The annual report provides a summary of the past few years’ accomplishments and the coming years’ plans, summarized for the most part under the topical headings of the Section's Strategic Plan.

Summary, the State of the Section:

Membership in the North-Central Section stood at 3,633 members at the end of December, 2011. The Section is the third largest of the GSA Sections, comprising 15.5% of all GSA members.

In 1990, the North-Central Section Management Board initiated a long-range planning effort to enhance meeting quality and marketing, which has generally been successful. Since 1990, meeting attendance has averaged well over 600 (this includes joint-meeting attendance figures) and because of this, and the fiscal prudence of local committees, revenues from meetings usually have increased. The 2008 section meeting in Evansville, Indiana, had 574 registrants. A 2009 meeting in Rockford, Illinois, had 608 registrants, the largest number of attendees since the extremely successful Minneapolis meeting in 2005. The 2010 joint meeting with the South-Central Section in Branson, Missouri, had 828 registrants, and the 2011 joint meeting with the Northeastern Section in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, had 1,603 registrants. The 2012 meeting in Dayton, Ohio, had 558 registrants (including 205 professionals, 272 students, 36 student volunteers, and a number of other attendees in smaller categories).

A 2013 meeting in Kalamazoo, Michigan, a 2014 meeting in Lincoln, Nebraska, a 2015 meeting in Madison, Wisconsin, and a joint meeting with the Northeastern Section in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 2017 are confirmed.

The financial security of the Section remains in good shape due to the fiscal prudence of the committee running the 2012 meeting in Dayton. The balance at the end of the 2011-2012 fiscal year was $97,747, exceeding the Management Board’s target of having assets approximately equal to the cost of one typical-sized annual meeting plus operating costs, and of providing stability and of ensuring continuity of Section activities. Support for student programs comprises the vast majority of all expenditures (exclusive of meeting costs) of the Section.

For perspective, in recent years the dues income for the Section has covered the general operating costs of the Section, but has not been sufficient to support other programs. Thus the Section must continue to ensure income from the Scientific Meetings Program. The Section has allocated up to $10,100 in Section funds (mostly funds generated by Section meetings) to be used for student travel, student paper awards, and undergraduate research grants for the 2012-2013 fiscal year. Portions of the student travel funds will be matched by the GSA Foundation, so the amount given to students will be even greater.
The excellent financial state of the Section over the last decade has allowed the Section to dedicate most of its fiscal resources to support student programs and to increase the North-Central Section Endowment in the GSA Foundation. The Section had a 2007-2008 fiscal-year-end balance of $123,699. Subsequently the end-of-year balances have been less, mainly due to funds being transferred into the GSA Foundation. The Section had a 2010-2011 fiscal-year-end balance of $101,988. The 2011-2012 fiscal-year-end balance of $97,747 reflects the $12,000 transferred to the GSA Foundation during the fiscal year.

Section Endowment History

The Section has substantially increased its endowment over the years. The Board made an initial pledge and payment of $2,000 in 1996 to the North-Central Section Endowment Fund of the GSA Foundation (this Fund was referred to as the Second Century Fund in older North-Central reports to Council) with funds taken from the Section treasury (operating funds). The Management Board, at its annual meeting, has continued to approve a maximum continuing annual contribution to the Foundation. The funds from this Section endowment fund have been intended for student support. Because of the need to increase the financial stability of the Section, payments were not made over a number of years, and the amount of funds in the endowment remained very low. However, $2,000 was contributed in September of 2005, and, because of the increase in financial stability of the Section following the financial success of recent meetings, and additional, generally increasing funds have been contributed since that time. The fund continued to grow but was greatly affected by the downturn in the stock market in early 2009 and by subsequent market fluctuations. At the end of the 2008-2009 fiscal year the endowment was at $63,997. At the end of May, 2010, with a fiscal-year contribution of $20,000, plus a $5,000 match from the Foundation, the North-Central Endowment was at $100,536, but at the end of June, 2010 (the end of the 2009-2010 fiscal year), the endowment was down to $98,292. With further contributions, the ending balance of the North-Central Endowment as of the end of June, 2011, was $138,312. Because of the excellent state of the Section’s finances, in March of 2011 the Management Board approved a contribution of up to $20,000 to the GSA Foundation in fiscal year 2011-2012 and $7,000 was transferred to the endowment in September of 2011. That was matched by $5,000 from the Foundation, and the endowment at the end of fiscal year 2011-2012 totaled $154,603. A maximum contribution of $20,000 for fiscal year 2012-2013 was also approved at the 2012 meeting of the Management Board.

Scientific Meetings Program:

2012: The 46th Annual Meeting was held on 11-13 April, 2012, co-chaired by colleagues at Wright State University. The conference was held at the new Dayton Convention Center. Meeting attendance was 558. Approximately 306 papers (162 talks, 144 posters) were presented. Ten field trips were originally planned and nine were held. A total of 115 people registered for these field trips. Two workshops were planned and one was held. The meeting included a welcoming reception, a keynote speech by Michael Coates, and a successful GSA Town Hall Meeting.
2011: The 45th Annual Meeting, a joint meeting with the Northeastern Section, was held on 20-22 March, 2011. The chairs were members of the faculties of Slippery Rock University and Kent State University. The conference venue was the Omni William Penn Hotel in downtown Pittsburgh. Meeting attendance was 1,603 (including all categories of attendees). Approximately 737 papers were presented (377 talks and 360 posters). Special events included an opening reception and a banquet with two speakers (a banquet is a tradition in the Northeastern Section but not the North-Central Section and attendance reflected these different traditions). Eleven field trips were originally planned and seven were run (two of the cancelled trips were post-meeting, and the post-meeting trip that did run had a small attendance). Seven workshops were originally planned and three were held. The meeting was notable for the large number of students and for the large number of talks relating to the Devonian.

2010: The 44th Annual Meeting, a meeting held jointly with the South-Central Section, was held on 11-13 April, 2010, co-hosted by the Department of Geography, Geology, and Planning of Missouri State University and the Department of Earth Science of Emporia State University. The conference was held at the new Branson Convention Center. Meeting attendance was 828. Approximately 442 papers (271 talks, 171 posters) were presented. Appropriate to the Branson venue, there was live music at the welcoming reception on Sunday and at the Happy Hour Reception on Monday evening. Eleven field trips were originally planned of which ten field trips were held. A total of 155 people registered for these field trips. Six short courses were planned and all of the short courses were held.

The conference in Branson utilized an innovative schedule with talks beginning on Sunday at 1:00 pm and ending on Tuesday at 12:00. This schedule also allowed for half-day pre- and post-conference field trips in addition to the usual longer trips. Evaluation of the conference showed that this schedule was well received by the attendees.

Professional Development/Awards/Membership and Student Involvement:

The Section's primary Awards and Professional Development Programs are targeted to increase student involvement. Student attendance at Section meetings continues to be substantial, and has increased during the last few years. Student attendance at the 2009 meeting in Rockford was 46%, at the 2010 meeting in Branson student attendance was 43%, excluding student assistants. At the 2011 joint meeting in Pittsburgh student attendance was 53%, 848 out of 1,603 attendees, including student assistants, and at the 2012 meeting in Dayton student attendance was 55%, 308 out of 558 attendees, including student assistants.

The Section’s travel-grant support aids in student attendance. Up to $6,000 from North-Central Section operating funds have been allocated for the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 fiscal years for student travel to the GSA Annual meetings and to the Section meetings. The amounts given to students were or will be increased from these amounts by matches from the GSA Foundation.
The Section has increased maximum Student Paper Awards from $400 in 1990 to $2,000 at present.

The Roy J. Shlemon Mentor Program in Applied Geoscience and the John Mann Mentors in Applied Hydrogeology Program were held in 2011 and 2012 for students. These programs were provided through GSA headquarters. Supplementary funds were raised for the 2011 meeting, however.

GSA Campus Representatives from the Section met with the Meeting Planning and Technical Program Advisory Board and Local Committees both in 2011 and 2012 for discussion of GSA business.

**Research Grants Program:**

The Section initiated a competitive Research Grants Program for undergraduate student members in 1993. Grant application forms and procedures were developed and have been refined over time. The maximum amount of an individual grant is limited to $300. Eleven grants were again awarded in the 2010-2011 fiscal year, for a total of $2,100. In the 2011-2012 fiscal year, four grants were awarded for a total of $1,150.

**GeoScience Education:**

The Section initiated special Geoscience Education sessions at its 1990 meeting. These have now become a standard part of meeting planning. Some costs are generally underwritten by the Section, with reduced or nominal registration for all K-12 teachers. A member of the GSA Education Committee is included as an ex-officio member of the Management Board. This year’s meeting included several sessions related to K-16 geoscience education, including two oral sessions on Environmental geoscience and poster sessions of Environmental Geoscience and Geoscience Education.

**Applied and Environmental Geoscience Programs:**

The Section continues to pursue greater involvement from professionals in the private sector in environmental geology, engineering geology/geotechnical engineering, and hydrogeological consulting. The Section initiated this with a highly successful effort at the 1991 meeting. Special sessions for, and by, consultants have been encouraged for all meetings. The 2011 Pittsburgh meeting included a number of sessions of relevance to applied geology. These included the sessions: Innovative data management and visualization in applied geology and other applied topics; Engineering geology/slope stability/mine subsidence; Marcellus – exploration and production; Marcellus—production and disposal of produced water; and Applied geology: environmental, engineering and hydrogeologic applications. The 2012 Dayton meeting included the following sessions of relevance to applied geology: Applications of remote sensing to the geological and environmental sciences; Applications, quantification, and modeling of groundwater—surface-water Interactions; CO₂ Sequestration; Geothermal Resources of the Central United States—An Important Source of Renewable Energy; Mercury Biogeochemistry;
Publications Program:

The Section’s field-trip guidebooks serve as important legacies of the Section meetings. The geological guidebook for the 2005 Minneapolis meeting was published and is available from the Minnesota Geological Survey. Three guidebooks prepared for the 2006 Akron meeting are available from the Ohio Geological Survey; two of these were published in 2006 and the third, on the geologic setting and processes along Lake Erie, was published in 2010. One of the guidebooks for the 2007 Lawrence meeting has been published as Kansas Geological Survey Open-File Report 2008-2. The field-trip guidebook for the 2008 meeting, From the Cincinnati Arch to the Illinois Basin: Geological Field Excursions along the Ohio River Valley, was published as Geological Society of America Field Guide 12 and the field-trip guidebook for the 2010 meeting, From Precambrian Rift Volcanoes to the Mississippian Shelf Margin: Geological Field Excursions in the Ozark Mountains, was published as Geological Society of America Field Guide 17. The guidebook for the 2011 meeting was published as From the Shield to the Sea: Geological Field Trips from the 2011 Joint Meeting of the GSA Northeastern and North-Central Sections (Geological Society of America Field Guide 20) and the guidebook for the 2012 meeting was published as On and around the Cincinnati Arch and Niagara Escarpment: Geological Field Trips in Ohio and Kentucky for the GSA North-Central Section Meeting (Geological Society of America Field Guide 27).

Cooperation with Other Professional Societies:

The Section continues to foster cooperation with other societies by providing opportunities for joint meetings and sponsorship opportunities. Societies sponsoring sessions, and/or having programs, breakfasts, or luncheons at the combined Section meeting in 2011 included: the Pander Society, the North-Central Section of the Paleontological Society, the Great Lakes Section of the Society for Sedimentary Geology, the Central Section of NAGT, the Council on Undergraduate Research, and the Northern Ohio Geological Society. Societies sponsoring sessions, and/or having programs, breakfasts, or luncheons at the Section meeting in 2012 included the Central Section of NAGT, the Pander Society and IGCP Projects 591 and 596, the North-Central Section of the Paleontological Society, the Great Lakes Section of the Society for Sedimentary Geology, the Council on Undergraduate Research—Geoscience Division; the Geological Curators Group; and the GSA Archaeological Geology Division. The Paleontological Society Council also had its mid-year meeting in conjunction with the section meeting.

Long-Range Planning and Coordination:

As a result of its long-range planning the Section has continued to review and implement better marketing strategies for its meetings and activities, has tried to increase attendance at its
meetings, has stabilized financially, and has continued to support several student programs. The confirmed meeting schedule is:

- 2013: Kalamazoo, Michigan
- 2014: Lincoln, Nebraska
- 2015: Madison, Wisconsin
- 2016: open
- 2017: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (joint with the Northeastern Section)

As preparation for these meetings, two North-Central Section meeting organizers attended a training session in Boulder in May of 2012. The Section’s policy in recent years has been to use Section operating funds to send people to this session in addition to the one person per section paid for by GSA Headquarters. The North-Central Section Planning and Technical Program Advisory Board met at the 2011 meeting in Pittsburgh to discuss aspects of the technical program.

There was a promotional booth for the Kalamazoo meeting at the meeting in Dayton. Such booths have become standard at North-Central Section meetings. Section representatives also promoted the then-upcoming Dayton meeting at the Section exhibit area at the GSA Annual Meeting in Minneapolis in 2011.

**North-Central Section Website:**

The Section website is continuing to be built as part of the main Geological Society of America site. Besides basic information on the section, the site includes Reports to GSA Council and the Minutes of the North-Central Section Management Board Meeting for those wishing more information on the history of the section and its finances.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Hannibal
Executive Secretary, North-Central Section