org/sustainable/africa.cfm

Deadline for submissions is June 26, 2009

Partners: My Community, Our Earth: Geographic Learning for Sustainable Development (MyCOE), Association of American Geographers (AAG) (MyCOE Secretariat), Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD), SERVIR-Africa, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and others.

Inquiries may be directed to Dr. Patricia Solis(psolis@aag.org).

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Recent Publications

Bekker, M., J. Clark, and M. Jackson. 2009. Landscape metrics indicate differences in patterns and dominant controls of ribbon forests in the Rocky Mountains, USA. *Applied Vegetation Science* 12 (2): 237-249.

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Miscellaneous News and Notes

- (1) Please consider adding the **new BSG domain** to your favorite links and promote it on your homepage (www.biogeographer.org)
- (2) If you're interested in being on the BSG student list-serv, please e-mail the list moderator, Chad Lane, at chad.lane@lawrence.edu.
- (3) John Kupfer continues to request syllabi online for biogeography courses to be included on the Biogeographer Specialty Group's website, which can be accessed via www.biogeographer.org
- (4) The BSG is responsible for organizing the Physical Geography reception at the 2010 AAG meeting in Washington DC. Concern was raised during the BSG business meeting about the costs for the reception, the need to solicit corporate sponsors and to carefully plan the budget. Lori Daniels solicited volunteers to help organize the event next year. Thanks to Linah Ababneh, David Cairns and Stockton Maxwell for volunteering.

- (5) BSG finances update from Taly Drezner (BSG treasurer): From March 2008 to February 2009 we paid out \$3386.00 and collected \$2540.00 in dues (paying out \$846.00 more than we took in). As of February 2009, we had a balance of \$2896.51. Note that the AAG has been encouraging specialty groups to spend incoming dues and not carry large balances from year to year, so we have given more awards in the past few years. To avoid overspending, the board has made the following changes to the funding for student awards and other contributions this year: doctoral paper presentation set at \$100, master's paper presentation set at \$100, poster presentation at \$50, doctoral research grant at \$1000, and master's research grant at \$500. In addition, the BSG provides \$500.00 to the graduate student representative on the board to support travel to the AAG annual meeting. The BSG contributed \$200.00 toward the 2009 Physical Geography reception, down from \$500 in past years.
- (6) Geography Compass is a new journal to provide review papers geared toward teaching. Articles are on a commission basis unsolicited papers are also welcomed. Contact George Malanson to learn more or to submit a manuscript. As well, Wiley Blackwell, the publisher, allows all papers downloadable for \$1.99 and the author's university may be eligible for a free one year subscription
- (7) Professional Geographer is encouraging biogeography submissions, especially from early career faculty and grad students. The journal has increased the number of color images that may be submitted and increased the size format of the journal. Although turnaround time has been very slow, the editors are trying to get articles online sooner. The review time is down to 2.5 months, but the backlog of articles explains the delay between acceptance and publication.
- (8) Communications among BSG members is usually by email through the AAG's discussion forum. The AAG will be updating this web-based system later this year. Currently, participation in a specialty group discussion forum is optional and the responsibility of members to enroll. Since it is difficult to communicate this information, particularly to new members, the system will be changed from an "opt-in" to automatic enrollment. In future, all BSG members will receive messages from the discussion forum and will have to change their personal preferences for communications on the AAG website if they do not want to receive all postings by email.
- (9) Current instructions to access the BSG forum:
Login to the AAG website (www.aag.org)
Select "My Communities" from the Communities panel (lower right)
Select "Global Preferences" to ensure you are actively subscribed to the BSG community and to ensure you are receiving all email messages from the forum (Select "preferences" to receive email messages immediately, daily or weekly)
Under "My Communities", select Biogeography Specialty Group
Under "Forums", select General Information or Job Announcements to review recently posted messages or to post a new message
To post a new message, click on "General Information" and "Create a New Topic" (upper right). From here you can type your message, preview for formatting and then post.

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Submission Guidelines to “The Biogeographer”

Submissions should be sent directly to the editor as email attachments in one of the following formats: html, MS Word, or RTF (single spaced, 12 pt. Times Roman font). Limit special formatting to bold and italics, ensuring that all links are complete and any subfolders or documents are included. If submitting items for more than one section of the newsletter (news, notes, publications), send each in a separate email with the section identified in the subject line. Bear in mind that your editor generally just cuts and pastes whatever she gets, so please spell-check and proofread your submissions carefully. Submissions should be concise and written in a style consistent with the rest of the newsletter.

Notes and News Items. News items can be personal, departmental, institutional, or simply biogeography-related stories from the press. Notes are intended to convey topical information of interest to the BSG community. Topics for these categories include:

- Research Notes: new projects and progress reports or general research-related ideas and issues.
- Field Notes: recent field work or field trips or retellings of classic tales from the field (embellishments welcome).
- Course Notes: news, announcements, or articles related to teaching biogeography or pedagogical issues affecting the discipline.
- Book Notes: book reviews or announcements.
- Miscellaneous Notes: anything that doesn't fit in any of the other categories.

News items should generally be less than 500 words and notes less than 1500. Please check with the editor before submitting longer items. Images should be sent as separate files (do not embed them in text documents) following the guidelines below.

Recent Publications

Format bibliographic entries following the Chicago B style used in the Annals. Only publications that have actually appeared in print or online will be listed, so please do not submit in-press items until you have page numbers or a permanent URL.

Images

Photos should be jpeg or png format with a minimum resolution of and no larger than 400 pixels wide or tall. Larger images (up to 800 pixels wide) will be considered if appropriate. Maps and other graphics can be larger if needed for clarity, but in no case should exceed 800 pixels wide. Edit your images to enhance contrast, brightness, and color balance. *Joy Nystrom Mast, Editor, [The Biogeographer](#)*

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