*SERA-46 Meeting Minutes*

*January 29-31, 2019*

*Hilton Baton Rouge Capitol Center, 201 Lafayette St, Baton Rouge, LA 70801*

**Tuesday, January 29, 2019 – Capitol Room- HTF Meeting Canceled**

**Wednesday, January 30, 2019 – Capitol Room- SERA-46 Meeting (All Day)**

*Zoom Details:*

*Join from PC, Mac, Linux, or mobile device:* [*https://msstateextension.zoom.us/j/824068493*](https://msstateextension.zoom.us/j/824068493)

*Dial In Numbers (if needed):*

*+1 646 876 9923 US*

*+1 669 900 6833 US*

*Meeting ID: 824 068 493*

*Breakfast & Refreshments provided*

8:00am SERA-46 Meeting-Louisiana Room: Welcome/Introductions

*What do you think is the best thing that SERA-46 has done so far? If you are new to SERA-46, why did you join this committee?*

* Meeting with HTF
* Learning about work around basin
* Education impacts
* Fostering collaboration
* Networking & working groups, partnerships
* Integrating LGUs w/HTF via cooperative agreement
* Evolution & productivity to EPA/HTF’s goals
* In-state relationships/goals through SERA-46
* Bridge farmers to HTF
* Relationship w/HTF
* Boots on the ground for HTF & SERA-46

8:30am Integrating Current Projects: How do current projects frame the new proposal or how do you envision outcomes of the current work to be leveraged over the next 3-5 years?

*Rebecca Power & Amanda Gumbert, Reid Christianson, Ron Cossman, open floor*

**Reid-Walton Family Foundation Work:** Reid Christianson discussed some of the work he is leading exploring opportunities to collaborate towards HTF goals and Ag industry. He discussed ways to strengthen networks across other multistate committees, LGUs and other agencies. There was some discussion as a group regarding the need to continue to develop new tools and increase our knowledge-base while at the same time continue to validate the practices that are in place. One of the major issues is to monitor in a way that we can track progress. There is a real need to find ways to not only implement effective ways to manage nutrients so they don’t end up in the environment, but also being able to quantify progress.

* Aims to Enhance Science Assessment Piece in States
* Work moving into Kentucky
* Understanding what we’re doing on the ground and how tracking process
* Aligning work w/ HTF NPS working group
* Internal work for Walton FF
* Focus of WFF on impact- their funding ROI/ impact & legacy of conservation
* Potential to integrate WFF w/specific state strategies?
* EQUIP & CSP across all states 🡪 pulling EPA 319 data; NCRS data aggregated by HUC 12
* The data is open & avail to HTF – how do we get access?
* Do we house the data at a LGU?
* Formalizing the process ask to federal to facilitate science assessments @ state level (federal and state)
* How do we account for long-term practices?
* FSA has spatially explicit polygons

-Can’t use geospatial context

**Specific Needs from Conversation:**

* How can NRCS data become publicly available? Concern: wide range of interpretation
* Starting point to make available to SERA-46
* Need for guidance on drawing valuable and appropriate conclusions
* Can utilize Resource Acts Reports @ State level
* Action item: a publication on how to soundly use and interpret available data
* \*FACT sheet > about how to use the data appropriately
* Educational opportunity of how to use this data appropriately
* Mike Daniels- The WFF work has had huge impact on money AR Nut. Red. Strat. Forward.
* New Farm Bill provisions state that USDA secretary shall make data publicly available
* Understanding the data: Where does state & federal data dovetail?
* Soon to be available: CTIC - tillage & Cover crop acrage (HUC8) from Sat imagery [OPTIS] 75% accuracy
* TNC will have access to all information

**Rebecca and Amanda: building watershed capacity**

* Rebecca Power: The Build Watershed Leadership Capacity project aims to continue engaging diverse stakeholders
* Including state leaders/ issues
* Emphasizing communication as key element
* Working to expand 12 state network
* Focus on building farmers & farm advisor relationships
* Remaining as a critical bridge- Broad SERA-46 training opps.
* \*Amanda Gumbert- strengthening farmer leadership-strengthening networks
* Connections – food industry- or food quality & production
  + Field & market
* Potential to engage with Conservation tillage technology conference in LA 300-400 ppl
  + Bridging food systems w/ farm production\*

9:00-9:15am Briefing on Renewing SERA-46 Proposal (10-15 mins)

*Eric Young, Southern Association of Agriculture Experiment Station Directors*

*Robin Shepard (tentative), North Central Cooperative Extension Association*

*Beth Baker- revision and development progress*

The group discussed the proposal renewal process. There was consensus that SERA-46 has been a very active group that has created a name for itself (people recognize this group in similar ways to other groups that have been in place for many years).

There was substantial discussion on whether we as a group should explore the possibility of becoming more involved in research. Most members of the committee do both extension and research. Originally the objectives were general so we could have substantial latitude in what we did. Now we need to decide what we want to do and if we want to be more specific. There was good amount of discussion, that captured of number of important elements to capture in the new proposal. Some are listed here and some were put directly into the draft proposal for editing by the writing team.

* Justification & what we’ve done should be major highlight in new proposal and will provide activity carry-over moving into next 5 yrs
* Objectives considerations:
  + Opportunity to streamline
  + Emphasis and expand critical external & internal linkages 🡪 plan for collaboration with NCRS person + NIFA
  + Get NCRS person to join/ engage Chris Gross?
  + Continue to better engage Karelyn Cruz with USDA-NIFA
  + Kevin Wickey –lab resources (NCRS)?
  + Regional soil scientist?

9:15-10am Open discussion related to envisioning what we can do better, how we can be strategic over next 3-5 years, where we want to refocus efforts.

* + Needs/ what’s not worked well on Extension side?
  + Stronger Extension component?
  + Overcoming funding barriers – Strong Extension Presences
  + Deeper buy in from folks from Ext. & committee 🡪 agents
  + Timeline: Draft (reviewed) by May 1st
    - Reviewed by Dept Heads (2 weeks)
    - Final proposal by middle end of June
  + \*Extend non-funded cooperative agreement (Katie, Eric, & Robin to work on)
  + Original priorities were largely based on university capacity- can expand on capacity of individuals
    - Policy challenges as barriers to adoption & education to agencies
    - Broad objectives provide long-term guideposts
  + 🡪Dan Downing- utilizing SARE fellowships🡪 for education
    - Educator panel
    - Basin-wide farmer advisory group

10-10:15am Break

10:15am Charting Our Course- Where project is headed in next 5 years and how that’s reflected in proposal renewal and shared priorities

*12:00pm Lunch on your own*

1:00pm Review of Shared Priorities & discussion on integration into new proposal

*Beth Baker, Mississippi State University, Mike Daniels, University of Arkansas, and past leadership*

* Katie Flahive and EPA Office of Research joined the call
* Main question for SERA-46: Do we have capacity or can we communicate field-scale models to CEAP (SWAT) models to integrate or can we use SPARROW to track progress
* \*How do we move our data from field scale to basin scale?
* \*Chesapeake Bay model from expert panel + body of literature to input data to models that track progress
* \*3 tier of watershed approach, filling gaps
  + - Numeric nutrient criteria & TMDL 🡪 Importance of tracking practices & progress 🡪 \*Science assessments @ state level
* Forbes climate change modeling exercise 🡪 infiltration rates
  + - Tracking & showing progress
    - Chunks of fundamental science that need to be included and potentially updated
* Understanding the mechanism within models that are tracking progress
* Collaborating w/ multi-state group S1063? to develop mechanism
* Which model to use w/ least uncertainty ?
* Louisiana DEQ has framework out for nutrient trading
* Ag. Water Quality Index (NRCS) is another tool
* NTT – mixed discussion about accuracy of model
* Pros & cons document around different approaches

2:00 pm Civic Engagement Project Objective, Outcomes, next steps (15 mins) and State Member Updates on Projects Relevant to Shared Priorities

**Update from Ron Cossman on Social Indicators & Civic Engagement**

* No clear definition of what social indicators or civic engagement is- often used flexibly
* Most civic engagement at Superfund sites, or similar type of major government intervention on landscape/in communities
* Investigating what are the indicators/ precursors to occurrence of organic civic engagement groups
* Developing active research partnership w/ foundations- want to know that funding is having impact but not sure how to measure long-term sustainability of groups & stewardship
* Please make comments to final report – aiming to make it a functional tool/ usable
* Continue Civic Engagement work – how do we get to scale @ watershed🡪
* At the Leadership level:
* 🡪Operationalize outcomes of one civil engagement project
* 🡪2025 target for HTF to reduce by 25%
* 🡪Civic Engagement 🡪 sharing interests – partnerships research arm for large foundation
* 🡪Role of education?
  + -leadership was often organic
* 🡪ARS integration of water quality & cropping systems research

3:00pm Break

3:15pm Future projects/proposals/collaboration with Jason Hubbart

Group discussion/Brainstorming for the Future

**Mini grant within new EPA proposal:**

* -Targeting farmer-led groups in 12 states w/ proposed criteria; may go to qualified groups than inviting proposals
* -Vitalize priority watersheds
* Katie- may not be farmer to farmer RFP for this year

**High Priorities:**

* ANR Academy – basin wide- moving through Extension Services
* Sustainable Ag. Technology & Education
* Extension education **>**
  + \*Jane’s Nutrient Red. Game
* Utilizing Soil Health Alliance and similar organizations
* \*State Strategy Implementation
* \*Give educator a reason to show up
* Incentives
* Move through program leaders to set this on high priority
* Action Item: Mike Forbes, Beth moving webinar forward
* Tracking Progress:
* Facilitating Science Assess.
* Linking EOF to models
* Metrics from work
* Refocusing on what is our role periodically
* Assessing cost to remove lbs of N
* Being creative w/economic end pts.

5:00pm Adjourn – potential dinner outing as group

**Thursday, January 31, 2019 –**

*Breakfast on your own*

9:00am Tour of Mississippi River Facility & Model – LSU Center for River Studies