



A Message from the Executive Director

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“It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is most adaptable to change.”

Whether scientifically accurate or not, Darwin’s paraphrased words are a fitting backdrop for the times we are living in and provides an overarching strategy for IBA in the coming months as the organization continues in its evolution and transition.

COVID-19 has caused a multitude of unique challenges (and dire consequences) and it is expected that for much of the world, the new business, as usual, has yet to be determined. For IBA members, we have heard from many of you and know your work and lives have been affected.

We know the funding landscape is even more competitive than normal and in for a bumpy ride, with funding being diverted to support COVID-19 related emergency response worldwide, global financial impacts expected for 1 – 2 years or more, an upcoming US presidential election, and social issues garnering widespread attention.

IBA is working to adapt to this new funding landscape. We are at the beginning stages of developing a global IBA community of supporters. It is a process that will continue to expand through time as we work to engage and develop relationships with new foundations, governments, and individual donors. However, to meet our immediate financial needs, it is our current and past donors, members, and friends who can best help keep the important work of the organization moving forward, through the following 5 funding endeavors:

Members Supporting Members – Among IBA’s greatest strengths is our close-knit network of members. To help further support members and their vital work, IBA is developing a fund where members can donate to support colleagues, whether long-time members or those new to the field of bear biology. For more information about this effort, email Julia Bevins, Bear Conservation Fund Chair at julia.bevins@bearbiology.org.

IBA Transition Process – IBA continues its work to expand its offerings, become more visible and grow our resources through Stage 3 of the Structural Evolution Plan (page 12), which includes the development of governance, financial, IT and related organization structures and a Strategic Plan (look for highlights of the plan in this year’s fall edition of IBN). Our goal is to raise \$300,000 by December 2020 to ensure the transition process continues. To learn



more about the transition process, plans and strategies, contact me at christopher.kelley@bearbiology.org or 415-902-8115.

Bear Conservation Fund – IBA’s desire is to grow BCF total grants to over \$100,000 and increase the number of funded grants by 25%. For more information on the BCF and past projects, please visit <https://www.bearbiology.org/bear-conservation-fund>, contact Julia Bevins at julia.bevins@bearbiology.org, and be sure to view our research video presentations coming soon to the IBA website.

IBA Fellowships – a new program to expand grants for projects. IBA will begin offering fellowships to support researchers and new projects this fall. Fellowships will be offered as they are formed separate from the normal BCF process. Announcements about specific fellowship offerings will be made fall 2020. If you or anyone you know are interest in naming a fellowship, please contact me at christopher.kelley@bearbiology.org.

IBA Ambassadors – to build a community of engaged supporters and increase IBA’s visibility in cities and countries throughout the world. IBA invites anyone interested in bear, wildlife conservation and the environment to be a community ambassador. Advisory groups are being established where there is volunteer interest including the UK, the San Francisco Bay Area, Alaska, and locations far and wide. Contact me at christopher.kelley@bearbiology.org or 415-902-8115 for more information.

IBA is only as strong as its members, partners and supporters. We thank you for all your tireless efforts that makes IBA unique and vital in our continuing mission to support science-based conservation and management of the world’s bears. As we continue to gauge and traverse the rugged terrain ahead, we keep in mind the words of Martin Luther King – “We must accept finite disappointment but we must never lose infinite hope.”