

**APPENDIX 1**  
**Formative evaluation survey conducted in 2014 after the NAPC Meeting**

**FOSSIL Post-Conference/ Project kickoff**

**Email invitation**

Subject: FOSSIL and NAPC convention, important feedback

Dear [name],

We really enjoyed meeting you at the North American Paleontological Convention (NAPC) and the FOSSIL Project activities a few weeks ago in Gainesville. Your thoughts were so rich and valuable as we begin to get the FOSSIL project underway.

At the time, you gave your permission to be contacted about your experiences. Now that you've had a chance to reflect, we would like to get your feedback about your experience at the convention and FOSSIL events, and potential future activities. We realize these invitations are quite common, but you were one of a small group of people to participate so each person's input is extremely helpful.

For the organizers of the recent NAPC and FOSSIL meetings your feedback is invaluable to help us improve future meetings and inform next steps in the development of FOSSIL. It's important to us that FOSSIL activities reflect the needs of you and your communities.

The survey takes about 15 minutes, and we would appreciate your responses by Friday, April 4.

To access the survey and provide valuable feedback please click here [include individualized link here]

Thank you very much for your time and participation,

Steven Yalowitz  
Audience Viewpoints Consulting  
[yalowitz@audienceviewpoints.com](mailto:yalowitz@audienceviewpoints.com)  
[www.audienceviewpoints.com](http://www.audienceviewpoints.com)

## Email reminder

Subject: FOSSIL and NAPC convention, important feedback

Dear [name],

About 10 days ago you received an invitation to provide important feedback about the FOSSIL Project activities at the North American Paleontological Convention (NAPC) in Gainesville. At the convention, you gave your permission to be contacted about your experiences. Now that you've had a chance to reflect, we would like to get your feedback about these activities, to help us improve future meetings and inform next steps in the development of FOSSIL.

The survey takes about 15 minutes, and we would appreciate your responses by Wednesday, April 9.

To access the survey and provide valuable feedback please click here [include individualized link here]

Thank you so much for your time and participation,

Steven Yalowitz  
Audience Viewpoints Consulting  
[yalowitz@audienceviewpoints.com](mailto:yalowitz@audienceviewpoints.com)  
[www.audienceviewpoints.com](http://www.audienceviewpoints.com)

**FOSSIL Post-Conference/ Project kickoff survey [administered online via surveymonkey.com]**

Thank you for agreeing to answer our questions, we really appreciate it. Your feedback is very important to us and will help inform decisions about future conferences and activities related to this project.

If you do not feel a particular question is not relevant to you, or you are not able to answer it, you may leave it blank.

By completing this survey, you are giving consent for Audience Viewpoints to use your responses. Your participation is voluntary. There are no direct benefits or risks to you for participating, and no compensation. You may quit at any time or skip any item. You may withdraw your consent to participate at any time without penalty. If you respond via email, your IP address will be registered; however, your responses will remain anonymous. Thank you for your help.

If you have questions about this survey, contact Betty Dunckel, Florida Museum of Natural History, University of Florida, 352-273-2088, [bdunckel@flmnh.ufl.edu](mailto:bdunckel@flmnh.ufl.edu).

If you want more information about your rights as a research participant, contact the UF IRB Office, 352-392-0433, [irb2@ufl.edu](mailto:irb2@ufl.edu).

By checking the box below I acknowledge that I have read the information and agree to participate in this survey. If you do not wish to participate, please close your browser at this time.

[check box] I agree

To start answering questions click "Next" below.

**[new page]**

**Feedback on the convention**

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**This section focuses on your experience at the North American Paleontological Convention (NAPC), and all related sessions and activities.**

**1. How would you rate the following aspects of the convention? [single selection]**

Not welcoming						Very welcoming
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. To what extent were your expectations met or not met for the conference?

Expectations not met						Expectations exceeded
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2a. For the question above, why did you give the rating you did?

3. How would you rate the sessions you attended, in terms of how academic or technical they were, in their concepts and language?

Not academic enough						Too academic
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. What was the most useful session of the convention for you? *[open response, single text box]*

4a. Why was that one particularly useful for you? *[open response]*

5. Is there anything you think you will do differently as a result of attending the convention? *[single selection]*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

5a. If Yes, what will you do differently? (list up to 5 answers, each in a separate box) *[5 text boxes for open responses]*

5b. If you have already done something differently as a result of attending the convention, please explain. *[open response]*

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6. There were some activities at the convention specifically about a project called FOSSIL. FOSSIL is forming a networked, national community of amateur and professional paleontologists who will collaborate in learning, the practice of science, and outreach. How aware were you of the FOSSIL project before attending the convention? *[single selection]*

- ☐ I had not heard of it
- ☐ I knew a little about it
- ☐ I knew a fair amount about it
- ☐ I was very familiar with the FOSSIL project

7. Which of the following FOSSIL Project activities did you participate in? *[single selection with skip pattern]*

- ☐ Monday symposium/speaker/poster presentations during convention
- ☐ Tuesday lunch at the Florida Museum of Natural History
- ☐ Wednesday workshop at the Florida Museum of Natural History
- ☐ Wednesday reception at the Florida Museum of Natural History
- ☐ None of the above *[skip next section]*
- ☐ I'm not sure if I participated *[skip next section]*

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## FOSSIL activities and events

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This section focuses specifically on the FOSSIL-related sessions and activities at the convention, mentioned in the previous question.

8. How relevant were the FOSSIL-related sessions to you, which included the symposium with speaker and poster presentations on Monday as well as activities after the convention including the Tuesday luncheon, Wednesday workshop, and Wednesday reception? *[single selection]*

Not at all relevant						Very relevant
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Please complete the following sentence. "Thinking about these FOSSIL activities, the one thing that could be changed at future meetings to make them more relevant to me is..." *[open response]*

10. Were there sufficient opportunities to interact with professional paleontologists attending the convention? *[single selection]*

Not enough opportunities						More than enough opportunities
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. To what extent were you able to make new connections with amateur paleontologists?

*[single selection]*

Did not make any new connections						Made many new connections
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. How likely are you to follow up with someone you met during the convention or FOSSIL activities? *[single selection]*

Not at all likely						Very likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

☐ I have already followed up with someone I met.

13. If you belong to an amateur fossil club, how comfortable would you feel contacting another fossil club member you do not know? *[single selection]*

Not at all likely						Very likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. If you belong to an amateur fossil club, how comfortable would you feel contacting a professional paleontologist? *[single selection]*

Not at all likely						Very likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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### General thoughts about FOSSIL project

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This section focuses on future FOSSIL participation, not the 2014 convention. The *myFOSSIL* website will be further developed to provide opportunities for people to both access and contribute fossil-related content; communicate electronically and socially; attend meetings, webinars, and workshops (in person and virtual); access a variety of resources; participate in projects; and conduct outreach.

15. How likely are you to engage in the FOSSIL project, as described above? *[single selection]*

Not at all likely						Very likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

16. How do you think the FOSSIL project will most benefit professional paleontologists? *[open response]*

17. How do you think the FOSSIL project will most benefit amateur paleontologists? *[open response]*

18. What do you see as the biggest barriers to increasing the exchange and collaboration between professional and amateur paleontologists as part of the FOSSIL project? (list up to 5 barriers, one per box) *[5 text boxes for open responses]*

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## Interest in future myFOSSIL activities

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As we move forward and make decisions about what to include on the myFOSSIL website, it is very important that these decisions be informed by the people who are going to use the site. This section asks you to help us prioritize which kinds of activities and content we include on the site, broken down into specific areas.

### CONTENT AND INFORMATION

**19. Which three of the following do you think are the most important for the project to include? Please pick three only. *[multiple selection]***

- ☐ Being able to read scientific paleontological content online
- ☐ Creating or contributing paleontological content online
- ☐ Discovering information about fossil clubs and professional paleontologists
- ☐ Learning about paleontology projects you can participate in
- ☐ Finding out about sites where you can collect fossils
- ☐ Searching the website by phrase or tag
- ☐ Finding, using, sharing information on the website, via forums
- ☐ Access to various kinds of social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.)

### TRAINING/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**20. Which three of the following do you think are the most important for the project to include? Please pick three only. *[multiple selection]***

- ☐ Training sessions, webinars, and talks
- ☐ Earning digital badges or other incentives for certain forms of participation
- ☐ Participating in webinars or workshops about a variety of topics, such as safety training, outreach, liability, helping produce and sell publications, etc.
- ☐ Learning how to teach effectively about paleontology
- ☐ Organizing visits to institutions/sites via virtual field trips
- ☐ Playing games that involve classifying and tagging fossils
- ☐ Participating in a Master Paleontologist program

### COMMUNICATION/COLLABORATION

**21. Which three of the following do you think are the most important for the project to include? Please pick three only. *[multiple selection]***

- ☐ Seeing, updating and sharing events on a calendar
- ☐ Using rich media to create personal stories
- ☐ Chatting online with other amateur and/or professional paleontologists- one-on-one or in group discussions
- ☐ Blogging about ideas



- ☐ Collaborating with other amateurs or professionals
- ☐ Affiliating with multiple clubs
- ☐ Soliciting the help of the community for solving a problem (crowdsource)
- ☐ Contributing to fossil digitization initiatives / doing citizen science

## OUTREACH/AWARENESS OF OTHERS

**22. Which three of the following do you think are the most important for the project to include? Please pick three only. [multiple selection]**

- ☐ Formal and informal educators using lesson plans, workshops
- ☐ Newsletters being distributed to club members and other clubs
- ☐ Seeing other members who are online
- ☐ Fossil clubs discovering information about users
- ☐ Fossil clubs finding out about potential members
- ☐ Fossil clubs identifying experts in certain areas to reach out to
- ☐ Fossil clubs accessing others' blog posts and newsletters to share
- ☐ Amateur paleontologists sharing their expertise and accomplishments with professional paleontologists
- ☐ Professional paleontologists reaching out to amateur paleontologists and fossil clubs/societies.

## REAL WORLD FOSSIL ACTIVITIES

**23. Which three of the following do you think are the most important for the project to include? Please pick three only. [multiple selection]**

- ☐ Digitizing fossils and adding information
- ☐ Photo gallery of fossils
- ☐ Creating online fossil collections
- ☐ Creating identifying information for fossils
- ☐ Geotagging fossils on a virtual map
- ☐ Creating virtual fossil exhibits for others to explore

**24. Are there any activities or components of the project not included in the lists above that you would like to see added? [open response]**

## Future in-person meetings

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**25. Which of the following cities do you think would be the best for the next annual FOSSIL symposium (likely in 2015), where amateur and professional paleontologists learn together and exchange ideas and information? (please select one option) [single selection]**

- ☐ Dallas
- ☐ Denver
- ☐ Los Angeles
- ☐ Washington DC area

**26. Also, please feel free to suggest additional locations we should consider for the 2015 symposium? *[open response]***

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### **Setting up working groups**

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**27. The FOSSIL project will be setting up collaborative working groups for amateur and professional paleontologists to communicate/connect/come together. Which two of the following working groups do you think would be most important to the success of the FOSSIL project? (please select two options) *[multiple selection]***

- ☐ Content and information
- ☐ Training and professional development
- ☐ Communication and collaboration
- ☐ Outreach/awareness of others
- ☐ Real world fossil activities
- ☐ Future in-person meetings
- ☐ Newsletter best practices
- ☐ Other - please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **General information**

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**This section includes questions that will help the FOSSIL project understand which audiences we're reaching for the project, and include a variety of points of view in our decisions moving forward.**

**28. What is your gender? *[single selection]***

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

**29. What is your ethnic origin? Please select as many as apply. [multiple selections allowed]**

- ☐ White/Caucasian
- ☐ African-American
- ☐ Hispanic/Latino
- ☐ Native American / Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian/Pacific Islander
- ☐ Don't know/not sure
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**30. If you live in the United States, what is your zip code? (If from outside the U.S. please tell us which country) [open response]**

**31. Would you consider yourself to be more of an amateur or professional paleontologist? [single selection with skip pattern]**

- ☐ Amateur/Avocational paleontologist [go to next section, then skip to end]
- ☐ Professional paleontologist [skip next section]

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#### **General information continued**

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If you consider yourself an amateur paleontologist (i.e., someone who is not employed in the profession), then answer these questions. If you are employed as a paleontologist, then please skip this section.

**32. How would you describe what you do, as an amateur?**

**33. Please let us know if you have a particular area of expertise regarding fossils? [open response]**

**34. Which words or phrases would you use to describe professional paleontologists? [5 boxes for open response]**

**35. As an amateur paleontologist, have you ever worked directly with professional paleontologists? [open response]**

**35a. If Yes, please briefly describe the experience and what it was like working with professional paleontologist(s). [open response]**

**36. Do you currently belong to a fossil organization?** *[single response]*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**36a. If Yes, which one(s)?** *[open response]*

**37. If you could pick any project to work on with professional paleontologists, what would that be?** *[open response]*

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**General information continued**

**38. Which institution or organization do currently you work for?** *[open response]*

**39. How would you describe your fossil-related activities or responsibilities?** *[open response]*

**40. Which words or phrases would you use to describe amateur paleontologists? (list up to 5 answers, each in a separate box)** *[5 boxes for open response]*

**41. In your professional capacity, have you ever worked directly with amateur paleontologists?** *[open response]*

**35a. If Yes, please briefly describe the experience and what it was like working with amateur paleontologist(s).** *[open response]*

**42. If you could pick any project to work on with amateur paleontologists, what would that be?** *[open response]*

**THANK YOU!**

Thank you very much for taking time out of your day to fill out this survey. We really appreciate your responses, and they will help us improve the FOSSIL project for everyone who participates.