

ESCOP Chairs Advisory Committee
Monthly Conference Call
May 25, 2017
NOTES

Participants

Bret Hess (WAAESD)
Camille Young (Cornerstone)
Jim Richards (Cornerstone)
Hunt Shipman (Cornerstone)
Gary Thompson (NERA)
David Leibovitz (Communications & Marketing Committee/NERA)
Clarence Watson (NRSP Review Committee/ alternate to PBD)
Alton Thompson (ARD)
Jeff Jacobsen (NCRA)
Eric Young (SAAESD)
Mike Harrington (WAAESD)
Shirley Hymon-Parker (ARD)
Dennis Calvin (ECOP liaison)
Sarah Lupis (Recording Secretary)

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS/ACTION ITEMS:

1. **A motion to recommend \$5,000 support to Breakthroughs 2030 was seconded and will go to the Executive Committee. Mike to send ESCOP EC a ballot to support Breakthroughs 2030 at \$5,000.**
2. **Engagement in Retaking the Field was tabled for the further discussion at the Joint COPS meeting.**
3. **The Impact Database Committee will report back on progress during the Fall meeting in Philadelphia.**
4. **The B&L Committee via Mike Harrington is directed to identify places in the conservation title where AES can contribute similar to the work Robin Shepard has performed for ECOP.**
5. **Request NIFA liaison to address items from above and in written report from DC visits at Joint COPS.**
6. **Planning for April, 2018 Congressional Ag Exposition and Reception was tabled for further discussion at Joint COPS in Calgary, Canada.**

Cornerstone Update

President's Budget was released this week. Core capacity programs largely were unharmed. Credit goes to Sonny for fighting for those. As always, Congress has the final say on the budget and this looks like it

will be a tough year with difficult, political decisions. Likely to end up in some kind of CR for FY18. Could be worse!

Time and Effort Reporting Update from NERAOC/NIFA

NIFA needs to more effectively certify time and effort. Going forward, there will be some kind of time and effort reporting on grant and capacity dollars, including matching state dollars. No judgements will be made regarding ROI/accomplishments/impacts. Having a documented policy and procedures that are followed is key. Annual reporting is not frequent enough; monthly or quarterly is needed. How T&E is documented is also key. Employees must verify their time/% activity. If an audit generates a finding, recommendations would be delivered in writing for the institution to respond to. Activities not directly related to the grant (i.e., grant writing), is not allowed. Legislative action would trump OMB guidance on the grant proposal issue. Prior to a legislative fix, we would perhaps also want to elevate this formally through NIFA to an undersecretary or the Secretary to ask them to reconsider the policy/interpretation and to use the confirmation process of the undersecretary as a way to secure a commitment for this.

FIFO Accounting Update from NERAOC

First in First Out (FIFO) is related to AES and CES capacity funds. Each and every award (project) needs a unique number associated with it. Some institutions in the NC region found this to be burdensome. Look for materials in the Federal Register this summer and the opportunity to comment—an organized response might be called for. Some institutions spend out or have minimal rollover or are already using single digits.

Breakthroughs 2030

Bret had a conversation with SoAR. The study remains slightly underfunded. Is there any interest in asking the ESCOP Executive Committee for \$5,000 to support this effort? We would be recognized as a sponsor. Gary supported the idea of putting this request to the Executive Committee; further support for this could be considered in the next ESCOP budget. **A motion to recommend \$5,000 support to Breakthroughs 2030 was seconded and will go to the Executive Committee.** There are still options to provide recommendations and input for the science panels. Look at Bret's written report for details.

Retaking the Field

Are there multistate projects that also have AFRI funding with a focus on the three priority topics (nutrition, food safety, or zoonotic disease)? In order to be in, \$2,500 is required. Should we consider engaging? This item was tabled for the further discussion at the Joint COPS meeting. There are several great multistate projects on these topics.

Diversity Committee Update

APLU is interested in learning how other COPS might join in efforts to improve diversity and inclusiveness. This came up at the EDs meeting in DC. Jeff has been in contact with Wendy Fink at APLU about the progress of the ESCOP Diversity Committee. ESCOP is projected to give a 5-10 minute presentation on the subject at Joint COPS.

NRSP Reporting

NRSP reporting was included as part of the multistate reporting discussion. Participating stations need to be more diligent about reporting on these and station-specific contributions to other multistate research projects in REEport.

Impact Database Committee Update

A 2-hour conference call is being planned for June that will cover the writing group recommendations and steps for going forward to improve the database. The committee will report back during the Fall meeting.

Multistate reporting in REEPort, NIMSS, Impact Database

There is general concern about the duplicative reporting required in NIMSS, REEPort, etc. Bret proposed an expert panel to address this issue. QUESTION- Gary seemed to agree, so should we make a formal request to NIFA or should we bring this up as another item of business at the ESCOP meeting during Joint COPS? Regardless of the approach, how do we proceed?

Bret's update from DC Visits—tabled (see written report for now)

Conservation Title—where can AES contribute?

Robin Shepard developed some suggested recommendations. **There was consensus that the B&L should identify places in the conservation title where AES can contribute.**

Planning for April, 2018 Congressional Ag Exposition and Reception (formerly Science on the Hill)

There is an opportunity to have system-representation at this event. Proposals are due March 1. We would need to find folks who can speak to how specific NIFA budget lines are being impactful in certain states. To be discussed further at Joint COPS.