

Directorate for Biological Sciences
Office of the Assistant Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE:

TO: Steve Meacham, OIA

FROM: John C. Wingfield, AD, BIO

SUBJECT: Report and Diversity Memo of the 2012 Committee of Visitors for the Division of Environmental Biology

This memo reports on the diversity, independence, balance, and resolution of conflicts of the Committee of Visitors (CoV) for the Division of Environmental Biology (DEB) held from the 5th to 7th of June, 2012.

The credibility of the CoV mechanism rests, in large measure, on the selection of credible, independent experts who are able to provide balanced and impartial assessments to NSF. Prior to issuing letters of invitation to serve on the DEB CoV, the DEB Division Director and Deputy Division Director were consulted regarding potential CoV candidates. Program Officers in DEB also were instrumental in identifying and selecting membership of the CoV.

The CoV represented a broad segment of the disciplines consistent with the scope of activities for which DEB has oversight responsibilities. The committee was composed of ten members, including one representative of the BIO Advisory Committee. Seven members are female, and two are from underrepresented minorities in the Environmental Biology disciplines. Members currently work in nine different states and one foreign country including California, Colorado, the District of Columbia, Michigan, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, Vermont, Wisconsin, and Germany. Eight members are from academic institutions, including one Primarily Undergraduate Institution. One member is from government and one is from a private non-profit research institution. Four of the members had not submitted a proposal to the Division in the previous five years. Seven of the members had not served on a review panel in the previous five years. All had prior NSF review experience. Two members have prior DEB CoV experience, with one returning from the 2009 DEB CoV.

Committee members were advised about confidentiality and conflicts of interest both prior to arriving at NSF and on the first day of meeting. All CoV members were required to complete the NSF Conflict of Interest form and submit a list of potential conflicts prior to receiving access to CoV materials. All identified conflicts were managed in the Electronic Jacket CoV module and individual CoV members were unable to see conflicted proposals.