WERA1013 – Friday Oct 7, 2016 – 1-5pm

Iowa State University campus

Attendees

Anna Talcott – ISU graduate student

Austin Gimondo – ISU graduate student

Brandon Miller – ISU graduate student

Zachary Hudson – ISU graduate student

Karen Panter – University of Wyoming

Bill Graves (chair-elect/sec) taking Genhua’s place – Iowa State University

Heidi Kratsch – University of Nevada Reno

Mikel Stephens – Brigham Young University

Jim Klett – Colorado State University

Tracy Dougher – Montana State University - taking notes

Prior to the business meeting, the group toured and met with horticulture leaders from the Des Moines Botanic Garden, a private industry prairie installation, and Iowa Department of Transportation to understand state and local efforts regarding native plants.

Bill Graves opened and conducted the meeting, as secretary/chair-elect as Genhua Niu (chair) was unable to attend.

The ISU graduate students introduced themselves to the group. Heidi Kratsch gave a history of WERA1013 and members shared the requirements and structure of the NIMSS multistate-groups.

Via Bill, Brett reminded the group that the renewal proposal due next year (Jan 2018) and that a thorough discussion is needed at the next meeting to assemble the proposal (Oct 2017).

Need elections this year – Heidi Kratsch was nominated for secretary/chair-elect (sec 2017 & 2018, chair 2019 & 2020). The group unanimously approved her election.

Decision on location and timing of 2017 meeting – Montana was suggested as the next host and Tracy agreed. The meeting will be Oct 5-7, 2017 (general schedule similar to this year, arrive by 5pm Thursday, leave on Saturday after morning tours).

Annual report – The group refreshed their memories on the annual reports and decided that the chair should be assembling the annual report from the station reports. Bill will send a reminder to Genhua. Everyone (even those that are absent) needs to turn in their station reports by Oct 31 to Genhua so that she can generate the annual report within 60 days after the meeting. Bill will also send the template to Genhua to share with everyone.

Website – University of Wyoming has redone their entire website. They can continue to host for the time being. Wyoming is currently undergoing large budget cuts. Thinking of scenarios, Karen could retire (nothing in stone or paper) and WERA1013 would not have a WY rep if that happens. WERA1013 website is OK for the coming year but should consider a possible move.

Plant species additions to website – It was determined that Stephen Love has the list from last year and we do not know what is still needed. It was decided that each member should select 2 species that are not on the list and send the names to Heidi. Heidi will be sure we are not duplicating.

Station reports

Heidi Kratsch – Plant Choices for Wildfire-prone areas

Karen Panter – Sunflower behavior in greenhouse and high tunnels

Tracy Dougher – Commercializing Production of Montana Native Plants

Jim Klett – Plant Select, increasing stock plants

Mikel Stephens – breeding native flowers for drought tolerant urban landscapes

Anna Talcott– Ptelea

Zachary Hudson – Dirca

Austin Gimondo– algal waste in bioplastics

Brandon Miller- Hickory

Research/Funding related to fire resistance – At the previous meeting the group had considered the importance of fire resistance in the landscape. Heidi’s station report brought the group up to speed on the latest information. Basically, while there are several publications on fire resistant plants, the science does not back up the lists. There is little to no research on what affects plant flammability and fire resistance. WERA1013 should consider looking into this type of research considering the current wildfire increase. The group decided that we should include a warning on the website that ‘native’ does not necessarily indicate fire resistance. Heidi will work with Ed Smith on crafting wording.

Mikel Stephens gave an update on Stephen Love. Mikel conveyed that Stephen is still willing to put the native plant bulletin of the native plant cooperativbe together with a deadline around Dec 1. WERA1013 members should put together their research reports and have them ready to send. Stephen will let us know when he has recovered.

Bill adjourned the meeting.

Immediately post business meeting, the group toured the Iowa Native Tree Nursery (Michael Blevin). Saturday morning the group toured a native seed production facility.