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Through the NSC Alliance partnership with the American Institute of Biological Sciences, we are pleased to provide NSC Alliance members with the following public policy update. With proper attribution to NSC Alliance, all material from these reports may be reproduced or forwarded. We encourage you to share this report with colleagues at your institution. Anyone interested in receiving copies of the NSC Alliance Washington Report may subscribe at www.NSCAlliance.org -- it's free!

If you have any questions or require additional information regarding any of the following items, please contact NSC Alliance director of public policy Dr. Robert Gropp at 202-628-1500 x 250 or at rgropp@aibs.org.

New Federal Registry of Scientific Collections

The Interagency Working Group on Scientific Collections has announced a new registry of federally owned and operated scientific collections. The registry is managed by the Smithsonian Institution and includes more than 125 collections from 475 federal institutions. These numbers are anticipated to grow in the coming months.

The registry has information about the location of the collection, its access policy, and the url for the online catalogue. Registered collections include pollinating insects, plants, soils, germplasm, tree rings, human brains, and other organisms.

Federal agencies are also developing policies to manage their collections. More than a dozen agencies have completed their policies, including the Smithsonian, the National Institutes of Health, and the Department of the Interior. Other agencies are still developing their policies.

Access the registry at http://usfsc.grscicoll.org/.

Public Comment Sought on Draft Rule for Paleontological Resources

The Department of the Interior has proposed a new rule to "preserve, manage, and protect paleontological resources" on lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, the

Bureau of Reclamation, the National Park Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The proposed rule would address the management, collection, and curation of paleontological resources from federal lands using scientific principles and expertise, including collection in accordance with permits; curation in an approved repository; and maintenance of confidentiality of specific locality data.

A permit would be required for collecting paleontological resources or disturbing paleontological sites except for casual collecting on certain lands managed by the Bureaus of Land Management or Reclamation where casual collecting is allowed. All collected materials will be the property of the federal government, and must be managed and curated consistent with certain requirements.

The rule would implement the Paleontological Resources Preservation Act, which was enacted in 2009. The Forest Service finalized a regulation to implement the law on Department of Agriculture lands in 2015. The new proposed rule would implement the law on lands managed by the Department of the Interior, including national parks, wildlife refuges, and lands managed by the Bureaus of Land Management and Reclamation.

Comments on the proposed rule are due by February 6, 2017.

Learn more about the proposed rule and how to submit comments at https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-12-07/html/2016-29244.htm.

NSC Alliance is currently analyzing the proposed rule and may submit comments. Please contact Robert Gropp, NSC Alliance director of public policy, with any feedback.

Another Stopgap Spending Bill to Keep the Government Open

Lawmakers have passed a second continuing resolution to keep the government running well into fiscal year 2017. The stopgap measure means that Congress has until 28 April 2017 to finish the appropriations process. The fiscal year started on 1 October 2016.

The spending bill easily passed the House of Representatives before the chamber adjourned for the balance of the year. The vote was 326 to 96, with 208 Republicans and 118 Democrats supporting the measure.

The proportion of dissenting votes was higher in the Senate, where the measure passed 63 to 36. Thirteen Senate Republicans and 23 Democrats opposed the bill.

Although most federal programs will remain at their current funding levels, the legislation provides a slight increase in total spending from $1.067 trillion to $1.07 trillion. The $3 billion increase is directed to various programs ranging from emergency disaster assistance to respond to flooding in Louisiana, to helping Flint, Michigan residents who have suffered from lead in their drinking water, to reimbursing New York City for costs associated with providing security for President-elect Trump.

The bill passed the Senate less than an hour before current funding expired. The legislation had been slowed in the Senate over concerns about retired miners' health care and pensions.

Several prominent lawmakers criticized the stopgap measure, especially the long duration of the continuing resolution.

"I am sorry I don't think this was a very smart decision and I don't think this will look very smart in April," said Representative Tom Cole (R-OK), who chairs the House panel in charge of health-care spending.

Congress will be busy in the spring finishing 2017 appropriations, taking up confirmations of Trump nominees, filling a Supreme Court vacancy, as well as other issues the Republican majority has pledged to take action on, such as repealing Obamacare and reversing certain environmental regulations.

"There will be plenty of things for them to do. This will be a heavy lift," said outgoing House Appropriations Chairman Hal Rogers (R-KY).

Workshop to Help Scientists Develop Interdisciplinary Skills

Reports abound from professional societies, the Academies, government agencies, and researchers calling attention to the fact that science is increasingly an inter-disciplinary, trans-disciplinary, inter-institutional, and international endeavor. In short, science has become a "team sport."

There is a real and present need to better prepare scientists for success in this new collaborative environment. The American Institute of Biological Sciences is responding to this call with a new program for scientists, educators, and research managers.

Team science is increasingly common in 21st century biological, life, and environmental sciences. Collaboration is no longer limited to sharing ideas with the biologist in the lab next door. The questions confronting science often require teams that may include a mix of computer and information scientists, physical and social scientists, mathematicians, ethicists, and even policy and management experts, as well as community stakeholders and citizen scientists. Adding to this complexity, teams span programs within organizations, cross organization boundaries to form institutional consortia, and often include international partners.

This intensive, two-day, interactive, professional development course was developed by scientists and experts on collaboration and teamwork to provide participants with the knowledge and skills required to become productive and effective members of scientific teams.

Nothing teaches collaboration like practicing collaboration. This is not a course that asks you to learn in isolation. It is a microcosm of scientific collaboration, with extensive hands-on learning as part of a scientific team.

Who should attend?

- Research program managers
- Departmental leaders
- Scientists engaged in collaborative projects
- Graduate students and post-docs looking to augment basic research skills
- Scientists working at the interface of different fields
- Groups interested in developing successful research proposals
- Academic, government, and industry scientists

This course is designed for anyone involved in collaborative scientific endeavors. Team leaders will find the course especially helpful. Because participants will work on "real-world" team science concerns, we encourage multiple members of a team to attend together.

Participants will develop and hone the skills needed to:

- Engage in collaborative scientific ventures;
- Eliminate barriers to effective team science;
- Execute the factors that make collaborations successful;
- Build the right scientific team;
- Perform with a variety of personalities and work approaches;
- Create a team roadmap;
- Enact the five keys to leadership;
- Develop effective communication strategies and techniques;
- Facilitate scientific collaborations; and,
- Apply practical solutions for team science concerns.

Representatives of NSC Alliance members receive a $100 discount on the registration fee.

Learn more and register at https://www.aibs.org/events/team_science_event.html.

Graduate Student Opportunity: 2017 Emerging Public Policy Leadership Award

Graduate students looking to make a difference in science policy and research funding are encouraged to apply for the 2017 AIBS Emerging Public Policy Leadership Award. This award recognizes graduate students in the biological sciences who have demonstrated initiative and leadership in science policy. Recipients receive first-hand experience at the interface of science and public policy.

Winners receive:

- A trip to Washington, DC, to participate in the Biological and Ecological Sciences Coalition Congressional Visits Day, an annual event that brings scientists to the nation's capital to advocate for federal investment in the biological sciences, with a primary focus on the National Science Foundation. The event will be held on April 25-26, 2017. Domestic travel and hotel expenses will be paid for the winners.

- Policy and communications training, including information on the legislative process and trends in federal science funding.
- Meetings with congressional policymakers to discuss the importance of federal investments in the biological sciences.
- A one-year AIBS membership, including a subscription to the journal *BioScience* and a copy of "Communicating Science: A Primer for Working with the Media."

The 2017 award is open to U.S. citizens and U.S. permanent residents enrolled in a graduate degree program in the biological sciences, science education, or a closely allied field. Applicants should have a demonstrated interest in and commitment to science policy and/or science education policy. Prior EPPLA winners, honorable mentions, and AIBS science policy interns/fellows are not eligible.

Applications are due by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on January 9, 2017. The application can be downloaded at http://www.aibs.org/public-policy/eppla.html.

Inaugural Digital Data in Biodiversity Research Conference

Registration and abstract submission for the Digital Data in Biodiversity Research Conference will open on January 15, 2017. The conference is presented by iDigBio, the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, and the University of Michigan Herbarium and will be held in Ann Arbor, Michigan on June 5-6, 2017.

The rapid mobilization of digitized biodiversity data, led largely in the United States by the National Science Foundation's Advancing Digitization of Biodiversity Collections program, has resulted in a substantial increase in available data for research and related activities. This conference will encompass the uses of digitized data across all biodiversity disciplines, with special emphasis on digitized specimen data and the potential for "big data" analytics in organismal biology.

Learn more at https://www.idigbio.org/content/second-update-inaugural-digital-data-biodiversity-research-conference-5-6-june-2017-ann.

The Natural Science Collections Alliance is a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit association that serves as an advocate for natural science collections, the institutions that preserve them, and the research and education that extend from them for the benefit of science, society, and stewardship of the environment. NSC Alliance members are part of an international community of museums, botanical gardens, herbariums, universities, and other institutions that house natural science collections and utilize them in research, exhibitions, academic and informal science education, and outreach activities. Website: www.NSCAlliance.org.

The NSC Alliance Washington Report is a publication of the NSC Alliance. For information about membership in the NSC Alliance, please contact spotter@aibs.org.