**SERA 46 Meeting Via Zoom**

**March 14, 2022**

**Minutes**

*Note: This serves as the annual meeting for 2021-22 academic year cycle (including spring of 2021).*

Attending: Naveen Adusumilli (Chair). Dan Downing (co-chair/secretary), Rebecca Power, Amanda Gumbert, Jenny Seifert, Forbes Walker, Beth Baker, Matt Helmers. Guests: Katie Flahive and Ellen Gilinsky, USEPA.

Called To Order by Naveen at 10:03 A.M.

*1. Dec. 10, 2021, Notes* – Some suggestion for edits were made. All agreed to accommodate editing of the notes and re-sending them via email.

*2. Guest Speaker Ellen Gilinsky* with the Great Lakes to the Gulf Observatory (GLTG). Ms. Gilinsky gave an overview of the program’s history, focus areas, and their activities (see the attached handout). Supplemental information shared during the discussion included:

* They are working closely with the Lewis and Clark Community College in the management and analysis of geospatial data relating to the Mississippi River nutrient loading. The current data sets are configured in a multi-tier structure and include substantial data layers from 13 of the basin’s states.
* The GLTG group is consulting on Mississippi River Nutrient reduction work. The SERA 46 Farmer to Farmer grant from EPA, and more.

The GLTG work group is actively working to acquire more quality data with one of the major challenges being the data from the states is frequently in different formats, was developed for different applications, and is not of equal quality. GLTG would like SERA 46 to request Ag. Nutrient Policy Council (ANPC) data for inclusion their databases.

A novel, potentially very high-quality data set is availed to LSU from Risk Management Agency. This is considered highly accurate since it is what is fertilizer is applied in contrast to what is sold.

3. SERA-46 Annual report. *Naveen opened discussion on the status of reporting for the SERA 46* that included:

1. What are the reporting requirements? It was suggested to contact John Lawrence regarding reporting compliance since Wes is no longer involved
2. How to report within your institution to justify faculty effort expended on SERA 46.
3. Amanda indicated the GHTF respects SERA 46 and include the SERA 46 efforts in their planning considerations.
4. Rebecca indicated there were concerns within the SERA 46 ranks of including programming and successes from related projects receiving funding from other sources. Their seemed to be consensus that this was appropriate if the efforts fit with the shared priorities of SERA 46 and the GHTF.
5. Naveen suggested pursuing funding for a part time employee or graduate student to manage reporting of programs and development of the annual report. In response it was suggested that a graduate student might not have the experience and longevity to appropriately deal with the task. A more permanent position was briefly discussed. As a starting point of developing a repository for collection of reporting data Naveen will check into establishment of a restricted access Google Folder for use by SERA 46 members.

4. SERA 46 Future Sustainability. Discussion of structure and organizational issues.

*Closely relating to the previous discussion is the topic of sustainability for SERA 46 led by Jenny, Rebecca, and Beth* including:

1. How to keep reporting up to date
   1. What level of reporting is needed?
   2. What visibility/meeting are appropriate
   3. How/Who to maintain contacts.
2. What funding is available to support these needs.

*Katie reported that EPA has appropriated $60 Million over a five-year time span to address GHTF plan implementation.* This report was welcomed with great enthusiasm since this is the first ever EPA appropriation of this magnitude focused on the Mississippi and the Gulf Hypoxia issue. This appropriation is viewed as somewhat akin to the Chesapeake Bay funding of previous years.

When the appropriations will become available, how they will be distributed, and many other details are still to be determined. What is known is:

1. Some funding will be utilized within EPA to hire personnel dedicated to working in the Mississippi and associated Hypoxia issues.
2. It is understood funding will likely flow through the state environmental agencies.
3. It is expected their will be some form of allocation parity within the 12 border states.
4. Funding will be accessible as grants to 23 tribal entities and 12 Land Grant Institutions, and others under the Clean Water Act Authority
5. These funds are tied to the Bi-partisan infrastructure bill.
6. Agencies will be working on how to successfully present this effort to the public
7. States will be looking to stand up programs and coordinating committees

5. Next Steps for Project Coordination and Communication:

*Next steps for SERA 46* are:

1. Complete an annual report (contact John Lawrence)
2. Potentially identify a SERA 46 Student Liaisons
3. Revisit the structure of SERA 46, selection of officers, their roles, terms, etc. with a priority being identification of a secretary.

Meeting adjourned at 11:45am