Dear Gillian and Vicky,

Thank you for your patience. We have spent a good deal of time over the past several weeks reviewing the publishing renewal offer and draft contract to the Botanical Society of America from Wiley. We recognize that these are unique and unprecedented times and appreciate that Wiley is striving to be a leader in the Open Access space and wants to help bring its partner society journals along. At the same time, I think we all realize that it can be difficult for high-quality/low-article journals like ours to transition to OA. We value our relationship and want to continue working with our partners at Wiley to make that transition—and also achieve successful growth and revenue-sharing while serving our authors and botanical community.

There are two main issues with the Wiley offer that cause us grave concern. We understand that under current projections, our journals look to receive decreased revenues in the short-term (next five years). However, it appears that under the current offer, Wiley has drastically cut BSA’s earnings while improving Wiley’s own revenue share by 57%. The royalty guarantee is also removed, putting the BSA more at risk.

We would ask that 1) rather than a one-sided increase in earnings at the expense of the other party, the drop in earnings should be shared equally; and 2) Wiley offers a true guaranteed royalty paid at the start of each year that does not change annually based on performance. As a nonprofit Society publisher, these items are critical to our financial stability and to a true partnership between our organizations.

To assist Wiley in improving the financial terms in the next contract, we would like to work with you on potential ideas to increase revenue. For example, we are willing to increase APCs, even perhaps beyond what Wiley has proposed, because in the short term at least we understand that APCs and transitional/transformative deals are what is funding OA. We should start with $1800 APCs for AJB immediately and perhaps move to $2000 at some point in 2022. For APPS, too, we should increase the APCs to $1575 now, and increase them over the next couple of years to bring them in line with similar methods journals. We are also planning to identify AJB authors whose papers reference novel methods and encourage them to send methods papers to APPS, thus growing the article base for our current open access journal. We are also willing to discuss what a future might look like for a third BSA publication, a transfer journal, that could pick up some of great work that is currently not being published by AJB or other Wiley plant journals.

We look forward to setting up a call to discuss these thoughts—and others you might have--with you. Our Board will be meeting again on November 22, and we would like to have an improved offer in hand to share with them at that time.