



NE 1049 Multistate Research Project Minutes

Date: February 15, 2017

Location: La Fonda Hotel, Santa Fe, New Mexico

Attending: David Shideler, Oklahoma State University, Chair
John Halstead, University of New Hampshire, Vice Chair and Secretary
Warren Kriesel, University of Georgia
Phil Watson, University of Idaho
Dawn Thilmany, Colorado State University
Tom Harris, University of Nevada-Reno
Steve Deller, University of Wisconsin
Mark Skidmore, Michigan State University
Yong Chen, Oregon State University
Mike Betz, the Ohio State University
Jungmin Lim, Michigan State University

Meeting began at 1 p.m., MST.

1. Motion was made, seconded, and moved to approve minutes from NE 1049 2016 Meeting in Washington, DC
2. Discussion about incoming secretary/vice chair. Mike Betz of the Ohio State University was noted as having interest. Mike later arrived at the meeting and confirmed this. He is now the incoming vice chair/secretary and will move into the slot next year when John Halstead Becomes Chair.
3. Dave Shideler noted that our new project director is David Leibovitz. Our Project Advisor is Tim Phipps at West Virginia University.
4. Discussion then turned to whether the group believed we should submit NE 1049 for an Award of Excellence. General sentiment was that we should, although someone will need to take a leadership role. We would be able to work from the project's termination report, which is due 90 days after 1049's project end date of 9/30/2017.
5. **Project renewal.** NE 1049 is scheduled to end this year, and we need to put together a new project proposal. Dave Shideler has agreed to take the lead in completing our project termination report.

A major issue brought up was that we don't yet have an idea of what the priorities of Secretary of Agriculture nominee Purdue (who has not yet been confirmed) will be; this in turn will presumably drive USDA's priorities in research and outreach, as well as the

various USDA undersecretary selections. The group agreed to ask for a one-year extension of the current project under its current goals. This request would need to go to Tim Phipps. With these issues in mind, the group discussed how we could make progress in drafting a new proposal; some of the key points/possible project foci raised follow.

- (general comment) We need to construct a template which is flexible enough to fit USDA's priorities, then fit individual state project to project goals
- There is a proliferation of health care issues, and much uncertainty with current activity in congress, that has the potential to greatly affect rural areas
- Changes in labor availability in rural areas is a potential area for research, also related to possible federal proposals. If labor becomes more expensive, more automation may result. This can affect economic distortion, labor participation rates, economic goal setting, etc. at the community level
- How changes in federal policies/federal land management will affect income and employment/issues of transfer of ownership from federal to state government, effects on taxation at the local/state level. Other issues of public land policy, especially water policy.
- Movement away from extractive industries to retirement/tourism based economies in rural areas; opposite effect with fracking areas?
- Oil/fracking; threshold price of oil to make fracking viable; regulatory effects
- Resilience as key factor; what did we learn from last recession
- Energy in more general terms e.g. renewables, issues of regional vs. local energy storage for solar. How can rural area participate? Who wants higher oil prices?
- Solar power—interaction between weather and output; link into “traditional” energy suppliers
- Clean energy development and effects on rural counties
- Local/regional effects of renewable energy pipelines, powerlines, etc. developed. Noted that MIT has a paper on incentives for wind energy.
- Do we want to continue focus on local foods? Probably want to wait until we know USDA's priorities. Rural entrepreneurship is a broader area of research which encompass food but also tourism/ recreation.
- Refining tools of analysis: IMPLAN, CGE—model to affect modeling efforts—agriculture and forestry models. Need production function to build region specific models.
- Set of representative counties to build REMI-CGE-COMPAS type models for general use
- Should we revisit COMPAS approach? Public open access implant? “median county” model? Like the open source modeling done by West Virginia (IO-Snap)? Should we work this into a larger NIFA grant?
- Retirement/wealth distribution issues. With the retirement of the first generation to fully embrace individual retirement accounts, there may be an intergenerational shift in wealth which didn't occur with e.g. pensions.

6. Next year's meeting place for NE 1049. Western Regional Science Meetings are in Pasadena, California. Southern Regional Science Association has not yet announced a location but presumably will at their upcoming annual meeting at the end of March.
7. Station Reports. A round table presentation was made by attendees on completed and ongoing research.
8. The current chair will obtain approval for next year's meeting as well as find a room at the meeting site and prepare the annual/terminal report (depending on approval of an extension).

Adjourned 3:22 p.m. MST.