

# NSF Activities

- Updates on the NSF activities presented to AIBS Council in the past
- 1. Collections activities – reported in 2007
- 2. Education activities - presented as beginning in 2007

# **NSF Collections Survey of Federally Supported Collections Interagency and NSF Activities**



National Science Foundation  
WHERE DISCOVERIES BEGIN

# IWGSC Charter

- Evaluate the state of object-based scientific collections at, supported by, or used by US Federal agencies or in federally-supported activities
- Foster the coordination of collections activities across the Federal agencies
- Increase government and public awareness of the importance and uses of collections.

# Survey of Federal Agencies:

## A starting point to identify and describe collections

- Descriptive information on size and scope, condition, care and preservation, accessibility, policies and procedures
- Focus on collections that are the agency's holdings or for which the agency has permanent responsibility.

# NSF Role

- NSF curates no collections
- NSF supports collections through several Programs
- Division of Biological Infrastructure
  - Biological Research Collections
  - Living Stock Collections
  - Major Research Instrumentation
  - Biological Databases and Informatics
- Division of Environmental Biology
  - Biodiversity Surveys and Inventories
  - Systematic Biology
  - PEET
  - Planetary Biodiversity Inventories
  - Assembling the Tree of Life
  - Small Grants for Exploratory Research (SGER)
  - Research Coordination Networks (RCN)
- Others
  - Anthropology and Geosciences Research
  - Polar Programs
  - NEON

# NSF Survey

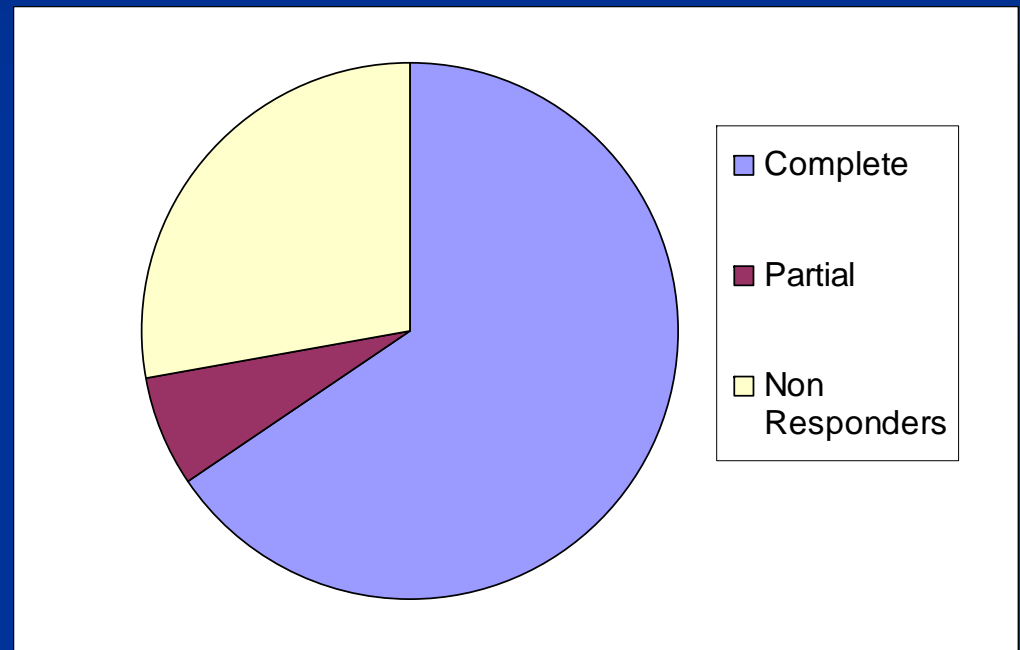
- ❖ *Many collections receive federal support*
- ❖ *Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approved survey*
- ❖ *339 collections*
- ❖ *138 institutions*
- ❖ *2 versions--Collections Managers, Administrators*
- ❖ *45 states, D.C. and Puerto Rico*
- ❖ *26 pages*
- ❖ *2 hours + to complete*
- ❖ *Dec 13, 2007 - April 25, 2008*

# Collection Survey Topics

- Size and scope
- Growth (+ or -)
- Condition
- Staffing
- New specimens (e.g., DNA)
- Instrumentation
- Documentation and Databases
- Education and Training
- Security
- Support

# Preliminary Survey Results

- Number of collections managers included in survey: 339
- Complete (including Partial Completes): 222 (65.49%)
- Partial: 23 (6.78%)
- Non-Responders
  - Never Clicked on Link: 79 (23.30%)
  - Clicked on link, but did not answer any questions: 15 (4.42%)



# Organization Type

Educational Institution: 240

Complete: 159 (66%)

Partial: 16 (6%)

Non Response: 65 (27%)

Government Organization: 7

Complete: 4 (57%)

Non Response: 3 (43%)

Museum/Organization: 84

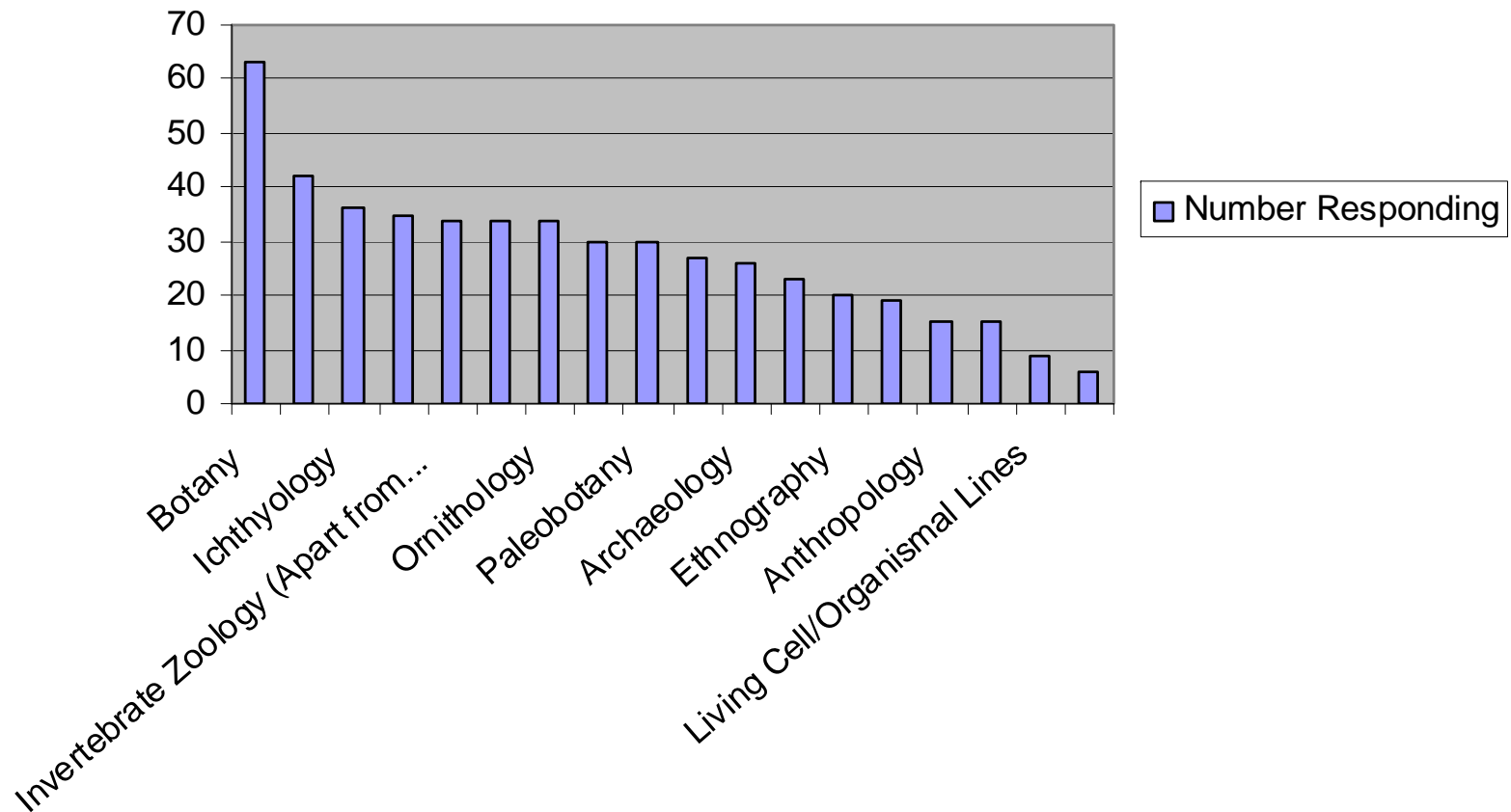
Complete: 55 (65%)

Partial: 6 (7%)

Non Response: 23 (27%)

# Response Taxonomy

Collection Managers Responding (based on partial sample of 189)



# Bio Ed Undergrad Bio General Strategic Plan

- 1. Conversations** – build groundswell of bottom-up support for vision and the changes needed to achieve it. Faculty, administrators, societies. 7 formal conversations, other advice and input from ACs, professional society meetings, other meetings.
- 2. Vision and Change conference** – winter 09 as a ‘coming out party’ for the initiative and the partnerships. Decision officials from NSF and academe; others. Steering committee.
- 3. Report** – that articulates the vision, synthesizes previous reports and current effort (conversations); develops essays and recommendations for changes needed and roles of different entities; recommendations include guides for institutionalization, assessment, and sustainability.

**4. Announcements of partnerships and activities** at Vision and Change meeting might include:

concept-based textbook;

A plan to leverage existing BIO centers curriculum reform;

faculty development;

institutional reform - realignment of reward systems.

“virtual center” for faculty development and mentoring;

pilot activities – coalitions to testbed approaches

Others ... wide open...

**5. Implementation** with defined outcomes, built-in regular assessment and tightened feedback loops to tune up activities in a timely manner.

Assessment should be tied to outreach to ensure that successes are widely recognized. This is a decadal strategy.

# What are we hearing?

## ***Vision***

Broad career horizons

Experiential learning

Concept literacy

## ***Change*** – starter list

Institutional change

Faculty development

Reward systems

Resources & high level buy-in

Hiring & retention

Common tools

Skills – critical thinking, communication

Curricula that fuse biology with other disciplines

**Progress to date:**

**Grant Opportunity announced: Research Coordination Networks – Undergraduate Biology Education**

**5 Conversations held to date: Washington, San Francisco, Atlanta, Denver, Boston. 1 planned: Chicago**

**Meeting of professional society representatives planned for September 2008. President/President-elect.**

**Active and planned discussions with partners and potential partners.**