

## NRSP-RC Call Notes: June 18, 2012

### Attendees:

Ralph Cavalieri  
Abel Ponce de León, NRSP-RC Chair  
Kirby Stafford  
Arlen Leholm  
Mike Harrington  
Don Latham  
Clarence Watson  
L. Washington Lyons

### NRSP Recommendations

**NRSP1:** \$50,000 - Approved

**NRSP3:** \$50,000 - Approved

**NRSP4:** \$481,182 - Approved

**NRSP6:** \$150,000 - Approved; Note: FY2012-13 amount raised from external sources same as FY2011. Committee has been working to secure matching funds as requested last year.

**NRSP7:** \$325,000 - Approved

**NRSP8:** \$500,000 - Approved

**NRSP9:** \$175,000 - Motion approved to table discussion until we obtain more information on matching funds. Original intent was for a full match, but currently, match is only \$70,000 (\$35,000 from industry, \$35,000 Federal sources). Arlen and Chris will obtain more budget information and the NRSP-RC will re-evaluate and provide expectations during an additional August follow-up NRSP-RC call or via email.

**NRSP\_temp261:** New Proposal, Budget: \$150,000 - Rejected; please send your region's comments to [chamilton@cals.wisc.edu](mailto:chamilton@cals.wisc.edu) for preparation of a document to send to the committee. Although a good proposal and much improved from the last iteration, the NRSP-RC does not feel that the committee's focus is suitable for an NRSP. The NRSP-RC will prepare a letter to provide the committee with clear information on why this proposal was not approved, following the national vote at the Fall ESS meeting (assuming the directors vote to approve this motion of rejection).

**NRSP-RC mechanics Discussion:** Is the process working as intended? (Proposed by Lee Sommers at the last CAC Call)

- Discussion ensued regarding the 2002 NRSP Task force, who at the time recommended approval of 5 year budgets, with the stipulation that if Hatch funds are reduced, NRSP funding will also be reduced by the same percentage.
- Should new proposals build in a sunset plan and only be funded for a finite period?
- Can we afford to approve new projects if we don't sunset some existing ones?
- Provide only operational support? (\$50,000 for NRSP3 allows them to leverage much more)
- Should we require a 5 year business plan and conduct midterm reviews?
- Are our directors willing to do a five year vote? Perhaps:
  - Updates at section meetings
  - Written reports circulated
- Each project is too different to provide a one-size fits all approach, hence the existence of the NRSP-RC to evaluate projects annually in detail

### **NRSP RC and Program Management – Prepared by Mike Harrington, WAAESD**

The ESS expends considerable resources in managing the National Research Support Program which is intended to provide off the top funding in support of research. Currently there are 7 NRSPs receiving a total of \$1.731 million. Management activities include those of the NRSP Review Committee whose responsibilities include making reviewing proposals progress and annual budgets. This committee meets a minimum of xx times per year. In addition each regional association sets aside time for discussion of renewal or new proposals as well as for discussion of annual budgets. Taken together these activities constitute considerable transactional costs for a program that comprises less than 1% of Hatch funds.

In 2002-03 an NRSP Task Force made series of far reaching recommendations on how the Program should be implemented and managed. These recommendations were adopted by the Section in 2003. However, one of the provisions, approval of 5 year budgets that included a caveat if Hatch funds were reduced, was reversed the following year as Directors wanted to have annual budget approvals.

Given that there have been few, if any, questions about annual approvals; perhaps it is again time to consider the matter of providing 5 year budget approvals.

A second major provision was the requirement that each NRSP develop a Management and Business Plan that indicated how the project would reduce off the top funding to a low maintenance level. This would free up funds allowing the Directors to consider and implement new projects as appropriate. Thus, NRSPs should expect a finite period of off-the-top funding; however some projects may not be readily transitions to other sources of funds.

The requirement for a Management and Business Plan must be examined. The program requires submission of a plan that must include “provisions for developing alternative funding or reducing off-the-top funding to a minimal level”. Included would be an assessment of transition options, and alternative funding sources, but few projects actually do this.

There are several examples where off the top funds have been reduced (NRSP-3) or eliminated (NRSP-5). However there are other projects that continue to have large contributions of off the tops funds.

**Conclusion:** The NRSP RC needs to prepare clarifying statements to present at the ESS meeting. This discussion will also continue either via email and/or during an additional August NRSP-RC call.

*Meeting Adjourned by NRSP-RC Chair, Abel Ponce de León*

**August 13, 2012:**

**NRSP Review Committee Call Notes**

**Attendees:**

Arlen Leholm  
Abel Ponce de León, Current NRSP-RC Chair  
Don Latham  
Mike Harrington  
L. Washington Lyons  
Kirby Stafford  
Ralph Cavalieri  
Clarence Watson  
Sarah Lupis  
Chris Hamilton

**Notes and Actions:**

1. Previous call notes: **Approved**
2. Brett Hess to replace Ralph Cavalieri in W region
3. NRSP-9's 2012 Budget Request: **Approved**
4. NRSP-RC Program Management Discussion
  - a. Discussion continued regarding NRSP Program Management
    - i. Are we efficient and following ESCOP Guidelines
    - ii. Suggestions for changes included:
      1. Obtain an initial, 5-year proposal/project and budget approval
      2. Conduct a year-3 midterm review
      3. Require annual project reports to include fund matching, if required
      4. Set a fixed amount of NRSP \$? Perhaps \$2M?
      5. Require progress towards sunset/maintenance level? Maintenance levels of \$50,000 or \$75,000?
      6. Project budgets will only be reduced if:
        - a. Hatch \$ at Federal level reduced, NRSPs will be reduced by same %
        - b. Unsatisfactory midterm review, required match not being met, not working towards stated goals/objectives sufficiently
        - c. Annual reports: budget not meeting match requirements
  - b. **Action:** Mike Harrington will summarize proposed changes and pass around a draft recommendation for this committee to take forward to ESS Business meeting
  - c. **Motion passed** to approve one slate of NRSP-RC recommendations at Fall ESS meetings rather than vote on each project.