SBAG 6 FINDINGS

Finding 1. The SBAG is pleased that the PDS Small Bodies Node is developing an interface to search the numerous and diverse data sets related to small bodies. The Data Ferret has a nice interface for returning information about data on individually identified objects. At present, this is limited primarily to asteroid data and needs to include its comet data holdings. The ability to conduct more sophisticated SQL-type queries is very desired, as is a means of intelligently sifting through large volumes of imaging, spectral and other data accumulated by spacecraft for individual objects (e.g., Eros, Hartley 2, and in the near future Vesta) – perhaps using tools similar to those available for searching data on Mars and the Moon. We request regular updates on these tools at our SBAG meetings.

Finding 2. The B612 initiative to build a largely privately funded NEO survey telescope is potentially exciting. However, before NASA invests any of its limited resources in supporting this venture, there should be an external peer review of the mission design to ensure that it will satisfy NASA needs, which need to be articulated first, and that those needs are cost-effectively addressed. If the level of needed investment by PSD is equivalent to a Discovery MoO or Discovery mission, then such support should be sought through open competition from those programs.

Finding 3. Any contribution of instruments or sampling systems by NASA to the ESA Marco Polo mission should be subject to open competition among potential providers.