

## NRSP1 Management Committee Call NOTES

Date: Thursday, April 16, 2026

Time: 2 pm ET, 1 pm CT, 12 noon MT, 11 am PT

NRSP1 Management Committee Members
Chris Hamilton, Chair and NIMSS Lead, agInnovation North Central Bret Hess (AA), agInnovation-West Jeanette Thurston (lead AA), agInnovation North Central David Leibovitz (AA), agInnovation Northeast Cindy Morley (AA), agInnovation South
Rick Rhodes, agInnovation Northeast Gary Thompson, agInnovation South Jennifer Horton, agInnovation-West Alton Thompson, ARD Julie Estrada (NIMSS User), Purdue University Robin Williams (NIMSS User), Clemson University Sara Delheimer (agInnovation MRF Impacts Program Coordinator), Ex-officio Faith Peppers (NIFA Director of Communications), NIFA Liaison Tara Warner (NIFA PARS Director), NIFA Liaison
Email list: <a href="mailto:nrsp1@escop.info">nrsp1@escop.info</a>
Committee Page: <a href="http://escop.info/committee/nrsp-1-management-committee/">http://escop.info/committee/nrsp-1-management-committee/</a>

**Call Attendees:** David Lane (NE IPM), Tegan Walker (S IPM), Alton Thompson, Bret Hess, Cindy Morley, David Leibovitz, Gary Thompson, Jeanette Thurston, Julie Estrada, Robin Williams, Sara Delheimer, Chris Hamilton

### **Action Items/Next Steps:**

1. Chris will connect with David Lane and Tegan Walker on scheduling a more in-depth call re: the ERA reporting tool/survey.
2. David Lane & Tegan:
  - Share a summary of survey data on how ERA participation benefits members.
  - Send the Smartsheet migration budget from the HATCH proposal to Bret.
3. David Leibovitz: update NEERA2104 chair to Alejandro.
4. Sara, David, and Cindy will work on potential MRFImpacts.org boilerplate updates and capacity fund-related text inclusions.
5. Sara will reach out to David Lane for further collaborations in impact statements.
6. Chris will send an email to NRSP1 membership to collect feedback on the Letter of Appreciation for Parker. Check also with Cindy/Robin to see if Parker can receive a gift card award, as well.
7. Chris will send a scheduling poll for the 2026 Q2 NRSP1 update call (July/early Aug?)

### **Call Agenda/Notes:**

1. Roll Call and Welcome – Chris

2. Guest Presentation: Standardization of IPM Coordinator ERA Reporting – Dr. David Lane, Cornell IPM
3. [NIMSS Updates](#) (written report only) – Chris
4. [Letter of Appreciation for Parker Parham](#) – Chris
  - Review and approval to send to Clemson
  - Do we want it to come from agInnovation Chair Chandra Reddy or NRSP1?
  - Monetary award/gift certificate from agInnovation?
5. [MRF Impact Program Q4 2025](#) Update – Sara
6. NIFA PARS Update (staffing, NIFA reps, etc.) – Tara (if available)
7. NIFA Communications Update – Faith (if available)
8. Other Items, as needed.

**Fathom AI Meeting Summary: [VIEW RECORDING - 64 mins \(No highlights\)](#)**

### **Standardizing IPM ERA Reporting**

- **Problem:** Inconsistent state reports to regional technical committees (NERA 2104, SARA 3, etc.) prevented year-over-year or national data analysis.
- **Solution:** The IPM ERA Survey, a standardized Qualtrics tool, aligns reporting with multi-state research guidelines and four core objectives:
  - Support regional collaboration and knowledge exchange
  - Identify and prioritize IPM needs
  - Develop and disseminate educational resources
  - Strengthen communication and representation
- **Adoption Status:**
  - SERA 3 (Southern): Year 3 of use; now includes all collaborators, not just coordinators.
  - WERA 1017 (Western): Year 2 of use.
  - NERA 2104 (Northeast): Piloting this year.
  - NCERA 222 (North Central): Expected to adopt next year.
- **Future Development:**
  - **Tool Migration:** A multi-state HATCH proposal was submitted to migrate the tool from Qualtrics to Smartsheet, which allows for embeddable, real-time dashboards.
  - **Impact Statement Workshops:** The Southern IPM Center plans regional workshops to train faculty on data collection and impact statement writing.
  - **Scope Expansion:** The tool may be adapted for other NIMSS-reporting IPM groups (e.g., corn, soy, wheat).

### **Multi-State Research Fund (MRF) Impacts Program**

- **NCERA 137 Workshop:** Approved an in-person workshop for NCERA 137 (soybean disease) in March.
  - Rationale: The workshop will coincide with meetings of other ERA groups (corn, wheat), maximizing reach and efficiency.
- **Website Content:** A sub-team (David Leibovitz, Cindy Morley) will review updates to the landing page to better explain the program's role.
- **Boilerplate Language:** The boilerplate for impact statements will be updated to highlight "capacity funding."
  - Rationale: To better align with APLU and other capacity funding initiatives.
  - Action: Sara will email the current boilerplate for group feedback.

#### Next Steps

- **Chris:** Schedule a follow-up meeting to review the IPM ERA survey questions in detail.
- **David Lane & Tegan:**
  - Share a summary of survey data on how ERA participation benefits members.
  - Send the Smartsheet migration budget from the HATCH proposal to Bret.
- **Sara:**
  - Coordinate the in-person NCERA 137 workshop.
  - Email the impact statement boilerplate for group feedback on "capacity funding" language.
  - Collaborate with David Lane on impact statement development to avoid redundancy.
- **David L. & Cindy:** Review and provide feedback on the MRF Impacts Program website content.

#### Action Items

- Email doodle poll to schedule IPM ERA survey Q&A w/ David Lane & Tegan Walker; include Sara Delheimer - [WATCH \(5 secs\)](#)
- Email Bret Hess Smartsheet migration budget + Smartsheet costs - [WATCH \(5 secs\)](#)
- Email David Leibovitz to reactivate NIMS access - [WATCH \(5 secs\)](#)
- Update NIMS NERA2104 chair to Alejandro Calixto - [WATCH \(5 secs\)](#)
- Email NCERA137 AA re: in-person workshop in Mar; confirm logistics/co-trainer - [WATCH \(5 secs\)](#)
- Email capacity task force re: capacity-focused boilerplate language - [WATCH \(5 secs\)](#)
- Email Jeanette Thurston initial thoughts on MRF benefits survey data - [WATCH \(5 secs\)](#)

- Email David Lane re: impact-statement coordination - [WATCH \(5 secs\)](#)
- Email doodle poll to schedule next NRSP1 call - [WATCH \(5 secs\)](#)

## **NIMSS Updates: Major Features & Initiatives**

### **Meeting Approval Workflow**

- Built new approval workflow allowing project editors to create meeting authorizations
- Meetings created by editors are routed to Administrative Advisors for approval
- AAs/RSAs can still approve meetings directly
- Added safeguards to prevent multiple SEAs from being created for a single meeting
- Added button for editors to create meetings directly from the project page
- Added link for meetings pending approval
- Improved meeting date formatting in notification emails

### **Appendix E Form Updates**

- Removed FTE and SY/PY/TY fields from Appendix E form, then restored them as optional fields
- Extracted research and extension form sections into reusable components
- Fixed rollover to no longer auto-select all objectives — participants must now manually select which objectives they're working on
- Updated user-specific rollover flow
- Added new Appendix E status tracking
- Fixed approval emails that were showing empty/zero values for SY/PY/TY and FTE

### **Project Management Improvements**

- Added deletion logging for projects — deleted project details are now recorded for audit purposes
- Inactive projects API now includes deleted projects
- New API endpoint to retrieve projects with successors (for NRS integration)
- Hid project committees section; updated labels from "assign editors" to "project leadership"

### **Search System Improvements**

- Temporarily removed Meiliseach for User and Impact Statement search due to Cloudflare CDN issues causing errors on the search page
- Added defensive wrapper to handle corrupted search responses
- Reintegrated Meiliseach after identifying the root cause — DB queries produced poor results for multi-word searches
- Added a no-downtime reindex command for users

### **Reviews**

- Added notes column to the outstanding reviews page
- Fixed Appendix I review email to use the assigned reviewer's name instead of the logged-in user

### **Bug Fixes**

- Fixed issue where certain projects failed to load on the project page
- Fixed redirect error when navigating to a project that no longer exists
- Fixed objectives display formatting on project pages
- Various minor redirect and navigation improvements

### **Chair Designation for Project Editors**

Previously, the “Chair” label on a project was automatically assigned to whichever editor was listed first. Now, AAs and admins can explicitly designate the Chair using a checkbox on the Project Leadership/Editors page. The selected Chair will always appear first on the project homepage, and validation ensures exactly one Chair is assigned per project.

Existing projects were automatically migrated, with the current first-listed editor set as Chair. No action is needed unless someone wants to make a change.



Dear Dr. Carlyle Brewster and Mr. Jason Eichelberger:

On behalf of the agInnovation agricultural experiment station directors, we wish to formally express our appreciation to Mr. Parker Parham. Parker has done an outstanding job to support our organization and the work we do with NIMSS, our National Management Support System, developed most recently by the Clemson University Learning Institute in 2014.


Parker is incredibly responsive, friendly, and professional, and he approaches everything with a true can-do attitude. No matter what we've asked of him, he has always found a way to make it work within the NIMSS system. The upgrades Parker has implemented have improved efficiency and genuinely made life easier for NIMSS users, agInnovation directors' office teams, and system administrators alike.

Parker has a deep, holistic understanding of our system. Time and time again, he has demonstrated the ability to envision and implement functional NIMSS workflows that execute the complex ideas we propose for the system. It's reassuring to work with someone who not only understands what we're asking for but also helps us think through the best solution collaboratively.

We are very grateful for Parker's expertise, dedication, and collaborative approach. He has been a tremendous asset to the NIMSS team, we value his contributions, and we look forward to our continued work together.

Sincerely,

agInnovation NRSP1 Management Committee

Christina Hamilton, NRSP1 Chair 

Jeanette Thurston, agInnovation North Central

Cindy Morley, agInnovation South

David Leibovitz, agInnovation Northeast

Bret Hess, agInnovation-West

Gary Thompson, agInnovation South

Richard Rhodes, agInnovation Northeast

Alton Thompson, ARD

Jennifer Horton, agInnovation-West

Julie Estrada, agInnovation North Central

Robin Williams, agInnovation South



# 2026 Q1 Report

January 1-March 31, 2026

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Reading this report: This report summarizes the performance of the Multistate Research Fund Impacts program by reporting key indicators and metrics and narrative. Use the Document tabs panel to quickly navigate to section headings. Figures of special note are **bolded**. A **green highlight** indicates outstanding performance or achievement. **Yellow highlights** mark action items. Any urgent concerns are **highlighted red**. Action items are also summarized in the “On the Horizon” section at the end of the document.

## **Impact Statements**

In Q1, Sara **finalized 2 Impact Statements** with another **1 Impact Statement out for review**. See full Impact Statement queue for 2026 [here](#). **NRSP1 Management Committee will continue to provide comments on projects to prioritize in 2026.**

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W4170: Safe Reuse of Residuals for Soil Health

[posted](#)

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W3010: Improving Feed Efficiency for Beef Cattle

[posted](#)

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## How we used Impact Statements

Finalized Impact Statements were sent directly to project participants, agInnovation regional leadership, NIFA communicators, and the APLU FANR communications office, and regional communicators.

All finalized Impact Statements were posted on the [mrfimpacts.org](https://mrfimpacts.org) website and will be shared via @MRFImpacts social media.

All finalized Impact Statements were uploaded to NIMSS and the NIDB.

### NIFA Update

Issue Link	Date Posted	Project Number & Title	Clicks
<a href="#">Link</a>	1/21/2026	<a href="#">S1076 Flies and Ticks in Animal Agriculture</a>	35
<a href="#">Link</a>	2/4/2026	<a href="#">W3009: Automation in Specialty Crops</a>	439

### NIFA Impacts Blog

Web Link	Date Posted	Project Number & Title	Views
<a href="#">Link</a>	1/15/2026	<a href="#">S1076 Flies and Ticks in Animal Agriculture</a>	486
<a href="#">Link</a>	2/2/2026	<a href="#">W3009: Automation in Specialty Crops</a>	782

The S1076 and W3009 Impacts were among the **top 12 most-viewed Impacts** on NIFA's website.

All MRF content on the NIFA Impacts page had an **64-74% engagement rate** during Q1 (considered good by industry standards). A higher engagement rate indicates that viewers spent longer on the page, had more “conversions” (e.g., clicks to view links, sign up for mailing lists, download materials, etc.), and visited other pages on the website, suggesting that MRF content is compelling and helps drive traffic to and across the NIFA website.

Impact Statements posted in previous quarters continued to perform well on the NIFA website, accumulating **217 total views** in Q1:

- [W3192 Protective Clothing for Wildland Firefighters](#)
- [NE1610 Eastern White Pine Issues](#)
- [Researchers Honored for Advancing Poultry Health and Food Safety](#) (NE2334 Genetic Bases for Resistance and Immunity to Avian Diseases, 2025 Excellence in Multistate Research Award Winner)
- [S1085 Cover Crops for Southern Farmers and Ranchers](#)

APLU FANR featured Impact Statements				
Web Link	Date Posted	Document title	Projects featured	Clicks
<a href="#"><u>Link</u></a>	2/6/2026	Research and Extension make agricultural systems more efficient, profitable, competitive and resilient	S1085, NC246, NC1173	
<a href="#"><u>Link</u></a>	2/6/2026	Research and Extension support resilient ecosystems	NCERA3	
<a href="#"><u>Link</u></a>	2/6/2026	Research and Extension ensure everyone has ample access to affordable, safe, nutritious food	NE2334, NC1173	
<a href="#"><u>Link</u></a>	2/6/2026	Land-grant university research and Extension strengthen nutrition, health and well-being	NE1939, W4003	

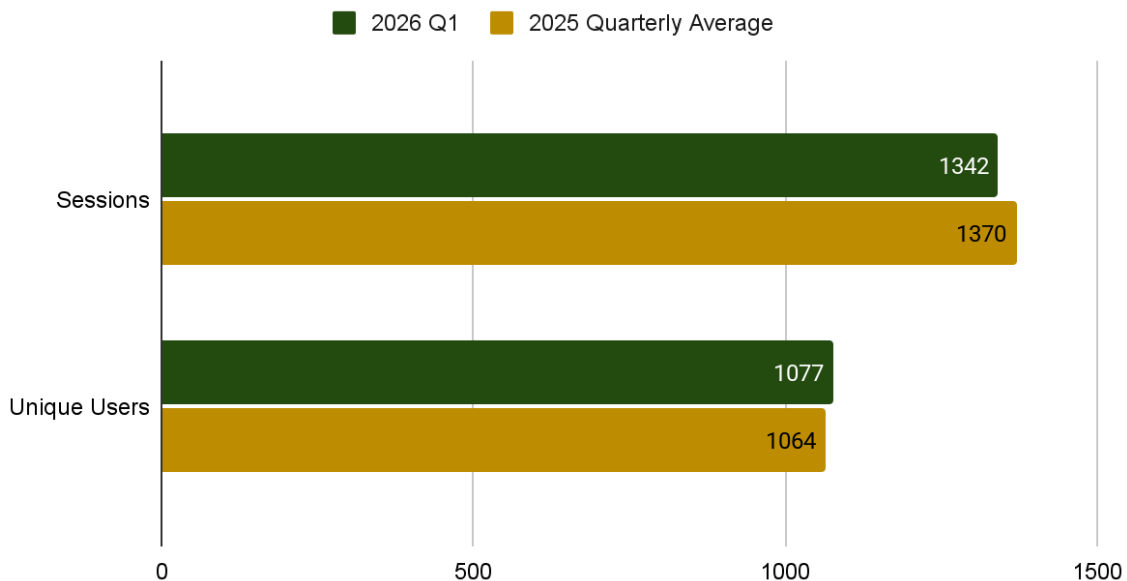
Multiple MRF projects were featured in the Focus Area Highlights sheets produced by the NIDB Communications Team. In addition to being

posted on the [NIDB website](#), these sheets were printed and distributed at the CARET/BAA Washington Conference and will be distributed at NERAOC and other conferences throughout the year.

## Website

Website performance in Q1 was similar to average performance in 2025, which was the website's best performing year on record.

### Website Performance



Most traffic to the [mrfimpacts.org](http://mrfimpacts.org) came from direct referrals (e.g., users typing the URL into their browser or clicking links in emails and non-web files such as PDFs, Word docs, or PowerPoint files), links on LinkedIn, organic searchers on Google, and links on the agInnovation site.

Pages that received the most visits include the January toolkit, Impact Statements, and the Impact Writing Workshops page and materials. The most-visited individual impact statement posts were NC1184 Improving Meat Production, W4002 Nutrient Bioavailability, and NC246 Managing Insect Pests in Corn.

# Social Media

## **MRF Impacts**

In Q1, the Impact Writer posted regular content on @MRFImpacts platforms on X, Facebook, and LinkedIn. We highlighted content related to Ag Day, nutrition, health and wellness, seeds/planting, World Water Day, National Poultry Day, National Strawberry Day, National Cherry Month, National Invasive Species Awareness Week, cold-hardy crop varieties, and more.

We shared communications toolkits with NIFA, APLU, and project participants to help them promote Hatch Multistate projects on social media.

Compared to Q4 of 2025, social media metrics in Q1 of 2026 indicate that X performance is up slightly. Facebook held relatively steady. LinkedIn impressions were down slightly, but engagement increased.

### **X**

Tweets: 61

Impressions: 2,516

Engagements: 90

### **Facebook**

Posts: 63

Views: 384

Engagements: 21

### **LinkedIn**

Posts: 63

Impressions: 6,815

Reach: 3,069

Engagements: 327

## USDA NIFA

MRF content performed at an all-time high across most USDA NIFA social media platforms in Q1. Impressions and engagements were roughly double those of Q4 of 2025 (the number of posts on each platform in Q1 was also roughly double that of Q4 2025).

### X

27 posts

6,534 impressions

210 engagements (54 link clicks)

### Facebook

24 posts

3,242 reactions

### LinkedIn

25 posts

27,812 impressions

716 engagements (434 clicks, 249 likes, 25 reposts, 8 comments)

## APLU FANR

[coming soon]

## Newsletters

Our latest newsletter was released on January 7, 2026 and was opened by **49 subscribers (27%)**. Readers made **4 clicks** on newsletter links. Opens and clicks are lower than average, likely due to the early January

release date when many subscribers may have been out of office or just returning after winter break.

The first newsletter of 2026 will be released on April 7, 2026.

## **Impact Writing Workshops**

During Q1, the Impact Writer worked with agInnovation regional leadership to solicit applications for Impact Writing Workshops for Hatch Multistate project groups. Eight projects applied.\* Working with agInnovation regional leadership, the Impact Writer selected six projects to serve in 2026 and has been coordinating with project leadership to schedule the workshops.

### **Workshops completed in Q1:**

- S1098: March 30, 2026

### **Workshops scheduled for later this year:**

- NE9: July 2026 (date TBD)
- S1094: August 24, 2026
- NC2042: October 2026 (date TBD)
- S1093: October 29, 2026
- W2196 (Sara has not heard back from this project)

\* NCERA137 also applied for a workshop; however, they are requesting an *in-person* workshop in early 2027, which would serve participants of NCERA137 as well as participants of NCERA184 and possibly another multistate group. NRSPI Management Committee will discuss whether an in-person workshop can be provided at no cost to the group.

See details about applicants and nominees [here](#).

## **Committees & Meetings**

- Monthly: Attended APLU Communications and Marketing (CMC) meetings as ex-officio member
- January 7, 2026: Met with Janice McDonell (Associate Dean of Research Impact at the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences, Rutgers University) to provide impact reporting insights for a college-wide workshop series
- January 16, 2026: Met with Tyler Messerschmidt and Lee Hecker (Assistant Directors of the Maine Agricultural and Forest Experiment Station) to provide guidance on impact reporting
- January 31-February 1, 2026: Co-chaired the NIDB Communications Team session
  - Helped plan session agenda, file system, and topic teams
  - Provided team briefing
  - Designed and wrote Focus Area Highlights sheets, which include numerous MRF projects
  - Managed session workflow and troubleshooting for 20+ writers and editors
  - Provided post-session debrief to CMC
- February 11, 2026: Met with Katie Williamson (Pivot CC) to coordinate agInnovation use of MRF Impacts materials

## **Conferences**

Sara assisted Alisa Gore (Oklahoma State) and Stacey Stearns (UConn Extension, CMC Northeast Region rep) with a session proposal for the ACE Conference in June 2026. A modified version of the proposal was accepted.

## **Professional Development**

- *Immersive Science Storytelling*, ACE Webinar, March 4, 2026

## **On the Horizon**

- Continue 2026 Impact Statement queue based on USDA, APLU, agInnovation priorities and needs. NRSP1 Management Committee members can provide comments [here](#).
- Discuss in-person workshop logistics and reimbursement procedures.
- Make content and accessibility improvements to the [mrfimpacts.org](http://mrfimpacts.org). NRSP1 Management Committee will form a small working group to guide and review changes.
- Use the [Benefits of MRF Projects Survey](#) responses to produce materials that promote the overall importance of the MRF and capacity funding.
- Consider changing website and Impact Statement boilerplate language to highlight capacity funding and identify appropriate language to use in MRF impact stories.
- Identify one MRF project/researcher for a researcher spotlight interview/video/story.
- Prepare materials for NRSP1 FFY27-32 proposal (Issues & Justification due 9/15/2026; Management, Budget, Business Plan narrative due 10/15/26).