

## Report on a Survey of Chapters of Society of Conservation Biology, Spring 2004

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### Executive Summary

The following survey, written by the Chapter Advisors, was distributed by email to the board members of SCB chapters in the spring of 2004:

1. *Please describe your most important or successful chapter activities:*
2. *What types of activities would you like to share with other chapters, if any?*
3. *What types of resources do you have that you would be willing and able to share with other chapters?*
4. *Do you have an interest in establishing a relationship with a sister-chapter?*
5. *What types of assistance or support would you most like to have from SCB-main?*
6. *Please add any other comments or ideas you think would help strengthen your own chapter as well as the relationships between chapters and with SCB-main:*

Two university chapters (UC Davis, New Orleans), two city chapters, one international (Berkeley, Toronto), two state chapters (Minnesota, Missouri), one regional chapter (New England), and two country chapters (Slovenia, Bolivia) responded. [Note: Nine out of approximately 14 chapters. Five respondents had been active for awhile, three were brand-new, and one was still forming (and never did make it).—fn]

The compiled results (12 pages) are available from the Chapter Advisors. Not all chapters responded to all questions, and the respondents provided additional information not requested in the survey.

### Conclusions

The chapters of the Society for Conservation Biology represent areas as small as cities and as large as countries. They build the science and educate their members through seminars, symposia, and workshops. They educate school children and the public through outreach programs. They support the Conservation Biology community through annual meetings, socials, on-line publications, useful websites, listservs, newsletters, and poster competitions. They serve their communities in service projects and the writing of position papers. Through recently developed channels, they now offer their assistance to their fellow chapters in the form of advice, materials, and expertise. They also have an interest in the Sister Chapter initiative. The SCB chapters make a valuable contribution to the field of Conservation Biology and to the Society.

While the chapters as a whole have a long list of accomplishments, many still struggle with low participation, nearly empty bank accounts, and what they feel is little interest or communication from SCB Main. As a result, the board members are at times discouraged. These problems may be behind the low rate of response to this survey, and the history of some chapters becoming defunct. However, all of the respondents were enthusiastic about future plans and expressed personal commitments to their chapters.

Chapters mentioned the valuable assistance they have received from SCB Main, including use of the Society's non-profit status and website, occasional small funds, and the new line of communication that has been opened through the Chapter Advisors. They also expressed the need for additional financial and in-kind support. These suggestions include seed money for new chapters, annual small grants, and support for board members to attend the SCB Annual Meeting, as well as support for chapters in developing countries.

The results of the Spring 2004 Chapter Survey show that the SCB chapters are a vital part of the Society. It also shows that they could benefit from increased communication and support from each other and from SCB Main.