

Understanding the ecological and social constraints to achieving sustainable fisheries resource policy and management (NC1189)

Research Team Meeting - Wednesday, September 7th, 2010, 9:00 a.m.; Seattle, WA

Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome and introductions

In Attendance:

Bruce Vondracek – University of Minnesota
Dave Wahl – University of Illinois
Mark Pegg – University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Carrie Simon – Cornell University
Reggie Harrell – University of Maryland
Barb Knuth – Cornell University
Mazieka Sullivan – Ohio State University
Doug Buhler (Administrative Advisor) – Michigan State University, AES
Bill Taylor (Chair) – Michigan State University
Chiara Zuccarino-Crowe – Michigan State University
Melissa Wuellner – South Dakota State University
Ingrid Biedron – Cornell University

2. Update on project status

- The most important thing – our project was approved! Congratulations to all.
- The primary comment from reviewers that we need to address in future activities was that the project was a bit broad and needs increased cohesiveness to be as effective a multistate program as it has the potential to be. We will work as a group to further refine our focus and make stronger multistate linkages and comparisons.
- It's important to remember that the goal/purpose is to do something that we wouldn't have accomplished otherwise without a multistate proposal.
- This is an opportunity to collaborate, make connections, and develop additional projects through facilitation of our committee meetings, making a difference in fisheries ecology, management and sustainability.
- Often these types of groups end up developing into a grant writing group or research team that writes papers together, ultimately bringing more focus, recognition and depth to our research programs.

3. Review logistics (next steps, accessing AES funding, etc.)

- It is important to make contact with your state AES station and find out the process they follow to facilitate your work on this multistate project. Each Station is different and it is best to inform your State Director or Representative about progress you are making and any needs you have. If you don't know who this is, Doug can help you track down which person to contact.
- It would be a good idea to arrange a meeting with that contact to make sure you understand what they need for their process.

- There are requirements to show investment of 25% of dollars in “multi-state” activities. When Michigan AES has made allocations in the past, it has looked for the best opportunities to leverage funds. So, using the AES research platform and funding, we should be pursuing opportunities to generate additional funds and activities. This will be viewed positively by the Multistate group and should improve our chances of being competitive for funding and continuance in the future.
- In short - emphasizing successes and efforts to leverage external matching funds to increase visibility and cache with State AES Directors, increases the likelihood of future support.
- Good news from NY – submitted proposal to their AES that was awarded 5 yrs. of funding. It can be done!
- As is often the case, funding is limited, so often times the travel support might be the extent of support in some states (at least at the beginning).
- Note: If you have HATCH research dollars, you should have a HATCH project. You can use a multi-state project to compliment a HATCH or *vice versa*. It can be complimentary; however, you will have to make sure it’s not duplicative.

4. Annual reports and development of impact statements and accomplishments

- Reporting requirements:
 - Annual reports are due ~60 days after the meeting. There is one report for the entire committee. Chiara will facilitate getting this year’s report together, with assistance from project participants as needed.
 - Each year’s report will require a list of accomplishments under the different objectives. Participants are expected to supply this information when requested by the committee chair and secretary.
 - There will be a mid-term review in about two years that outlines progress that has been made to date. This review is primarily done by the Administrative Advisor. At the meeting closest to the review, we would have a discussion about progress and the AA would file the review. It would then go to a committee that would make a recommendation to the full group of Experiment Station directors. Generally, if the committee is functioning well, doing something unique, and is following protocol, the mid-term review is a simple and clean process and we should be able to proceed.
- Impact statements (tips on preparation, etc. Examples provided by Cornell):
 - Think about what being part of the group has allowed you to leverage – whether it be funding or ideas or research.
 - Report on what is happening with the research, itself.
 - Has the project allowed you to do research on a broader scale (geographic, content, etc.)?
 - Think about changes in behavior or thinking. In addition to our own behavior, think about changes prompted over time in the agencies and stakeholder groups we work with (e.g. behavioral, policy, management decisions).

- Think about improvements in the way we're able to think synthetically about our projects.
- Impact statements can also be helpful for assisting project participants to learn about what others on the team are doing.
- Remember to use hard statistics of measurable outcomes/impacts.
- Doug will provide some examples of good annual reports and impact statements for distribution to the group that Chiara will email to everyone.

5. Discuss process to refine project scope and enhance cohesiveness

- Can impact statements help us define how we refine our project?
- What will the process be to accomplish greater cohesiveness? How will we engage each other and other researchers to move forward? (e.g. is our goal to submit a proposal for external funding by a certain date?)
- Are there commonalities in methods that we could compare across our different areas? Is there a separate piece that pulls us together? Where can we find that point of synthesis that will help us pull our results together?
- At this stage, it's important to think a couple years ahead.
- Who is our target group? Right now it's us – but who should our target group be? How do we look at target outcomes? Will our audience be others that attend future meetings? Administrators? Answers to these questions may help us stay on target.
- We need to figure out what we can rally around as a group, and then at the next meeting really get into how we can make progress on that.
- Are our fish communities and their habitats better due to what we are doing; are the fisheries more sustainable?
- Brainstorm ideas for synthesis in project focus:
 - Jeremy Bruskotter could be a potential contact; his work appears to be in line with the subproject that Jim Perry's group is working on.
 - Keith Gido could be doing similar things in Kansas to what they're doing in MN, and then there could be a compare/contrast for different areas of the country
 - Reggie Harrell is especially interested in the ethical perspectives of sustainability; challenge to think beyond typical approaches
 - Support interaction between biological aspects of the research within the social realm (Objectives 3 and 4).
 - Meta-analysis of process/themes regarding how different groups approach Objective #4.
 - What are the governance systems today and how might we expand those to focus on sustainability?
 - Communication between groups in Ecosystem-based management
- In preparation for next year's meeting, the group should host a symposium refining what our focus is, and what our issues/roadblocks are. This could be used as the lead-in to crafting an additional proposal that enhances our relevance and usefulness.
- Symposium discussion:

- AFS2012 would likely be receptive to this and it is to be located in Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN
- Bruce Vondracek will follow up with symposia organizer to let him know we are interested.
- We would try to have our NC_1189 group meeting following the symposia to begin efforts at getting to “low-hanging fruit”
- Overlaying Obj. 3&4 on Obj. 1&2 could be a neat angle for the symposium theme. We could highlight a couple topics (climate change, invasive species, land use, etc., and emphasize the human dimensions overlay on top of that).
- Would like to have reflections from the group after each highlighted topic
- Need to decide on what product we want people to walk out of symposium with
- How can we best address the project objectives with the symposium and still market it in a way to make people want to attend the whole thing?
- Bruce can be point person on the symposium, but additional volunteers are needed. Other symposium organizing workgroup members: Carrie Simon; Melissa Wuellner.
- Chiara will help serve as liaison with the larger research team.
- Please send ideas of who to approach to speak about different topics to symposium organizing team.

6. Communication strategy

- Email is preferred method of communication amongst group members
- Conference calls will be necessary occasionally
- Once-a-year meeting at AFS

7. Expand reach to other geographic areas?

- Need for representation from Virginia Tech, Iowa State, and others.
- At some point, we should also expand to the west and the gulf states
- Is broadening our reach going to make the project more scattered?
- It may be worth having some additional investment in refining the project scope *first*, and then contact others who can build within that more targeted approach.
- Once we further refine scope, some ideas for getting the word out to a larger group:
 - Annual state AES directors meeting (usually at end of September)
 - Contact other regional AES directors
 - Write personal notes to investigators who we know might be interested in this topic and committee.

8. Date of next meeting and expectations

- Discussion of possibility of being congruent with the World Fishery Conference, Edinburgh, Scotland; May 7-11
 - Since the next AFS meeting is in August, concerned about participation logistics.

- Barb Knuth, Mark Pegg, and Bill Taylor will likely be at Scotland meeting. However, logistically, more people may be able to make the AFS meeting in MN.
- Perhaps we will have an informal meeting in Scotland, but have the official group meeting at AFS in August.
- Decision: **Next meeting during AFS in MN; August 19-23, 2012.**
- Since we will be an official project as of Oct. 1, for next year's meeting we will need reports on everyone's progress under each of the objectives.

9. Other discussion items

- Request for advice on how to improve AES receptiveness to support fisheries projects:
 - Demonstrate the group is working on a competitive project, writing papers, or getting grant funds.
 - Highlight research that ties in with areas of interest to agriculture?
 - Demonstrate productive record of research; highlight funding already secured for portions of projects.
 - Demonstrate project results are being used by policy makers and that these are creating more sustainable and prosperous riparian fisheries communities
- We are seeking names of members to add to the executive committee (who have a breadth of disciplinary expertise and geographic area). Please nominate self or others.
- Participants from non-AES institutions are welcome to take part as cooperators, but cannot get funding through AES.
- Helpful links:
 - Project outline: <http://www.nimss.umd.edu/homepages/outline.cfm?trackID=13136>
 - List of official participants with Appendix E forms: <http://www.nimss.umd.edu/homepages/member.cfm?trackID=13136>

Recap of Action Items:

- Chiara Z-C will facilitate preparation and submission of this year's meeting report.
- Doug Buhler will provide some examples of good annual reports and impact statements for distribution to the group.
- Additional volunteers are needed for organization of next year's symposium at AFS. Contact Bruce Vondracek (bvondrac@umn.edu) if interested in helping.
- Send ideas on who should speak about different topics to symposium organizing team.
- Next team meeting will be scheduled to occur during AFS in MN; August 19-23, 2012.