

December 7, 2017

To FBRI Supporting Organizations:

The FBRI Board of Directors met on Monday, November 13, in the Western Forestry & Conservation Association office at the World Forestry Center in Portland, Oregon. The agenda for the Board meeting is located in Attachment A. The discussions included status updates on numerous action items the Board has been working on diligently for the last year. As usual, the meeting was long, interesting, and productive. We are finally to a point of visible progress on several issues of key interest to all of our contributors. Like my predecessor, I will in this letter only report on what I believe to be the more interesting items. If you have questions on anything shown in the agenda, feel free to contact me, or any one of the other Directors or Staff. Our contact information is provided in Attachment B as well as on the Institute's website at <http://fbrinstitute.org/board-and-staff>.

The main focus of the meeting was the status update for the various pending action items and preparing the presentation for the FBRI Annual Contributors Meeting held Tuesday, November 14th at the Lloyd Center Double Tree Convention Center in Portland, Oregon. Much of the material discussed in the Board Meeting was also presented at the Annual Meeting. For those that were unable to make the trek to Portland, the PowerPoint presentations from the Annual Meeting are available on FBRI's website.

Status updates on action items this year-end include some milestones the Board is pleased to present.

- 🌲 The most often mentioned issue of concern from FBRI contributing organizations is the longevity and stability of FPS going forward. We all know no one individual is irreplaceable; however, many will argue when it comes to FPS, Jim Arney is an exception. What happens, what are the plans for when the "proverbial bus" hits Jim Arney? The succession plan; for several years, the Board has discussed the need to enter into a contract with a second biometrician to work closely with Dr. Arney.

During the Board meeting in November 2016, the Directors voted to expedite the search for a second biometrician and prioritized the action to create and fill this position by year-end 2017.

We solicited, we reviewed, we selected. Terms were negotiated and contracts signed. Starting on January 1, 2018, Dr. Dan Opalach will commence full time the duties of an FBRI Forest Biometrician. Working closely with Dr. Arney on all matters FPS, "A to Z", this is a markedly significant step toward a successful transition to Dr. Arney's retirement. It also strengthens the level of biometric support available to our contributing organizations and increases staff flexibility to enhance and promote the Institute and FPS. Thank you Dan Opalach. Thank you for your dedication to the Institute serving as Chairman of the Board for the last seven years and thank you for the consideration and willingness to step into a very challenging position that is essential to the future of FBRI.

- 🌲 Elections: Dan Opalach's resignation from the Board to accept a Staff position left a vacant seat on the Board of Directors. Following thorough discussion and consideration the Board approached Don Wales, Hancock Forest Management, and were pleased to welcome him to a three year term as our newest Board member. Don brings the experience of a seasoned career in inventory and management with large industrial ownerships. He will be a tremendous asset and supplies an advantageous balance to the Board. The last election was for the new Chairman of the Board. I was honored by my colleague's confidence in me and have accepted the position for the 2018 term.

- 🌲 Efforts previously reported to establish a partnership with academia have been successful beyond expectation. FBRI has entered into an agreement with the University of Idaho to launch an M.S Graduate program to further studies in quantitative sciences related to forestry. We are initiating this program with four students that are all employees of contributing organizations. The emphasis is to benefit the Institute, benefit forestry, and benefit our core group of contributors. For more information on this program, please visit the FBRI website or call Dan Opalach (stay tuned for Dan's FBRI Phone #).

- 🌲 FPS version 7.52 was released with the new Universal Libraries in early 2017. The beta testing (in-house and by you has been thorough), and requested additions have resulted in Version 7.53 to be released before the end of the year. You can expect to see the download link and documentation via email any day.

- 🌲 The Institute's contract with Northwest Management, Inc. (NMI) for technical support on FPS issues to contributing organizations has been and continues to be a very valuable asset. Support records reported monthly via conference call with staff and Board members show a shift in the frequency and subject matter of support calls. In part, this is attributed to a series of instructional webinars targeting what were the most prevalent FPS support issues. Tech Support has an array of webinars addressing more advanced FPS procedures that will be available soon.

🌲 A tentative schedule for 2018 workshops was discussed with the first, *FBRI FPS Inventory* set for some time in March. *FBRI FPS Site Grid Methods, May 21-23 in Moscow, ID*, and *FBRI FPS Planning* sometime in September in Portland, OR. Look for emails announcing definite dates. Another topic breached that is a carryover of business from several previous meetings is the need to increase the visibility and exposure of the Institute. FBRI will have a presence and both Dr. Jim Arney and Dr. Dan Opalach are slated for speaking appearances at numerous professional forums throughout the coming year. This topic is closely tied to our strategy of securing financial stability for FBRI going forward. The Board has discussed and taken action to potentially realize new revenue sources outside of our core contributing organizations. A more in depth financial report and forecast was presented at the recent Annual Contributors Meeting. Again, this information is presented in the PowerPoint available on the FBRI website. Financial health will be one of the main topics carried into the FBRI Spring 2018 BOD Meeting.

This summary of FBRI business could soon become a book if it were to include all the discussion on old business as it ties into new business and completion of some of these action items. I think a statement that our previous Chairman made sums up the whole of the Boards intentions.

The Board is confident that the above listed actions will accomplish the reviews needed to ensure that the various components of FPS are rigorously tested, implemented properly, and, where appropriate, published in journals to benefit the science of forest biometrics. Sure, this will take time, but these actions will lead to a level of review and model transparency that are critical to the long-term success of FPS.

This last year has been a year of accomplishments that has generated a momentum that will carry FBRI into 2018 on a wave of successes. We have seen an increase in participation and input from our strong professional user group that is helping the Board to refine the direction and goals of the Institute. The Board is comprised of your peers from contributing organizations with many of the same concerns and issues as you. Your participation and input is a valuable tool, an asset, in our decision making process. Contacts for Staff and BOD members is attached to this letter. We are all available for conversations to strengthen FBRI.

Thank you for your continued support of the Forest Biometric Research Institute.

Best Regards and Merry Christmas,

JMc...

James McWhorter
Chairman, Forest Biometrics Research Institute
(360) 607-1021
JMcWhorter@terraverdeinc.com