

**NRSP-RC Project Review Discussion Zoom - MINUTES**  
**May 27, 2020, 10 am to 12 am ET**

**Current Membership:**

<p><b>Chair:</b> Doug Buhler (NCRA)</p> <p><b>Past Chair:</b> Fred Servello (NERA)</p> <p><b>Executive Vice-Chair:</b>          Jeff Jacobsen (NCRA ED)</p> <p><b>Assistant Director, Ex-officio:</b>          Chris Hamilton (NCRA AD; Recorder)</p>	<p><b>Delegates:</b></p> <p>Shirley Hymon-Parker (ARD)</p> <p>Mark McGuire (WAAESD)</p> <p>Keith Owens (SAAESD)</p> <p>Don Latham (CARET)</p> <p>Tom Bewick (NIFA)</p> <p>Mike Schmitt (ECOP)</p> <p>Bret Hess (WAAESD ED)</p>
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**Committee Page:** <http://escop.info/committee/nrsp-rc/>

**Participants:** Doug Buhler, Keith Owens, Tom Bewick, Shirley Hymon-Parker, Mark McGuire, Fred Servello, Mike Schmitt, Bret Hess, Don Latham, Jeff Jacobsen, Chris Hamilton (recorder).

Item #	Topic	Notes	Action Taken
1.0	Welcome and Roll Call	<p>Doug welcomed the committee members to the call and gave an overview of how the call topics and discussions will flow.</p> <p>Doug also introduced our newest member, Mike Schmitt, our ECOP representative. Mike is with UMN Extension and has previous experience as a director within the NCRA.</p> <p>The other call members briefly introduced themselves, as well. See Participants list above for attendees.</p>	None, for information only.
2.0	Overview of NRSP Review Committee Activities	We will follow the existing <a href="#">2015 NRSP Guidelines</a> for the project reviews today, which were included with today's call attachments.	None, for information only.
3.0	NRSP1 Midterm Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NRSP1 serves to fund both NIMSS and the Impact Writing Program with Sara Delheimer and Faith Peppers.</li> </ul>	None, for information only.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steve Loring will need to be replaced as the W region AA, as he is retiring in the fall.</li> <li>• Midterm review was positive and the current mindset is to keep NRSP1 as one project for NIMSS and the Impact Program for now, but this may change with the next renewal.</li> <li>• Jeff, Chris and Bret acknowledged that they are members and leads.</li> </ul>	
4.0	<p>NRSP4 Renewal: <a href="https://www.nimss.org/projects/18675">https://www.nimss.org/projects/18675</a></p>	<p>NRSP-RC members reviewed their detailed NRSP4 <a href="#">regional feedback</a>, as provided.</p> <p>Doug acknowledged that he is an AA on the NRSP.</p> <p>W: Fully fund. It still would be beneficial for the project to work on transitioning off the minor amount of support from the NRSP program, given the larger, federal support for IR-4.</p> <p>S: Fully fund.</p> <p>NC: Fully fund.</p> <p>NE: Support fully, but the NRSP-RC should continue to send a clear transition plan message to all NRSPs whenever possible.</p> <p>ARD: This is a long term, valuable project and should continue to be fully funded.</p> <p>NIFA: Concur with all the positives mentioned above. Tom has been working recently with DC to get IR4 out of its special grant status and allow indirect cost recovery, allowing it to be considered more seriously by the federal administration, perhaps in the next Farm Bill. The President’s budget was very supportive of IR4, so this might be the last renewal of NRSP4 that asks for NRSP support. This project also just moved to NC State from</p>	<p>Doug moved (Bret seconded) to recommend that membership support the NRSP4 renewal request as written, while also including in the proposal a clear distinction of NRSP4 from IR-4. Edits should also be made to the language redundancy and formatting consistency in the Objectives. The Accomplishment report has track changes in it. The NRSP-RC also recommends NRSP4 start a collaborative discussion for a future model to transition off NRSP funds, with progress on this effort to be reported back to the NRSP-RC no later than midterm review time.</p> <p>This motion was supported unanimously by the NRSP-RC.</p>

		<p>Rutgers. NRSP4 fits the NRSP definition and is critical for regulatory guidance. Tom will help IR4 recognize the difference between NRSP4 and IR4.</p> <p>ECOP: Agree with the concerns above, but the project also serves so many and does a lot of good and is needed for all the research and outreach conducted. Overall, supportive of continuation and funding.</p> <p>CARET: Agree with the comments above. Consider whether NRSP4 truly meets the definition of an NRSP or would a multi-institutional project work. Probably does meet the definition of an NRSP and crop registrations might not happen without it.</p> <p>Other discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There's a need to evaluate the intent of all NRSPs, but also support the need for projects like NRSP4.</li> <li>• Per NIFA comments, this could be a point of discussion for the BAA CLP concerning the 2023 Farm Bill.</li> <li>• Overall, the group showed a strong consensus to approve NRSP4 and its budget for the next 5-year period. Distinction between IR4 and NRSP4, as well as the development of a transition plan off NRSP funds would be appreciated.</li> <li>• Perhaps include a plan for them to show that an effort to explore alternative funding by midterm has been conducted. Doug offered to take this discussion to the NRSP4 committee members.</li> </ul>	
5.0	<p>NRSP9 Renewal:  <a href="https://www.nimss.org/projects/18686">https://www.nimss.org/projects/18686</a></p>	<p>NRSP-RC members reviewed their detailed NRSP9 <a href="#">regional feedback</a>, as provided.</p> <p>Bret acknowledged that he is an AA on this NRSP.</p> <p>W: Supportive of NRSP9, fully fund.</p>	<p>Mark moved (Shirley seconded) to recommend the approval of the NRSP9 request as written, with a request to start a collaborative discussion for a future model that transitions off of NRSP funds, with</p>

		<p>S: Fully fund, funds are highly leveraged, project doing good work.</p> <p>NC: Supportive of NRSP9, fully fund.</p> <p>NE: approve renewal of NRSP9 with the caveat that the total 5-year budget be reduced by 50% and a clear message shared with NRSP9 to develop a transition plan to reduce or eliminate off-the-top, NRSP funding.</p> <p>ARD: Supportive of NRSP9, fully fund.</p> <p>NIFA: Nothing to add.</p> <p>CARET: Nothing to add, also supportive of NRSP9.</p> <p>ECOP: NRSP 9 is a comprehensive, inclusive project with great value. Better integration with Extension would be useful to improve the balance between the valuable research being done and sharing of the data.</p> <p>Other discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We need to also be consistent with our business plan improvement feedback. Perhaps also suggest the development of a transition plan off NRSP funds by midterm review time, as described above for NRSP4.</li> <li>• NRSP9 exhibits excellent leverage of funding and industry support. Excellent ROI.</li> <li>• Institutional support unclear as to whether it's state or additional AES funds.</li> <li>• The impact analysis previously requested was not very robust, so perhaps we should request a more complete and comprehensive version by midterm.</li> </ul>	<p>progress to be reported back to the NRSP-RC no later than midterm review time. NRSP9 must also submit a more complete and comprehensive impact analysis than the previous version by midterm review time, as well.</p> <p>This motion was supported unanimously by the NRSP-RC.</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business plans for transition off NRSPs should be required with renewal proposal submissions.</li> <li>• NRSP9 AAs will be engaged in the development of the transition plan and the impact analysis to help limit the need for NRSP-RC intervention.</li> </ul>	
6.0	NRSP6 Renewal: <a href="https://www.nimss.org/projects/18694">https://www.nimss.org/projects/18694</a>	<p>NRSP-RC members reviewed their detailed NRSP6 <a href="#">regional feedback</a>, as provided.</p> <p>W: Decrease funding to \$50,000 per year to be consistent with previous actions by SAES directors. This is possibly the last year of funding at the current level of \$150,000.</p> <p>S: Communication has been poor overall. The Zoom presenter for NRSP6 at the S meeting never mentioned that TX and FL states used the gene bank. The region expressed concerns over the tone of the report. The consensus overall was that we should not continue to fund NRSP6 as we have been.</p> <p>NC: The NRSP6 program is too big to lose, but the business model needs to change. The National Potato Council is aware of these issues.</p> <p>NE: Approve renewal of NRSP6 with the caveat that the total 5-year budget be reduced by 50% and a clear message shared with NRSP6 to develop a transition plan to reduce or eliminate off-the-top, NRSP funding.</p> <p>ARD: Expressed concern over tone of the report, as well. Can this be funded as a regional project? How long should we continue to support this as a NRSP?</p> <p>NIFA: Other gene repositories are largely supported by industry, i.e. National Clonal Germplasm Repository for Citrus in Riverside, CA. No other ARS facilities receive AES support through the NRSP</p>	<p>Mark moved (Shirley seconded) to recommend rejecting the NRSP6 proposal and funding renewal as submitted.</p> <p>This motion was supported unanimously by the NRSP-RC.</p>

		<p>mechanism, other than faculty time. This has been an on-going issue with NRSP6 and perhaps a line needs to be drawn.</p> <p>CARET: Other commodities are industry supported, why is this one under NRSP funding?</p> <p>ECOP: Concur with above comments over the tone of the report. The potato gene bank is important, but scope of the other work is very narrow.</p> <p>Background of recent interactions with NRSP6 and general discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Midterm review did not acceptably explore alternative models, as was requested.</li><li>• Jeff and Doug visited with National Potato Council and Bill Barker, the lead AA and host institution contact at WI.</li><li>• Jeff received a long, somewhat hostile email from the NRSP6 lead, which prompted Jeff to talk with ARS leadership about improving the tone of NRSP6 interactions. This was shared with the NRSP-RC.</li><li>• Jeff, Doug, and others tried to form an AES and ARS group to develop potential new business plans over a year ago, but ARS never followed through.</li><li>• ARS appointed a middle person to serve as a liaison between NRSP6 lead and NRSP-RC, but that person has since retired.</li><li>• Jeff developed an example transition plan based upon major users via the number of orders and units.</li><li>• NRSP6's funding model has been an ongoing issue with the NRSP-RC for years. We need to be thoughtful and persistent with efforts if we want to effect real change.</li></ul>	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This year’s funding was reduced by \$15,000, taking it down to \$135,000, but it doesn’t appear to have made a difference.</li> <li>• One option is to give a one-year extension, with the stipulation that NRSP6 and USDA ARS develop an acceptable transition plan off NRSP funds before renewal will be approved.</li> <li>• If we deny this renewal, NRSP6 will still receive funding for an extra year to transition off per Guidelines.</li> <li>• It would be a huge impact to USDA ARS if we discontinue NRSP and WI support for NRSP6, beyond just the \$150,000 NRSP funding.</li> <li>• Our options are to offer a one-year extension of the current project or declare non-approval, which also allows a one-year funding extension. If we do not approve, the project could submit a proposal for a brand new NRSP.</li> <li>• If we recommend disapproval of the proposal and budget, we could include language that indicates our willingness to support a new more positive, partnership with ARS administration on the potato gene bank. Further discussion on this additional language can take place on our June 3 call.</li> <li>• Jeff noted that in the last Farm Bill, there was a charge to USDA ARS to develop a strategic plan for sustainability of the National Plant Germplasm System (NPGS).</li> <li>• The potato gene bank is already part of the national germplasm group, but NRSP6 is the only one that gets AES funding via the NRSP mechanism.</li> </ul>	
7.0	Preview and Action Items for Next NRSP-RC Call	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doug reminded the group of the June 3 call, during which members can refine additional language to accompany the NRSP6 recommendation.</li> </ul>	For information only.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Updated Guidelines</li><li>• NRSP Program</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tom will be unable to join the June 3 call, but indicated that he's supportive of what he NRSP-RC is doing.</li></ul>	
8.0	Other, as needed	None.	

**Call adjourned at 12:03 pm ET.**



## **NRSP FFY2021 Renewal Feedback by Region**

(5/4/2020)

### ***NRSP-4: Facilitating Registration of Pest Management Technology for Specialty Crops and Specialty Uses***

#### **WAASED:**

- Recommendation: Fully fund
- Necessary for industry, both nation-wide and in the West, particularly with the large amount of specialty crops that are grown in western states.
- Includes industry backing

#### **SAAESD:**

- Recommendation: Fully fund
- Doing a good job

#### **NCRA:**

- No major issues with the renewal.
- Some revisions requested.

#### **NERA:**

- The MAC expressed general support for NRSP4.
- NRSP4 is a minor but relatively important component of IR-4.
- NRSP4 contributes \$500k to IR-4's \$20M budget.
- IR-4 is an individual USDA budget line item.
- Currently IR-4 administrative offices are transitioning to NC State University (has been with Rutgers since 1963.)
- NRSP funding has been leveraged to secure other sources of funding.
- NRSP dollars are spread out to support regional IR-4 offices across the country.
- NRSP guidelines call for a transition plan to decrease off the top funding and increase support from other alternative sources of funding. Can the current level of NRSP support be decreased?
- IR-4 would not disappear without NRSP funding, but NRSP funding helps stations across the country to organize and helps to showcase the value of IR-4 at a national level.
- NERA recommendation on NRSP4 renewal: Approve renewal of NRSP4 with the caveat that the NRSP4 technical team provide a transition plan to reduce or eliminate off-the-top, NRSP funding in the final proposal.

### ***NRSP-6: The U.S. Potato Genebank: Acquisition, Classification, Preservation, Evaluation and Distribution of Potato (Solanum) Germplasm***

#### **WAAESD:**

- Recommendation: Decrease funding to \$50,000 per year to be consistent with previous actions by SAES directors. This is possibly the last year of funding at the current level of \$150,000.
- Concerns about material distribution.
  - Foreign average units exceeded most states average units except Iowa, Minnesota, New York, and Wisconsin.

- None of the top three potato producing states (Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, respectively) are in the top 5 with units.
  - The need is not as great for potato-growing states as it is for non-potato-growing states.
  - Is this a missed opportunity by potato-growing states?
- Begin to work with industry to support projects/germplasm that benefits the industry
  - If germplasm isn't being used now, is this a missed opportunity by industry or the gene bank?
  - Benefits to industry may also bring additional funding opportunities
  - Ensure use of cutting edge breeding strategies (molecular breeding)
- Function as quarantine facility for imported material is vital
- Is it possible for a university to take this over? Would another entity take it over if it doesn't receive the requested amount of funding? There should be a contingency plan in place if project is unable to maintain the gene bank at \$50,000 to avoid losing genetic material.
- Mid-term review
  - The statement that they are doing well and don't need to/can't find alternative funding comes off abrasive.
  - A substantial effort needs to be made to secure alternative funding to leverage NRSP funds further (ROI should be greater than 4:1 or 5:1).

**SAAESD:**

- What is the value for the South?
- Useful presentation and project, but needs more communication back to us.
- We don't grow potatoes in our state, so probably not very important
- This is a germplasm project similar to regional germplasm projects. Discussion was then, why isn't this part of a regional project.
- This has off the top funding for 27 years as NRSP6 and for 45? Years as IR-1 (not sure if that is a total of 45 years over both sources)
- At what point does a project move to minimal OTT funding or terminated? Questions about whether or not the budget should be reduced
- There was no clear consensus about whether to continue this project or not.

**NCRA:**

- Directors understand the high importance and functionality of the potato genebank, but long-term issues over the current business model continue to exist, despite multiple conversations with the technical lead and ARS.
- The program is too important to lose, but the business model needs to change and the NRSP-RC is working on alternative options.

**NERA:**

- NRSP6 supports the national potato germplasm center in Wisconsin.

- The NRSP provides unique services and has received decades of off-the-top funding support.
- The budget request for the project is “the status quo funding level” at \$150k/year, and no transition plan was included. The technical team expressed that they were comfortable with the current NRSP arrangement and are requesting the same.
- ESS voted to decrease NRSP6 funding to \$135k in 2019.
- NRSP6 is the strongest case for the need for alternative sources of funding.
- A transition plan to sunset the project is critical and should be required for submission by NRSP6 team.
- NERA recommendation on NRSP6 renewal: Approve renewal of NRSP6 with the caveat that the total 5-year budget be reduced by 50% and a clear message shared with NRSP6 to develop a transition plan to reduce or eliminate off-the-top, NRSP funding.

### ***NRSP-9: National Animal Nutrition Program***

#### **WAAESD:**

- Recommendation: Fully fund
- Desperately needed by the industry. Updates to nutrition guides are essential
- Funds are highly leveraged by industry dollars.
- Livestock industry benefits from the work done. Continuing industry support at an increasing level would be good going forward.

#### **SAAESD:**

- Recommendation: Fully fund
- Doing a good job

#### **NCRA:**

- No specific NCRA feedback given on this project.

#### **NERA:**

- NRSP9 supports animal nutrition research, focused on the expansion of databases related to animal nutrient requirements.
- NRSP9 interface with the National Academies of Science in the development of the widely-used database is critical.
- Years 1, 2, and 5 budget requests are level at \$199k/year.
- Year 3 includes a budget increase to support mid-term review.
- Year 4 includes an increase to support a national animal nutrition summit in Washington, DC.
- 2020 is the second renewal cycle for NRSP9 (project was initiated in 2010.)
- National Animal Nutrition Program is truly research support, and shows heavy leverage of the off-the-top funding – meeting the expectations of an NRSP.
- NRSP9 should draft a transition plan away from off-the-top funding, whether short or long term.
- NERA recommendation on NRSP9 renewal: Approve renewal of NRSP9 with the caveat that the total 5-year budget be reduced by 50% and a clear message shared with NRSP9 to develop a transition plan to reduce or eliminate off-the-top, NRSP funding.