**NCAC14 Annual Meeting – Grapevine, Texas**

**Minutes**

**2/1/16 – 2/3/16**

o All attendees supported the cost of the meeting room. Texas A&M supplied the projector and snacks for the meeting.

**Tuesday, February 2, 2016**

o **Housekeeping**

 Meeting called to order by Sandy Pierson at 9:00 AM

 Sign-in sheet passed around

 In attendance: Thomas Baum (ISU), Steve Slack (OSU), Peter Goldsbrough (Purdue), Sandy Pierson (TAMU), Rick Bennett KYU), Martin Draper (NIFA), James Bradeen (U. Minn), Terry Niblack (OSU), Jim English (U. Miss), Lawrence Datnoff (LSU), Frank Zhao (U Ill), Patty McManus (WISC), Daniel Collins (ALCORN ST), James Steadman (UNL)

 Not Present: Brad Day (MSU), Jack Rasmussen (NDSU), David Wright

(SDSU), Carolee Bull (PENN ST)

o **Minutes & Agenda**

 Sandy Pierson organized the agenda leaving specific time restrictions out to encourage discussion and exploration

 Approval of previous year’s minutes –

 Brad Day is Vice-chair/Secretary. He sent an email that another person would attend, but that did not occur. Sandy Pierson will Chair and try to take the minutes

 Please send Sandy your state reports electronically. He will assemble and send out

 A group thank you to Steve Slack who will be stepping down as our

Administrative Advisor (AA). Rick Bennett will be our new AA

o  **Steve Slack** – Comments to the group

 This committee was organized under the auspices of the Agriculture experiment station. Hence the name North Central Administrative Committee (NCAC-14). It

is not under the auspices of APS, but a separate opportunity for academic leaders to meet at another time besides the annual APS AULF breakfast.

 This used to be a strictly regional committee. Hence the name North Central and number (14 = plant pathology). Now called multi-state because anyone can join.

 A benefit of this group is the opportunity to discuss multiple issues of concern and to share ideas and brainstorm outside the demands of the annual APS meeting.

 Members may be asked to review multi-state projects. They are discussed here and can either be submitted directly through the NIMSS site, or can send to

Shelly Whitworth (Whitworth.2@osu.edu) in his office to be uploaded onto NIMSS. It is understood that the optimum is to have a primary and a secondary reviewer. Following discussion a vote is taken. The lead reviewer incorporates the committee’s comments in their review before submission. Next the project is reviewed by a 3-person NC group and submitted to the NC Station directors for approval. The process is detailed at the NIMSS site. Christina Hamilton (christina.hamilton@wisc.edu) is very helpful.

 All project reviews are due no later than Feb. 15, so please get them in so they can be discussed by the Directors.

 Minutes are due within 30-60 days.

 Steve has asked Terry NiBlack to assist in the soybean multi-state project.

 NCAC-14 Committee Members homework assignment No. 1:

Find out why folks did not attend and encourage them to become part of the group.

o **Update on NIFA federal funding**

**Martin Draper**

 NIFA was closed for 3 days due to the severe snowstorm that hit Washington

D.C.

 Discussed the current NIFA budget and federal spending in the light of passing a budget and sequestration effects (**slides attached**).

 Office of Continuity Oversight (OCO) is charged with overseeing the continuity of operations. The formation of NIFA has not equaled budget expectations.

 We had several Continuing Resolutions (CRs) for the last 72 days from Oct to Dec, 2015. The 2016 Omnibus bill (PL114-113) was enacted Dec 18. The 2017 budget process is currently ongoing. The President’s initial budget was due Feb.

1, 2016. The 2018 budget is also underway. It may be transitory after the election of a new President this Nov.

 The last increase NIFA received was during FY11 amounting to $40K. Since then

have seen decreases of $500K, $100M, $18M, $181M, etc. We are losing ground when inflation taken into account.

 Crop Protection/Pest Mgt (CPPM) budget is flat @ $1.7M. If move into Smith- Lever, no IDC returned to cover administrative costs and no room for research in

program.

 HR2029 would increase NIFA funding to $17.2M, but CPPM would still exclude cost recovery for extension implementation programs. Thus, for $300K would lose $90K if IDC was permitted, so did not allow. So if states accept these funds they cannot use them to support administrative costs.

 Section 406: EIP (extension implementation project) funds – no cost recovery

 RCP (regional coord. program) funds – could get IDC

 ARDP (appl. res. & devel. program) funds – could get IDC

 National Diagnostic laboratory System Funding:

 In cooperation with USDA-APHIS. Funding is flat at $6.7M for NPDN (50%), NAHLN (50%), and EDEN ($350K). No IDC allowed on these funds. Marty does not believe the funding will decrease more, but it is difficult to increase the funding.

Predictions:

 FY16 is done. FY17 in progress, expect it to be rocky with a new President elected. Expecting CRs to be in effect in the next year. FY18 budgets being developed, agencies are submitting plans to the Office of Budget Policy Analysis (OBPA) at USDA. AFRI is a likely area for USDA to request an increase in funding due to the fact that Congress has been generally supportive of AFRI. CPPM is requesting $3M more. FADI (Food and Ag Defense Initiative) needs to get back $4M to be at $10M.

 Grant RFAs will probably come out in mid-February to mid-March.

o AFRI ELI (AFRI Fellows)

o Food security- late Feb.

o Foundational grants-March, including CARE exploratory grants for 1 yr.

o CPPM- Beginning of April

 The new joint NSF/NIFA program will be in NIFA RFA. It is still being formulated as to how it will work.

 RFAs get delayed because of having to work out funding with PI claiming to be centers of excellence and commodity funding matches. Once agreed to, then have to work through approval process before release.

 Panels will not meet until November this year.

 CARE = Critical Ag Research and Extension funds ($300K) are good for

extension work, need stakeholder input and clear outcomes to be achieved within the timeframe of funding. More funding is available in 2016 with the program including research-only emphases (historically, only Extension or research- Extension proposals were considered).

 “Exploratory” program funding rate is only about 5%, and many project submitted

are not good fits. Some of these might fare better in CARE.

 Two Handouts (attached):

 Sharing your science (Tweet: @USDA\_NIFA; email:

impactstories@nifa.usda.gov)- Submitted by PIs, highlights NIFA successes.

NIFA tries to collect data as well, but this helps a lot. This what the keywords in the REEPORT is all about. Impact indicators important. This includes things like money saved by growers, etc.

 It was mentioned (S Pierson) that maybe we need to recruit agricultural economists into NCAC-14.

Comings and Goings at NIFA:

 Sonny Ramaswamy- Must tender resignation. Up to the next President whether he stays on. If he does resign, will take time to approve a new Director.

 Kitty Cardwell-Moved to Oklahoma State to be leader of the National Institute for

Ag and Food Security, replacing Jacqueline Fletcher who retired.

 Marty Draper- has been with NIFA 10 yrs this July. In his own words, time that he moved on.

 NIFA will be looking for 2 National Program Leaders (NPLs). Would be preferred.

Experience in extension/applied and applied molecular experience These positions will be posted in March or April.

 Duties they will have include: NPDN, Citrus disease mitigation, AFRI, CPPM, multistate representation, capacity oversight, etc.

 Discussion held about what we should advise new faculty to try for funding on?

1. Be part of a team

2. Be in multistate groups to make contacts and work together

 NCAC-14 Committee Members homework assignment No. 2: Suggest some ag economists to invite to the group.

**Jim Bradeen** suggested Phil Pardey from U. Minn. He is an agricultural economist who

‘gets’ plant pathology.

**Lunch (11:30 – 1:05) Rick Bennett-**

 2016 APS annual meeting will be in Tampa, FL.

 Theme chosen by Sally Miller is “Translation to Function”. Connecting with

constituents and growers.

 Discussions on the role of APS journals in light of open access publications.

 Two new APS journals will be announced.

 Phytobiomes Initiative will be moving forward.

 Early career engagement of new members

 Research experiences for undergraduates

 Industry relations, how to involve industry in training students. Will include

Monsanto and Syngenta.

 Support of divisional APS groups by recognizing their student awardees at the national meeting.

 International Congress of Plant Pathology will be held in 2018 in Boston, MA.

Program planning underway. Predict 2,500-3,000 attendees.

**Lawrence Datnoff**- Because ~30% international members, setting up MOUs to tie in with other societies, including China, Japan, India. No financial commitments, but forming working groups. The ISPP does not have the staff to do these things, but APS does.

**Sandy Pierson** mentioned the recent National Academy of Sciences conference calls leading to a meeting in Washington DC that **Terry Niblack** will be attending in the next week. The goal is how to attract the best and brightest to agriculture, not just medicine. Terry wants to present CSAW program, Borlaug’s Army, APS.

**Plant Pathology Curriculum Issues**

 One issue many departments face is declining faculty numbers but the need to cover a broad range of topics in plant pathology.

 **Sandy Pierson** led a discussion on plant pathology curriculum changes at Texas

A&M. The department goals are reducing in classroom time commitment while maintaining extensive coverage of key plant pathology topics. The current curriculum is comprised of core courses plus 6 5-week modules covering organismal and plant host subjects. From APS AULF suggestions, now added back a hands-on experiential laboratory course. This course consists of 2 week modules taught be the faculty in specific areas. Recognize we still need nematology as a subject area.

 **Sandy Pierson** reported on a conference call to discuss certifications through

APS. The discussion was that since APS has 30% international members perhaps we should offer certifications in various areas. Although they are not as important in the US, they are important for international members. On the phone was Tom Mitchell (APS OE), Ana Tengsten (Graduate student representative), Martha Malapi-Wight (Early Career representative), Nik Grunwald (Senior Editor), and Chris Wallace (CADRE). The first certification discussed was on manuscript reviewing. Many students learn how to criticize papers during journal clubs, but not how to serve as a constructive reviewer. This is supported by editors as it would assist those who already do reviews and also add new qualified reviewers to the lists available.

**Break (2:30-3:00)**

**Lawrence Datnoff** led a discussion about how plant pathology departments can try to enhance their visibility and impacts to the community.

 He discussed the use of newsletters and local television reports to reach out to the public (https://Youtu.be/ZINPP60fCRI). It is critical to consider the target audience (Provosts, legislators, the public, prospective students). Related the importance of context and using examples of positive impacts to get points across.

 Outreach to K-12 students. Use terms they can relate to, such as “Plants get sick just like people do”.

 The diagnostic center is a useful outreach tool.

 How do we quantify “impact”?

 Mentioned AgMagic week (@AgMagic), hosting visit days for highschoolers.

 Important to consider “indicators”.

**Jim English** mentioned Insights by National Public radio regarding research and agriculture podcasts.

 Discussion of “Outputs” (putting things out) vs. “Outcomes” (what have people done with it).

 **Terry Niblack** mentioned at Ohio State they hired a professional writer to convert facts into impact stories. Ohio State uses impact statements by faculty as a consideration for distribution of some funding. On a similar level as the number of publications and graduate students.

 Our administrators need these stories to use at multiple levels. Often difficult to sell this idea to faculty unless they can see themselves in it.

**Marty Draper** mentioned at the Western Region Ag Experiment Station Directors meetings they discuss impacts.

 **Terry Niblack** said at faculty meetings they post all impacts on the wall on sticky notes and let faculty discuss which ones to move up the administrative chain.

 **Patty McManus** mentioned can tie impact statements to raises.

**Sandy Pierson** provided updates on the status of the Phytobiomes Roadmap meeting at the Noble foundation. He discussed his recent presentation at the January State Agriculture and Rural Legislative (SARL) chairs summit in Denver, CO. One of the things he observed was that almost everyone at the meeting had more involvement in animal-oriented agriculture than plant-oriented agriculture.

Sandy asked about any news on the recent possible change by the Federal Labor Commission regarding the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). It is being considered that salaries about ~$24K are exempt from paying time and a half if work over 40 h/week. This enables post-docs to work more without overtime as part of their career development. The proposal is to raise this to ~$50K. if so, then post-docs, technicians, etc. would require overtime pay that would break many grants and funding sources. Graduate students are still exempt as they are students.

**Terry Niblack** asked about 9 mo. vs. 12 mo. appointments. There is a question of what defines the off duty period. Is this only when school is not in session? Then what about faculty who teach in the summer? What about faculty that teach in the summer but want to make the fall or spring their off duty period? This is an issue at many institutions.

**Jim English** discussed assessment tools and what resources do we have. He showed us the free NIH Star Metrics (federalreporter.nih.gov). He went to the web site and showed how we can search by agency, PI, terms. Showed the Data and Visualization tabs as being very useful. Discussed a circles program, but could not show it.

This site useful for identifying potential collaborators and competitors. Source is [www.umsystem.edu](http://www.umsystem.edu/).

IRIS is Institutional Research on Innovation and Science statistic site. Universities can pay to play, $25K/yr for 3 yrs. Anyone who has been supported by federal funds will be listed in the database. Each member supplies annual data. Currently 25 universities, but want to reach 150 universities. IRIS folks are looking for faculty with skills to mine this data. These folks can be a node. This database will enable a school to be able to follow undergraduates and graduates as they pursue their careers. Possible this could be

used to measure impacts of plants on the economy.

**General Discussions (a whorl-wind range of topics)**

**Sandy Pierson** asked about how other institutions performed department reviews. At Texas A&M, each department turns in 4 pages (1 each on research, teaching, extension, and requests. Get 1.5 h to discuss everything with administrators. All 14 departments done in ~ 1 week. Asked if this the best way? Several others use similar process. Discussion on what makes requests more likely to be funded.

**Wednesday, February 4, 2015**

**NCAC-14 Business Meeting**

The business meeting was held at the Courtyard Marriott due to a scheduling mix-up.

All members are thanked for their patience. Meeting began at 9:00 AM.

**Business Item 1: Election of new leaders**

 **Sandy Pierson** initiated discussion of electing officers for next year. Brad Day was to be Vice-Chair this year and Chair next year. As there was no Vice-Chair this year, need a mechanism for next. Patty McManus volunteered to serve as Vice-chair/Secretary for next year. Sandy will contact Brad and see if he will Chair next year.

 Several possible locations were discussed for next year’s meeting. In the past we

have met in Chicago and Atlanta. Discussed Chicago, Minneapolis and Detroit..

 Ideal time for meeting was decided to be near the end of January or beginning of

February.

**Business Item 2: Multi-state reviews**

1. Project NCCC 307 “Biochemistry/Genetics of Plant-Microbe Interactions”.

Thomas Baum primary, James Bradeen secondary.

Mid-term review. 17 participants, a high power group, annual meetings and reports submitted. List 105 publications for 2014-2015.

A concern was they meet annually, but at the Asilomar Fungal Genetics

Conference. Spend 2.5 h at the meeting on the project. Is this sufficiently separate to be justified? Suggest they either meet separately, or document more fully how this is separate. Should include how many of the publications are the result of collaborations due to this project. Should better describe community efforts since 3/5 objectives are focused on this.

Goals/Objectives Excellent

Ability to carry out goals Good

Not duplicative with other projects Good

Collaborative in nature Needs Improvement Recommendation Approve with normal revision Unanimously approved.

2. Project NC\_TEMP1197 “Practical Management of Nematodes on Corn, etc.” New project. Jim English reviewed as Jack Rasmussen was not at the meeting and Terry Niblack had a COI. A continuation of a previous project. Have met annually in the previous project. 3 objectives. Not many details on objectives, whereas previous project had many details. This is partly due to changes in the guidelines for projects that request fewer details to be provided. Screening 900 soybean lines for nematode resistance and testing of nematicides. Obviously a multistate project due to the number of sites used. Needs a better introduction of the need, where they are, and where they are going.

Brief clarification of naming codes: NC = research and extension, including evaluation of lines. These get additional funds, while NCERA = groups primarily for dissemination of information as primary goal. These do not get additional funds.

Goals clearly stated Good Ability to carry out objectives Good Not duplicative Good

Collaborative in nature Excellent

Recommendation Approve with revision on justification

3. NCERA\_TEMP222 “Turfgrass and the Environment”.

Lawrence Datnoff primary, Phil Mulder secondary (not present)

A new project, A large extension group focused on IPM, developing new curriculum and educational materials, improve evaluation methods for outcomes, improve collaboration and continuity.

Objectives:

Increase capacity to implement

Increase evaluation of knowledge among participants

Will review primary extension needs

Increase coordination

Increase sharing among multistate groups Goals clearly stated Good Ability to carry out objectives Good Not duplicative Good Collaborative in nature Good

Recommendation Approve with continuous revision on justification, Vote unanimous.

4. NCERA\_TEMP013 “Soil Testing and Plant Analysis.”

Sandy Pierson Primary, Patty McManus secondary.

Proposed duration: 10/1/2016-09/30/2021; Administrative Advisor: Ken F. Grafton

This is a continuation of an on-going project.

Premise: Sustainable crop production is predicated on accurate analysis of soil properties. This will determine the optimum amounts of fertilizer for maximum plant growth without groundwater leaching.

However, soils and cropping practices change and there is a lack of ability to

analyze all soils within the NC region. To avoid duplication of efforts where soil types are similar across multiple states, data sharing is critical. Since most soil testing is performed by commercial laboratories, better communication between commercial labs and LGUs is needed. This coordination will also enable better regulations for livestock management to reduce environmental damages.

Previous work by NCERA013:

1. Revised several chapters in NCR Res. Publ. No. 221, including chapters 1, 4, 8,

11, and 15. The continuation of this regional project will enable the revision of additional chapters in this publication.

2. Wrote a new publication on sulfur responses in agronomic crops.

3. Development of a website for dissemination of results and guidelines.

4. Organization of a soil and plant analysis workshop every other year. Objectives: Clearly spelled out with intended purpose

There are 6 specific objectives proposed:

1. Develop a regional guidance manual for soil testing.

2. Develop a regional guidance document for optimizing phosphorus and potassium applications.

3. Develop more formalized information exchange procedures between commercial labs and LGUs.

4. Develop and improve a website for marketing.

5. Organize every other year soil testing and plant analysis workshop.

6. Update other specific chapters of the publication on chemical soil testing procedures for NC region.

Procedures and Activities:

Committee composed of LGU representatives with expertise in lab operations and field based plant tissue testing. The group will meet annually, collaborate on procedures, initiate additional research where needed, and maintain representation to N. American Proficiency Testing program. Improve communication with other relevant regional projects.

Expected Outcomes and Impacts:

Write/revise specific chapters in NCR Res. Publ. No. 221.

Develop new regional publication for regional potassium recommendations. Develop new regional publication for regional soil phosphorus recommendations. Increase community’ knowledge regarding soil and plant analysis methodologies. Improve collaboration between public and private laboratories by working together on current analytical challenges.

Members will make recommendations on analysis interpretation. These recommendations may have a significant impact on growers in the NC region while reducing adverse environmental effects.

Projected Participation:

Six scientists are proposed to be involved, from Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, Iowa, Missouri and Kansas. Indiana and Kansas are the two LGUs involved.

Education Plan:

Education of relevant growers and groups will be pursued through publications, pamphlets and the workshops.

Will formalize interactions with commercial labs and SERA006 regional workgroup

during this period.

Comments: The previous project had 13 states involved whereas this renewal only lists 6 states. This large a decrease is a concern. The group is strongly recommended to increase the diversity of the members involved. Ways to pursue this is to recruit representatives from commercial soil testing laboratories and from other regional groups as one of the goals is to increase communication among groups.

1. Sound scientific approach: Excellent

2. Achievable goals/objectives: Excellent

3. Appropriate scope of activity to accomplish objectives:Good

4. Potential for significant outputs and outcomes: Excellent

5. Overall technical merit: Excellent

6. Your recommendation: Approve/continue project

**Business Item 3: State reports.**

Sandy Pierson asked that all members submit their state reports to him electronically. He will combine and submit for NCAC-14.

**General Discussion:**

 **Peter Goldsbrough** asked what different departments were doing about replacing outdated growth chambers and greenhouses. At Purdue they are hiring

90 new faculty in various areas, including plant sciences. Have funds for start-up funds and the rest for UAVs, fields, etc.

 In several instances, new facilities were being constructed and a manager hired

to run them. This will mean increased (or new) user fees to use these facilities.

 **Sandy Pierson** mentioned that one issue with general use growth chamber facilities is the mix of pathogens with plant science experiments.

 Question raised as to the use of LED or conventional lighting. LEDs generate less heat and can be more uniform, but many who do growth and physiology experiments do not like LEDs because they get different results.

 Best way to do outreach to attract new students. Focusing on K-12 education.

Some departments have graduate students that travel to schools to expose students to science and to plants. **Patty McManus** mentioned the students do skits to engage young students, rather than just telling them what it’s like to be a scientist. Use plant costumes and sticky balls to represent spores. Very popular with teachers, but the long-term impact on students is hard to measure/predict.

 **Dan Collins** mentioned at Alcorn State University they developed a Global Food

Security course. During a 1-week period, 6 states send undergraduate students to visit and learn about food security. This is a collaboration with USDA-APHIS and funding assistance is by NIFA and Monsanto. A good recruitment tool for introducing students to the field. They also do K-12 field day visits where students actually visit and see agriculture in the field.

 **Peter Goldsbrough** mentioned this will be his last NCAC-14 meeting as a department head. He will be stepping down as head at Purdue this year.

**Sandy Pierson** adjourned the meeting promptly at 11:00 AM to allow time for those with airport connections to head to the airport and others to return to the Holiday Inn Express before they left for the airport. The group thanked Sandy for his work in putting together this year’s meeting.

**Sandy Pierson** also acknowledged the assistance of Carla Levingston, the Sales Manager at the Holiday Inn Express in Grapevine, and Shana Childers, his assistant, at Texas A&M for their invaluable assistance before and during the meeting.