NRSP1 Management Committee Call NOTES
Date: 4/22/2025
Time: 2 pm ET, 1 pm CT, 12 noon MT, 11 am PT

NRSP1 Management Committee Members
Chris Hamilton, Chair and NIMSS Lead, NCRA
Bret Hess (AA), WAAESD
Jeanette Thurston (lead AA), agNC
David Leibovitz (AA), NERA
Cindy Morley (AA), SAAESD
Rick Rhodes, NERA
Gary Thompson, SAAESD
Jennifer Horton, WAAESD
Alton Thompson, ARD
Julie Estrada (NIMSS User), Purdue University
Robin Williams (NIMSS User), Clemson University
Sara Delheimer (ESS Program Coordinator), Ex-officio
Faith Peppers (NIFA Director of Communications), NIFA Liaison
Tara Warner (NIFA PARS Director), NIFA Liaison
Email list: nrsp1@escop.info
Committee Page: http://escop.info/committee/nrsp-1-management-committee/

Attendees: Jeanette Thurston, Cindy Morley, Robin Williams, Tara Warner, Faith Peppers, Gary Thompson, Bret Hess, Chris Hamilton, Parker Parham

Action Items:

- Chris to send scheduling poll for next quarterly call (July); please watch for this and enter your availability.

Call Agenda/Notes:

1. Roll call and Welcome – Chris
   - Chris introduced Parker Parha, one of our main Clemson NIMSS Team Members
2. NIMSS Update – Parker went through the last quarter's NIMSS updates they've made. Everyone on the call expressed much gratitude to Parker for all his quick work and responsiveness. Parker in turn thanked everyone for being easy to work with.
3. NIFA PARS Update (staffing, NIFA reps, etc.) – Tara (if available) – Nothing to report on their end, other than data scientist Stephanie Morris is no longer with the team.
4. MRF Impact Program Q1 2025 Update – Sara reviewed her 2025 Q1 impact program update, included below.
5. NIFA Communications Update – Faith (if available) – not much to update on NIFA's end, other than approvals for social media posts are starting back up again, so expect more engagement

from NIFA's social media team. Many NIFA staff members have taken the retirement offer package, so staffing is lower and things may take longer than before.

6. Other Items, as needed.
   - Midterm Review – Jeanette reviewed the submitted NRSP1 midterm review form (also included below). Review was very positive for both NRSP1 objectives.

Call adjourned at 1:25 pm CT.

Fathom AI recording and summary:

VIEW RECORDING - 29 mins (No highlights)

Meeting Purpose

Quarterly NRSP1 Management Committee call to discuss updates on NIMS, PARS, impact reporting, and NIFA communications.

Key Takeaways

- **NIMS updates include improved budget handling, user interface enhancements, and security measures**

- **MRF Impact program continues strong performance across various platforms, with declining Twitter engagement but growth on Facebook and LinkedIn**

- **NIFA social media faced temporary pauses, but efforts are being made to resume sharing of MRF content**

- **NRSP1 received an outstanding rating (10/10) in its midterm review for both major goals**

Topics

NIMS Updates

- **Description on literature cited form for projects updated**

- **Midterm reviews form now supports more blank fields for non-final submissions**

- **NRSP budgets improved, especially "other budget sources" now grouped by source in separate tables**

- **Default to zero added on budget forms when fields are left blank**

- **Appendix E's no longer require validation checks when status is set to "removed"**

- **User email search now case insensitive**

- **Additional security measures implemented against bot search requests**

- **Station participant's PDF updated to exclude rejected and removed users**

- **Improved validation messages for milestone year entries**

- **Project and user search capabilities extended to more users' homepages**

PARS Update

- **Data scientist Stephanie Morris has decided to take the DRP and will no longer be with the team**

- **Otherwise, status quo maintained for PARS operations**

MRF Impact Program Q1 Report

- **Multiple impact statements completed and distributed via email and newsletter**

- **S-1071 (STEM education) and Asian Influenza projects featured in APLU monthly toolkit**

- **Strong continued performance of previously shared projects on NIFA's blog/impact page**

- **Impact writing training workshops planned for each region in 2024**

- **Social media performance: Twitter/X declining, Facebook and LinkedIn growing**

- **Website traffic and newsletter distribution maintaining steady performance**

NIFA Communications Update

- **Temporary pause on NIFA social media in February and March**

- **Efforts underway to resume sharing MRF content on NIFA channels**

- **Pre-approval process for social media posts still in place, causing some delays**

NRSP1 Midterm Review

- **Received outstanding rating (10/10) for both major goals**

Q1 2025 NIMSS Updates:

- Updated the description on the 'Literature Cited' form for projects.

- Enhanced MidTermReviews to support more nullable fields.

- Updated RSA Notes to allow emojis and special characters.

- Major improvements to NRSP Budgets:

  - 'Other Budget' sources are now grouped by source in separate tables for improved clarity.

  - Added the ability to remove 'Other Budget' sources.

  - 'Other Budget' no longer displays if all values are zero across NRSP projects.

  - Added an error message if multiple 'Other Budget' entries are created with identical source info.

  - Improved read-only view (inputs now appear as plain text).

  - Fields default to 0 when left blank, preventing errors.

  - Users can now rename other funding budgets.

- Reduced validation checks when switching an AppE status to "Removed."

- Meeting authorizations can now only be completed by RSAs and project AAs.

- Fixed a bug on the AppH form where the II1c field was not saving correctly.

- Added additional security measures to protect against bot inquiries.

- User email search is now case insensitive.

- Added user and project search to all user homepages.

- Users can now search by project name in the 'Edit Station Participants' view.

- Improved the validation message when setting a Milestone Year to a non-numeric value.

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NRSP1 Mid Term Review

RELEVANCE

Is there evidence of stakeholder use of project outputs?   YES

Are there project outcomes that aid in development of or contribute to the discussion of public policy?
                                                                                    YES

COMMENTS: *NRSP1 has two key objectives, with the second being: "Effectively document and communicate the impacts of multistate research, enhance the utility of MRF Impacts materials, and improve the capacity of Hatch Multistate project participants and others to report their impacts." This objective plays a critical role in ensuring that science-based outcomes inform public policy discussions.*

Data collection of the impact of outreach efforts by the MRF Program Coordinator/Writer demonstrates significant success in disseminating MRF outcomes, reaching thousands through multiple communication channels, including newsletters and social media. Additionally, the annual training provided to diverse audiences equips participants with the skills and knowledge necessary to further amplify these messages, expanding the reach and impact of multistate research.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NRSP

Management and Business Plan

Is the NRSP making progress on the implementation, and management of the business plan and meeting funding expectations?   YES

COMMENTS: *NRSP1 continues to serve as a vital internal management system, supporting a diverse stakeholder base in achieving Objective 1: "Maintain and enhance the effectiveness, functionality, and utilization of NIMSS." Throughout this reporting period, the NRSP1 management team has consistently improved NIMSS, incorporating enhancements based on user feedback from the Agricultural Experiment Station (AES) system.*

In early 2024, the NRSP1 management team (RSAs) collaborated with Clemson ITT to beta test and then launch an upgraded NIMSS system. This NIMSS 2.0 release includes an updated database framework, data query systems, faster search and information display functions, and more comprehensive system testing, all of which make implementing regular software updates easier and reduce potential security vulnerabilities. This suite of upgrades further streamlines multistate project management and reporting. For those accessing NIMSS on their mobile devices, pages and function display in a more user-friendly fashion than previously and allow for quick and effective access on the go; no more waiting to return to the office to add new users, authorize meetings, upload files, etc. Users can accomplish just about all tasks on the mobile site as they would on the desktop version.

Stakeholders widely recognize the effective management of NIMSS, particularly the team's rapid response to requests and prompt implementation of user-driven improvements. Clemson ITT remains an exceptional partner in overseeing NIMSS, ensuring it remains a responsive, user-friendly platform for organizing, storing, and sharing critical information related to multistate research project review, reporting, and impact assessment.

In 2024, NRSP1 updated the Rules of Operation to improve and streamline the management of NRSP1.

Financially, NRSP1 continues to meet funding expectations. A necessary increase in support for the MRF Program Coordinator/Writer was successfully implemented, and the 2025 budget allocation of $253,395 came in slightly below the projected $259,754, demonstrating responsible budget management.

Progress toward objectives and projected outcomes:

Has the NRSP made demonstrable progress towards the original objectives, demonstrated productivity and linked project goals, actual accomplishments and any impacts to date?

YES

COMMENTS: *As previously stated, NRSP1 has made significant progress toward its two primary objectives: managing and enhancing NIMSS and expanding the visibility of multistate research impacts through diverse communication platforms. These efforts directly benefit the Agricultural Experiment Station (AES) system by improving efficiency, accessibility, and outreach.*

Key activities—including the testing and rollout of a new NIMSS system, strategic impact communication, continuous optimization of NRSP1 management, and proactive integration of user-driven enhancements—have strengthened the effectiveness of NIMSS as a critical research management, review, and reporting tool. By aligning system improvements with stakeholder needs, NRSP1 has enhanced both the functionality of NIMSS and the reporting of multistate research outcomes.

Integration:

- Has the NRSP clearly demonstrated integration, collaboration and built partnerships as described in the proposal?   YES

COMMENTS: *NRSP1 does an exceptional job of integrating and collaborating with key stakeholders (e.g., NIFA, regional association leadership, Clemson IT, and communications) in the management and oversight of NIMSS and multistate research impacts communications as mentioned in other sections of this review. Good examples during the reporting period include working closely with regional stakeholders and Clemson ITT in upgrading and testing NIMSS for enhanced functionality and security.*

Outreach, Communications and Assessment:

- Does the NRSP clearly identify and interact with the intended stakeholders?   YES
- Has the NRSP implemented methodology to measure the accomplishments, outcomes and impact of the project and effectiveness of the communication plan?   YES
- Has the NRSP effectively communicated project results to stakeholders and others?   YES
- **COMMENTS** for above three bullets:
  NRSP1 leadership maintains a strong commitment to responsiveness and stakeholder engagement, ensuring that the management of NIMSS and the communication of multistate research impacts align with the needs of key audiences. The primary stakeholders of NRSP1 include the Agricultural Experiment Station (AES) system and NIFA, with additional stakeholders encompassing a broad network of individuals who receive multistate research impact communications through the efforts of the MRF Program Coordinator/Writer.

  The active participation of regional association leadership, NIMSS users, MRF Program Coordinator/Writer, and NIFA in NRSP1 remain crucial to the system's success. Quarterly NRSP1 meetings serve as a vital forum for discussing NIMSS system improvements, addressing emerging issues, and identifying opportunities to enhance system effectiveness. Additionally, ongoing stakeholder engagement and feedback throughout the year informs refinements to NIMSS functionality. The four NIMSS Regional System Administrators (RSAs) play a central role as primary points of contact, providing training and support to university administrators, program managers, investigators, business officers, and station staff. RSAs facilitate the integration of user feedback, ensuring continuous improvements that enhance system usability and efficiency. The MRF Program Coordinator/Writer also engages directly with the greater Land-grant system on national level committees including the APLU BAA Communications and Marketing Committee, National Impacts Database communications team, and during national level professional meetings (e.g., Association of Communication Excellence, National Extension and Research Officers Conference).

Furthermore, regularly monitored metrics, reviewed during NRSP1 quarterly meetings, highlight the significant reach and impact of multistate research communications. The oversight of these outreach data by the MRF Program Coordinator/Writer provides clear evidence of broad dissemination across multiple communication platforms, reinforcing NRSP1's essential role in amplifying the visibility and value of multistate research.

- Should the project continue to be funded at the proposed levels?   YES