

ESCOP Budget and Legislative Committee (BLC): <http://escop.info/committee/blc/>

Call MINUTES for: 4/28/2020 (4th Tuesday monthly)

4 pm ET, via Zoom (<https://zoom.us/j/257727621> or 1 646 558 8656 Meeting ID: 257 727 621)

Committee Members:

<p>Chair: Ernie Minton (NCRA) Past Chair: Bill Brown (SAAESD) Gary Thompson (Active Past Chair, NERA)</p> <p>Delegates: Alton Thompson (ARD) Dyremple Marsh (ARD) Gary Pierzynski (NCRA) Shawn Donkin (NCRA) Sabine O'Hara (NERA) Jon Wraith (NERA) Steve Lommel (SAAESD) Saied Mostaghimi (SAAESD) Glenda Humiston (WAAESD, Incoming Chair) Chris Pritsos (WAAESD)</p> <p>Executive Vice-Chair Jeff Jacobsen (NCRA ED) Chris Hamilton (NCRA AD; Recorder)</p>	<p>Liaisons: Jon Boren (ECOP) Katie Frazier (CARET) Doug Steele (APLU) Eddie Gouge (APLU) Jim Richards (CGA) Hunt Shipman (CGA) Maggie Earle (CGA) Vernie Huber (CGA) Paula Geiger (NIFA) Mitch Adams (NIFA) Glen Hoffsis (BVM) Vacant (BHS)</p>
--	---

Participants: Ernie Minton, Hunt Shipman, Saied Mostaghimi, Katie Frazier, Glenda Humiston, Jon Boren, Jon Wraith, Alton Thompson, Caron Gala, Doug Steele, Shawn Donkin, Mitch Adams, Dyremple Marsh, Maggie Earle, Vernie Huber, Paula Geiger, Rick Rhodes, Jeff Jacobsen, Chris Hamilton (recorder).

Call Agenda/Minutes:

1. Welcome and roll call – Ernie and Chris.
 - a. Done; see participants list above.
2. Approval of 3/24 meeting minutes (http://escop.info/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/BLC_MIN_-20200324.pdf) – Ernie.
 - a. Approved as distributed.
3. Approval of today's agenda – Ernie.
 - a. Approved as distributed.
4. ESCOP COVID-19 Supplemental Proposals – Ernie, Jeff
 - a. \$300M Research Proposal for Supplemental 4 (please refer to proposal document).
 - i. The final allocation of funds in this proposal included \$150M to AFRI and \$150M to Capacity programs, with emphasis on 1890s and 1994s. BAC-approved.
 - ii. Capacity allocation distributions were the result of work conducted by the ESCOP Executive Directors (Hatch \$85.0M; Evans-Allen \$36.2M; McIntire-Stennis \$11.8M; Tribal Research \$5M). The EDs provided valuable information

that justified the request for funding because of the costs that Directors of the SAES will sustain in order to keep faculty, graduate students, technicians, and other personnel employed and paid during the Pandemic disruption. This justification will be used by APLU CGA as they provide information to congressional delegations about the request for the \$300 for research relief for NIFA.

- iii. The 5-question COVID-19 impact survey sent to the AES and 1890 directors helped provide helpful reinforcement regarding the final allocations of the Capacity funds, along with information from the sign-on letter. A summary of the impact survey responses has been shared with the regions. Over 80% of stations responded to the survey in one week.
- iv. Status of the final \$380M proposal for NIFA programs sign-on letter – Caron
 - 1. 50 national organizations and over 100 state orgs have signed on. Farming organizations are very busy right now, so in some cases their state groups have signed on instead of the national ones.
 - 2. The letter will be closed tomorrow and sent to leaders in both chambers with a cc to the ag committee staff of both chambers.
 - 3. The allocation outlined by the research EDs is an APLU request, not a request related to the letter. Cornerstone is on point with appropriators to communicate the allocation for the \$300M and the \$80M.
- v. Interactions with appropriators - Hunt
- b. Infrastructure Proposal, also sent as an attachment.
 - i. This is a shovel-ready, infrastructure proposal which might fit well into some of the future COVID-19 supplementals.
 - ii. The proposal is now with Cornerstone and is ready to go if and when the opportunity arises. It's been socialized with the ag appropriations committees and has received a good response.
 - iii. This proposal includes not only infrastructure, but also has local economic development opportunities for each state.
 - iv. Hunt encourages us to be sure that all university leadership be ready with clean, open lines of communication to support the proposal. This situation is dynamic and we need to be ready.
 - v. The APLU Council on Government Affairs is meeting this week and plans to discuss this proposal.
- 5. APLU update – Doug Steele
 - a. All consumed with getting these proposals ready to go out. Appreciate all the work from ESCOP and BAC to act quickly.
 - b. The National Multistate Coordinating Committee (NMCC) will have a Zoom teleconference tomorrow to discuss priorities:
 - i. Joint COPs for July has not been canceled yet, but a decision needs to be made soon.
 - ii. Would like to bring closure to Dr. Angle's suggestion to form external advisory committee to NIFA with LGU members. Conversations during the NMCC will discuss what this committee should look like.
 - c. May 7 at 12 noon ET there will be a virtual, national BAA webinar. Connection details TBA.

- d. CMC has narrowed down finalists for our consultant on a what a strategic, national plan should look like. Doug hopes to extend a contract to the finalist next week. We will use the 2019 CMC carryover to fund (AHS, ECOP, ESCOP) this consultant for one year.
- 6. Cornerstone report – Hunt Shipman, Jim Richards, Maggie Earle, Vernie Huber
 - a. Regarding the Congressional schedule for FY21, the Senate currently plans to return to DC next week, but the House will not, despite a prior message. Votes on the \$480B COVID-3.5 bill last week were staggered and took about 90 min, so any business would be inefficient if they do return to DC.
 - b. For FY21, the House majority has given its clerks a nominal number to use for FY21 mark ups. This number has not been shared with the House minority members or Cornerstone yet, so we don't know how this compares to FY20. The goal is to finish this process before July 4.
 - c. Now is the time to reiterate requests for FY21. Cornerstone will reach out on this next week with a call to action.
- 7. NIFA update – Paula Geiger with Mitch Adams (NIFA Stakeholder and Congressional Affairs Officer)
 - a. The budget process continues to move forward; NIFA is now looking at their FY22 budget now, in addition to FY21.
 - b. Virtual career fair for Kansas City is happening now, see website for these open positions: <https://workforusdakc.com/>.
 - c. Mitch Adams has joined the team at NIFA, filling in for Josh Stull for the next four months. He previously worked with the Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) as their Congressional Affairs Officer and also on Capitol Hill in ag policy. He's looking forward to working with the group.
- 8. ECOP report – Jon Boren
 - a. Jon mentioned again the COVID-4 CES proposal, an \$80M request focused on education around the spread of and recovery efforts for COVID-19.
 - b. Funds for this proposal would run through Smith-Lever, 1890 Extension, NTAE (New Technologies for Ag Extension), with some funds for Tribal Colleges.
- 9. 2020 Annual ESS Meeting Baltimore, MD, September 28-30 – Any interest in BLC face-to-face?
 - a. Meeting is still on, as scheduled.
 - b. Glenda will become BLC chair after fall ESS meeting, and the fall meeting might be a good time to share best practices around COVID-19, as well as further discuss how the committee could be more effective and forward-thinking into the next year. Glenda concurred and added that COVID-19 has opened up opportunities to frame the importance of ag, food systems, and food supply.
 - c. Consensus of the call participants is yes, we should meet face to face at the Fall ESS meeting. Jeff will work with Alton and return to the BLC with details. Most likely, we'll meet that Wednesday, September 30. As an update from Jeff, it will have to be Thursday morning, ~8-12, October 1.
- 10. Other business, as needed

Call adjourned at 4:50 pm ET.

Background and Allocations for \$300M Supplemental NIFA Funding for Research

Agricultural research at Land-grant Universities (LGUs) and other institutions throughout the U.S. are uniquely positioned to address challenges amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Eighty one percent of agricultural research directors at LGUs provided information on impacts of pandemic restrictions. Directors also reported donation of personal protective gear and equipment, hand sanitizer, reagents and consumables for diagnostic testing, RNA kits, and loaning of PCR machines, other small equipment, and laboratory space for testing.

Public investment in agricultural research is reflected in Hatch, Evans-Allen, McIntire-Stennis, Tribal Research, and AFRI program lines at USDA NIFA. Supplemental support is critical to meet the direct needs caused by a stop in U.S. research operations. Additional federal assistance will help the U.S. agricultural research enterprise overcome unexpected disruptions in the following areas.

Ramp-down and ramp-up costs to close and restart research activities

- Nearly 60% of directors reported ramp-down or closure of at least 61% or greater; only 5% of directors reported ramp-down or closures of less than 21%.
- The cost of terminating on-going experiments coupled with future restarts will be devastating. On average, directors anticipate 6 months of additional support is needed to meet research objectives.

Ramp-up costs for new research related to COVID-19

- 68% of directors reported one or more projects initiated with capacity funds.
- Several projects have been launched to identify antiviral compounds, assess effectiveness of antiviral drugs, monitor disease prevalence in communities, evaluate various modes of SARS-CoV-2 transmission, and determine impacts of the pandemic on food safety and security.

Salaries, benefits and other costs with retaining research, technical and work-study employees

- 49% of directors reported spending greater than 60% of their NIFA-supported budget on salaries of personnel considered essential for conducting critical research.
- Hiring moratoriums decreased on-boarding and future recruitment of research personnel.
- Although paid, most undergraduates, work-study students, graduates, staff, post-docs, and faculty across lab and field programs have been unable to conduct any laboratory, greenhouse, and field research.
- Prohibitions on all travel negates research in which personnel must travel to research sites.

Core facilities supporting NIFA research

- Costly shutdown of greenhouses; genomic, proteomics and other ‘omic’ labs; fabrication units; wet laboratories; and specialized BSL2 and BSL3 containment facilities.
- The 24/7 nature of any laboratory animal and livestock facility, and the redundancies needed from scarce personnel, drives up costs locally and throughout the supply chain.

The five program lines recommended for supplemental allocations support most research negatively affected. COVID-19 disproportionately affected Tribal Research and Evans-Allen programs. Therefore, we recommend allocating \$5M for Tribal Research and \$36.2M for Evans-Allen, which also raises Evans-Allen to 30% of Hatch as directed by the 2008 Farm Bill¹. NIFA estimates additional funding needs for AFRI at \$150M and Federal Administration (4%) at \$12M. We recommend allocating the remaining funds to Hatch and McIntire-Stennis based upon FFY2020 proportional share. Lastly, given the severity of COVID-19 impact on State budgets, broad waiver authority for the Secretary match and other criteria would be significant contributions.

Proposed Allocations by Program		
Program	FFY2020 Actual (\$M)	Supplemental (\$M)
Hatch	259	85.0
Evans-Allen ¹	67	36.2
McIntire-Stennis	36	11.8
Tribal Research	3.8	5
AFRI	425	150
Federal Administration	---	12
Grand Total	---	300

¹Section 1445(a)(2) NARETPA (7 U.S.C. 3222(a)(2)), as amended by Section 7122 of the 2008 Farm Bill with Evans-Allen not less than 30% of Hatch Act appropriations.