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A Farewell to BCI's Executive Director

Executive Director Nina Fascione is leaving Bat Conservation International after leading the organization for more than two years following the departure of Founder Merlin Tuttle. Her resignation is effective today (April 30). Fascione, who lives in the Washington, D.C., area, commuted to BCI headquarters in Austin, Texas, and represented BCI around the world.



Nina Fascione. ©Bat Conservation International

“We are extremely grateful for all that Nina accomplished as BCI’s leader, and we know she will achieve even more in her future endeavors. We wish her nothing but the best,” said Dr. Dave Waldien, Vice President of Operations & International Programs. Waldien, who joined BCI in 2004, will serve as Interim Executive Director while BCI’s Board of Directors searches for Fascione’s successor.

“I am leaving a strong and dynamic organization that has begun a new era of conservation success,” Fascione said. “I am proud of all that we have accomplished and awed by the dedication of our members, partners and friends.”

Fascione was Vice President for Field Conservation Programs at Defenders of Wildlife when she became BCI’s Executive Director on March 1, 2009. She quickly became a powerful advocate for bat conservation through outreach to the U.S. Congress and federal agencies and other conservation organizations.

BCI expanded its worldwide impact under her leadership through active participation with such multinational groups as the Southeast Asian Bat Conservation and Research Unit and the Latin American Network for Bat Conservation. BCI is also increasingly working to support local efforts around the world. The Global Grassroots Conservation Fund Program, which provides small grants for bat-conservation projects outside the United States, has seen dramatic growth. Targeted fundraising efforts and the generous support of BCI members allowed the program to fund 14 grants (up from five last year) totaling a record \$39,800 for work in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

A new Education Department has been a key organizer of International Year of the Bat events, while conducting hundreds of bat-education lectures and building a vibrant new volunteer program.

BCI also moves into the future with a stylish and modern new logo that symbolizes our commitment to conserving bats and the ecosystems they serve. Our new brand was developed by the prestigious Pratt School of Design, with invaluable feedback from BCI members.

“The Board of Trustees appreciates Nina’s dedication and celebrates what she has accomplished,” said BCI Board Chairman John Hayes. “We also have complete confidence in the proven ability of BCI’s Management Team, with Board oversight, to direct this organization and continue its vigorous conservation efforts during the search for Nina’s successor. BCI is a strong organization that is in good hands as it moves confidently into the future.”

Adds Waldien: “We have accomplished much in the past two years, but bats still face many daunting challenges, from White-nose Syndrome in North America to habitat destruction and commercial hunting in some parts of the world. Our conservation efforts will not slow as we move forward. BCI” buoyed by the unstinting support of our

members, colleagues and partners “is up to the task.”

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