

BoFEP - A TIME TO THINK ABOUT OUR FUTURE

BoFEP generates and disseminates scientific information about the Bay of Fundy. However we are now at a crossroads. The old ways of funding organizations such as ours are no longer the reality. Two years ago we did not receive our annual grant from Environment Canada, and EC funding remains uncertain. We must look for new ways to finance BoFEP.

This leaves us with two broad choices. We can drastically reduce our program to accommodate a much smaller budget, such as truly becoming a “virtual institute” where our impact is through posting on the website, papers done by member researchers, etc., or we can find ways to increase our revenues and broaden our appeal to the wider Fundy community. This could involve broadening the scope of our activities to include socio-economic issues around the bay and to include industries and First Nations groups in our deliberations. This implies making BoFEP better known and finding ways to better use our resources.

Some of the ideas coming from the Outreach committee and recent retreats are presented here for your consideration and discussion.

1. DIVERSIFICATION OF FUNDING

1.1 Membership fees. A system of membership fees has already been established. It has been strengthened at the last annual meeting by including a membership fee with the workshop registration. Retreat members suggest that we need to seek out members to be in the higher membership brackets such as “Honor Roll” members and “BoFEP Fellows”.

How do we produce more revenue from memberships?

How do we retain members in non-workshop years?

1.2 Consulting. BoFEP has successfully completed one consulting contract in which a profit of \$4,700 was made.

Is this an activity that BoFEP should pursue more aggressively?

What guidelines are necessary to determine projects most suitable?

How will the proposals get written?

Are there members who are prepared to be project managers for these projects?

1.3 Publishing. BoFEP has material such as the Fact Sheets which might be published in book form.

Should we consider technical publications such as the fact sheets or work on Corophium or a non technical money raiser such as a cook book of Fundy specialties?

Who will undertake the work of preparing a publication and finding publishers?

1.4 Other funding ideas: These could include - Approaching foundations, Running technical seminars and setting up a system to receive bequests.

What additional ideas do people have?

2. MARKETING OF BoFEP

BoFEP is not well known outside of the scientific community. If we are to increase our membership, attain support from industry and otherwise broaden our activities beyond the scientific community, we need strategies to clarify our product and make BoFEP better known.

2.1 Approach to Industries Around the Bay.

What Industries should be most sympathetic to BoFEP's approach?

Who should do this?

What back up material do we require?

2.2 Talks to Local Community Groups. The concept is to develop a roster of BoFEP members available to talk to service clubs and other community groups.

Is this an activity that BoFEP members would support?

What back up material would be required?

Are there members who are prepared to do this in their home area?

2.3 Develop a Media Relations Program. This would involve the establishment of a communications committee and the ability to issue press releases' as required

How might this be organized?

Do we have resources in our steering committee and membership to undertake his task?

2.4 Other marketing ideas: these might include Ocean Day celebrations, sponsor high school students at the workshops, Sponsor poster competitions, participate in science fairs by giving prizes and or judging.

3. STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

Some topics to consider:

3.1 Makeup of the Steering Committee

What skills/backgrounds should be represented on the Steering Committee?

Should the chair of each working group be a member of the steering committee?

Should the Steering Committee be larger or smaller than the current number of 24 members?

3.2 Role of the Steering Committee

Should the steering committee take a more active role in the operations of BoFEP such as fund raising and marketing?

Should the Steering Committee meet more often?

Should there be more meetings (such as today) focusing on policy and/or strategy?

3.3 Working Groups

What is your vision of the role of working groups?

Should they engage the public more?

Should they have a task and then dissolve?

What process should be used to determine the topic for new working groups?

A focus is being put on strengthening BoFEP through its Steering Committee. An active Steering Committee is vital to BoFEP and this special meeting has been called to report on recent outreach working group discussions.