

**NRSP-RC Call: February 25, 2020, 11 am ET**

**Committee Members:**

<p><b>Chair:</b> Doug Buhler (NCRA) <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> Shirley Hymon-Parker (ARD) Mark McGuire (WAAESD) Keith Owens (SAAESD) Don Latham (CARET) Tom Bewick (NIFA) Ron Brown (ECOP) Bret Hess (WAAESD ED)</p>
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**Participants:** Bret Hess, Shirley Hymon-Parker, Dave Leibovitz, Fred Sevello, Tom Bewick, Rick Rhodes, Keith Owens, Mark McGuire, Jeff Jacobsen, Chris Hamilton (recorder)

**Call Agenda/Notes:**

1. Roll Call (Chris, Doug)
2. NRSP Guidelines
  - a. Current Update (Jeff)
    - i. Continuing effort initiated by Fred and Rick with NERA
    - ii. Effort underway to take the current NRSP Guidelines from 2015 and bring them up to current status, as well as remove redundancies and clarify topics, as needed. So far, we've cut the document down by about 50%.
    - iii. Currently, under ED review, then will take to NRSP-RC (within the next month or so), and regional associations after that.
    - iv. Our end goal is to send to ESS for approval vote. Probably will be presented as a new document to fully replace the 2015 version.
    - v. Comments/questions?
      1. Intent is not to change the NRSP process, but just to clean up the document to make things more clear and consistent.
      2. Better mimicking what NIFA asks in their grant programs.
      3. Rick: Provides RC with clear pathway towards sun-setting NRSPs, by specifically including this step in the business plan.
      4. Fred: It's much more clear now that we want a transition plan off the NRSP program discussed with the FIRST submission now. Is this a simple change or significant re-emphasis?
      5. Jeff: It really is a new document and re-evaluates the NRSP program, with the sun-setting facet cleaned up with a stronger emphasis. We will re-articulate this emphasis to be more clear to the Section, as we proceed with the effort.
  - b. Future Status Discussion (Q1-Q3 below, Doug)
    - i. Is now the appropriate time to discuss the NRSP program and if it needs significant changes? Do we want to put the below questions in front of the regional associations at this time or wait until the NRSP Guidelines are revised and approved?

- ii. Mark: Those questions are critical now. Perhaps the revised Guidelines will help as a start.
  - iii. Shirley: Agreed. It's time for the regions to discuss how we should move forward and include the decision in the new Guidelines. The questions below are perfect to ask this committee as well as the regions to really answer what the purpose of the program is.
  - iv. Doug: Good idea to roll the two efforts together.
  - v. Fred: Also agrees to do them in parallel, Guidelines and NRSP program revision. Good list of questions overall, some even catalyze deeper thinking about the entire NRSP program. For instance, "G" in the first list below regarding choice. Currently, we don't have other options to turn on.
  - vi. Keith: NRSP program is needed, but things that were important 15-20 years ago, may not be anymore.
  - vii. **Action: Doug, Jeff, Chris will work on finalizing a survey on the feedback questions below and send on to the group soon. Will combine responding to existing questions as well as allow for further discussion on questions that especially catalyze discussion.**
3. NRSP6 Background and Discussion (Jeff, Doug)
- a. Long history of funding support
  - b. Much conversation over many hours, as described below in the narrative below, based on what asked of NRSP6 last year. Renewal proposal is essential status quo, though. Response by NRSP6 lead has been unsatisfactory.
  - c. NRSP\_temp6 has provided 12 reviews with the renewal proposal. We need to think about how we address the renewal as well as all of the reviews.
  - d. A number of alternatives have bubbled up, we have to get a handle on whether they are viable. Jeff and Doug continue to work on this and will be meeting with more people on this issue during CARET/AHS.
  - e. Rick: What are we seeking from regional association reviews of NRSP6?
  - f. Jeff: Treat the proposal as-is. EDs can provide the background to their members, but ultimately, review as presented in NIMSS as you would all other proposals. NRSP-RC reflects regional directors and have more information, even than EDs, and can share that info with their regions. We'll have more discussion at the NRSP-RC meeting in May as well, after regions have met and discussed.
  - g. Doug: Must be respectful of our process and go from there. Lots of good in the proposal, but also a lot of the same old thing that wasn't working before.
  - h. Fred: There is new information presented in the NRSP6 below that wasn't available before, such as the fate of the Sturgeon Bay station. Fred thanked Jeff for provided such a full picture of what's been happening over time and with ARS, UW-Madison, etc.
  - i. Doug: Maybe we'll even want UW reps to attend our NRSP-RC meeting in Madison. Shirley: How long has NRSP6 been funded by this model?
  - j. Bret: Thank you to Jeff and others for all the follow-up on NRSP6 and continuing to work on the changes.
4. Other
- a. Jeff: How much time do you need to provide input on the NRSP Program and Guidelines? 2 weeks is good.

Call adjourned at 11:44 am ET.

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**Members of the NRSP Review Committee-**

Welcome to the New Year! In order to have a highly productive meeting in Madison, WI on May 27, some prior thinking and dialogue is necessary. We want to continue to discuss: the purpose of NRSPs with consideration for changes to existing NRSP Guidelines (<http://escop.info/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/NRSP-GUIDELINES2c-Revised-Nov-2015.pdf>) and desirable/undesirable characteristics/goals of this program. Please note that the initial list of desirable/undesirable elements has been started (via Doug and Jeff), so please ADD more. With these responses, the NRSP RC will be able to strategically evaluate the NRSP program and provide some leadership for NRSPs to the SAES directors in the future. This will also allow for any advance background or synthesis work to be incorporated into the NRSP Guidelines rewrite, prior to our May meeting.

In addition, work continued on NRSP6 with the subgroup of NRSP RC participating (Doug Buhler, Mark McGuire, Fred Servello, Bill Barker (lead AA), Robert Stougaard (S region and NPGCC member), Jeff Jacobsen). While the list is a bit long of activities, we wanted to share this PRIVILEGED information in the grey-highlighted area, with the NRSP RC too. For Information and Discussion as needed.

Thanks in advance for your work as NRSP Review Committee member.

Doug Buhler  
NRSP RC Chair

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**Q1: The purpose of NRSPs remains worthy of the continued investment of 1% (up to \$2.59M) by ESS.**

If YES, then >>>>>

- a) Keep as is
- b) Phase in MAJOR changes such as (provide):
- c) Phase in slight changes such as (provide):

If NO, then >>>>>

- a) Completely phase out as funded projects expire
- b) Phase in MAJOR changes such as (provide):
- c) Create a new program such as (provide):

**Q2: The NRSP Guidelines should be simplified and changed as necessary (YES or NO).**

**Q3: Provide additional observations on the desirable and undesirable characteristics and goals of NRSPs**

**Desirable –**

- A) Flexible method to fund projects
- B) Stimulate/catalyze research and collaborations
- C) Few long-term projects (or projects with minimal cost)
- D) Several existing projects are highly leveraged
- E) Stimulate innovation and risk taking
- F) Flexible duration depending upon the nature of the project.
- G) If ESS could identify a few strategic areas of need, then new proposals could be created/funded

- H) Ground up ideas from LGU faculty
- I) Meet a critical national need not readily funded by other sources
- J) Leverage funds from other sources

**Undesirable –**

- A) Distinction between research and support becomes difficult to identify (need to discuss)
- B) Long-term perpetuity of some projects with higher budgets minimizes change (desirable too)
- C) NRSP Guidelines complexity/redundancy and do not reflect the nature of all projects
- D) SAES has a hard time of saying no or terminating projects
- E) SAES takes what comes and does not ask for strategic areas of interest or needs assessment  
Communications on the impact of many NRSPs is not readily and consistently identifiable