

**Western Region Joint Summer Meeting
July 8-9, 2015, Breckenridge , CO
Joint Session Notes**

WRJSM Joint Session Agenda

Tuesday, July 7

Plenary Session I

- Welcome – Lou Swanson and President Tony Frank (*via video*)
- National Western Stock Show Redevelopment – Jocelyn Hittle
- Value Chain – Greg Graff
- 2015 Ag Innovation Summit – Kathay Rennels

Plenary Session II

- Academic Program Section – Donna Brown
- NIFA Update – Louie Tupas
- Cornerstone Report – Jim Richards
- kglobal Update – Darren Katz

Plenary Session III

- Overview of Western Perspective – Bret Hess, Bill Frost
- Western Governors Association – James Ogsbury

Communications and Marketing 101 – kglobal

Wednesday, July 8

Introduction to the day – Steve McMullin, Lead Facilitator

Breakout Session #1: Western Perspective Message Development

- AK, AS, GU, HI, Micronesia, MP
- AZ, CA, CO, NM, NV, UT
- ID, MT, OR, WA, WY

Report Back and Refine Messages

Breakout Session #2: Filling Gaps

- WAAESD
- WEDA
- W-APD
- W-AHS/CARET

Report Back and Refine Gap Filling Plans

Thursday, July 9

Closing Session

Overview of Western Perspective

July 7, 2015

Bret Hess and Bill Frost

Building Strength in Unity

- 1) Identify common ground regarding unique attributes of the West, audiences, and areas of emphasis
- 2) Document and demonstrate the value and contributions of the West and Western LGUs
- 3) Identify research & programmatic gaps and opportunities for future collaboration
- 4) Advocate for future opportunities through strategic communication

Effectively Working Together

Which do you support?
(top 3 in order)

8	1. More joint appointments
32	2. Create subcommittee/ opportunities for collaboration
29	3. Increased communication
15	4. Joint Mission Statement
12	5. Increased director interaction
12	6. More joint meetings
6	7. More focus on Multistate Research Contracts
35	8. More collaboration on funding opportunities
37	9. Jointly funded initiatives
13	10. Common Stakeholder engagement

Most Important Unique Attributes

	Advantage	Disadvantage
Extensive public lands Water issues/scarcity Western independence Diversity of people, ecosystems, and agriculture	Greater tourism opportunities Beautiful open spaces Quality of life	Local control is non-existent Lack of tax base Doesn't fit into funding plan
Water issue/scarcity	Key asset for ag Key opportunity for research Opportunity to grow (if you have access)	Conflict over use Water flows to money Limits economic opportunity Caps development
Western independence	Quality of life Iconic image	Hard to get everyone on the same page Difficult to have one voice What do your stakeholders want?
Cherished natural resources	Abundant Beauty	Problems associated with development Other people want them (and have the money to do so)
Diversity of people, ecosystems/agriculture	Opportunities to grow programs Opportunities to grow agriculture	Diversity of culture (obstacle to unity) Funding to meet everyone's needs More variety of areas of expertise Understanding all differences is challenging

Common Audiences

- #1 Federal and state legislators
- #2 University decision makers
- #3 Federal and state agencies

Value and Contributions?

The Western Region is appropriately recognized and supported for contributions made to agriculture

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Response	Count
1. Strongly Agree	2
2. Agree	4
3. Neutral	13
4. Disagree	10
5. Strongly Disagree	6

Common Areas of Interest

- #1 Community & Economic Development
- #2 Natural Resource Management
- #3 Energy
- #4 Health and Nutrition
- #5 Food Systems
- #6 Rural-Urban Interface

Common Areas of Interest

- #1 What are a few of the most important specific topics that should be documented about this area of common interest?
- #2 How does the Western Region, in general, benefit the entire nation when it comes to this area of common interest?
- #3 How do research and Extension activities at Western Region LGUs contribute to this common area of interest? List specific projects or examples, if possible:

Focus Area Work

- 1) Developed background statements for each of the focus areas.
- 2) Cataloged W-LGU investments in each of the focus areas.
- 3) Discovered commonalities and relationships among W-LGU.

The Western Perspective

- 1) Compiled information and drafted a document to demonstrate the unique attributes and value of the West Region.
- 2) Set the stage for understanding the complex and unique features of the Western Region.

The Western Agenda

- 1) Documented contributions the Western LGUs are making in the focus areas.
- 2) "The Western Agenda" as a guide to:
 - a. Identify research & programmatic gaps and opportunities for future collaboration.
 - b. Advocate for future opportunities through strategic communication.

The Western Perspective & The Western Agenda

WAAESD
Western Association of Agricultural
Experiment Station Directors
<http://www.waaesd.org>

WEDA
Western Extension
Directors Association
<http://www.westernextension.org/weda>

Edited by:
B. Hess, B. Frost & B. Allen-Clay
June 2015

Part I: The Western Perspective

Introduction

Characteristics that make the West the West

- A Broad Geographic Expanse
- A Very Diverse Region
- A Glimpse of the Contributions to U.S. Agriculture
- Public Lands
- Urban-Rural Juxtaposition
- Fire

Part I: The Western Perspective cont'd

Critical Characteristics that affect the West (and everyone else)

- Water
- Climate Change
- Population Growth
- Endemic and Invasive Pests and Diseases

Moving the Western Perspective to the Western Agenda

- 1) Increase the visibility of the West and enhance public support for the W-LGU.
- 2) Highlight the contributions of W-LGU.
- 3) Increase funding for mission related research and public service programs of W-LGU's.
- 4) Identify gaps in the W-LGU infrastructure for better delivery to people and communities.
- 5) Build capacity in the W-LGU system to support healthy food systems, healthy environments, healthy families, and healthy communities.

Part II: The Western Agenda

Sustainable Production Systems

- Food Production
- Food Safety
- Food Security
- Forestry
- Horticulture

Part II: The Western Agenda cont'd

Natural Resources

- Water
- Wildlife
- Wildfires in the West
- Invasive Species, Pests, and Diseases
- Ecosystem Services
- Economic Opportunities for Natural Resources

Part II: The Western Agenda cont'd

Energy

Community and Economic Development

- Youth Development
- Science Literacy around Agriculture, Nutrition and Natural Resources

Nutrition and Health:

Innovation in Foods for Health

The Western Perspective & The Western Agenda


References (Supporting Documentation)

The Things That Should Done


Sample Message




THE TEAM



Darren Katz
Partner



Collin Lever
Account Executive



Ashley Hawn
Account Executive

WHO WE ARE

We are a team of **public relations** and **public affairs experts**, **media relations** and **digital strategists** who help organizations, government agencies, individuals and companies **communicate better**.

We create programs and analysis that combine **strategic communications**, **new media** and **stakeholder engagement** into one powerful punch.

Established in 2009, kglobal is the public affairs division of Zenetex, a government services firm with more than 400 employees worldwide.



MEET AG IS AMERICA

Ag Is America is a communications campaign that highlights the importance of the American land-grant system, specifically the Colleges of Agriculture, Agricultural Experiment Stations, and Cooperative Extension. **Help us tell your land-grant story.**



OVERVIEW

Today, we will discuss different tools you can leverage to **better communicate** your land-grant story.

- How to identify your **audiences**
- How to develop targeted **messages**
- How to effectively use **messengers**
- How to successfully utilize various **media**
- How to engage with your **legislative targets**

AUDIENCES

Find and connect with your audiences in four easy steps.

- Step 1. Identify
- Step 2. Research
- Step 3. Prioritize
- Step 4. Engage



AUDIENCES

As an example, let's say you want to connect with Members of Congress.

- How can we identify the right Members of Congress
- What should we research
- How can we prioritize our outreach
- Let's engage

AUDIENCES

Generally, there's two ways to reach your audience:

- Directly
- Or, indirectly via validators



MESSAGES

Your messages should:

- Be informed by qualitative and quantitative research
- Help tell your story
- Always reinforce your mission
- Act as thematic elements in your land-grant narrative
- Reiterate previous success
- Be straightforward



MESSAGES

To control how your audience perceives your land-grant narrative, you must control your messaging.

Consider building a message map or conducting a branding and messaging session.



MESSAGES

Your messages will be more persuasive when they are part of ongoing conversations in Washington, such as:

- Federal food programs
- School lunch programs
- Trade, TPA
- Avian flu
- Dietary guidelines
- Clean water rule, EPA
- Water usage, conversation



MESSAGES

Here's a list of tools that can help you identify relevant conversations already happening in Washington:

- The Hill
- POLITICO
- CQ / Roll Call
- National Journal
- Washington Post
- Wonkblog
- USDA blogs
- Congress.gov



MESSAGES

Sometimes, it can be hard to keep current with all relevant news topics. This is where an editorial calendar can help. An editorial calendar incorporates trends evident in traditional and digital media and news hooks.

Soybean Sunday	1/18/2015	Resources, Ag
microirrigation Monday	1/19/2015	Water Security, Resources
National Cheese Lover's Day	1/20/2015	Communities
National Granola Bar Day	1/20/2014	Resources
NMSU Diabetic Session in Las Cruces	1/21/2015	Health

MESSAGES

Different types of news hooks include:

- Local
- Regional
- National
- Evergreen



MESSAGES EXERCISE

Let's discuss ways to identify news hooks.

- What university or local events
- What regional topics
- What food holidays
- What national holidays
- What seasonal topics



MESSAGES

According to our national survey results, the topics that resonated the most with respondents in the West include:

- Product labeling
- Global access to clean, safe water
- Water management
- Conservation techniques
- Drought
- Food supply
- Energy use / hydropower plants
- Education and awareness of water issues



MESSAGES

According to our Western region focus groups, the topics that resonated the most with participants include:

- Obesity and its affect on the health care system
- School lunches
- Access to healthy food
- Water conservation
- Drought
- Wildfires
- Energy use



MESSENGERS

A messenger is a stakeholder who helps you deliver your messages and reach your target audience. Who can be a messenger?

- Leaders in the community
- Students
- Alumni
- Deans
- Directors
- Researchers
- Scientists



MESSENGRERS

In our message testing research, seventy-seven percent of national survey respondents found scientists and researchers to be the most credible messengers to discuss issues related to health, nutrition, and water security.



TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Traditional media includes:

- Print
- Broadcast
- Trade publications
- Online news sites



TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Top news sites based on web traffic include:

Yahoo! News Network	86,635	USATODAY Sites	21,316
CNN Network (cnn.com)	80,202	Advance Internet	18,254
MSNBC Digital Network (msnbc.com)	54,245	WASHINGTONPOST.COM	17,832
ADL News (adlnews.com)	47,221	CBS News	17,305
The New York Times Brand	38,060	Mail Online	16,550
Huffington Post	31,076	Wall Street Journal Online	15,541
Tribune Newspapers	28,843	BBC News	15,052
FOXNEWS.COM	27,019	Hearst Newspapers	14,965
ABCNEWS DIGITAL	22,370	MediaNews Group	14,600
		McClatchy Corporation	13,807
		Examiner.com Sites	12,700

TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Traditional media:

- Demonstrates thought leadership
- Shows your importance
- Continues to tell your story
- Reaches your desired audience
- Reiterates your messages



TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Tackle traditional media by:

- Building an editorial calendar
- Identifying news hooks
- Monitoring trends and topics
- Monitoring target reporters and outlets
- Building media relationships
- Compiling targeted press lists
- Developing pitch strategies
- Sending owned content to the media



TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Monitor reporters, topics, and outlets in five easy steps.

- Step 1. Identify your key topics
- Step 2. Know your desired audience
- Step 3. Identify your target outlets
- Step 4. Create alerts
- Step 5. Add to your media lists



TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Connect with reporters and build a relationship in six easy steps

- Step 1. Research the beat
- Step 2. Maximize the connection
- Step 3. Connect and engage on social media
- Step 4. Share their content
- Step 5. Send a "thank you" email or tweet after your story hits
- Step 6. Follow the six months rule for commentary pieces



TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Craft a meaningful pitch to reporters in six easy steps.

- Step 1. Start with a reference to a previous article
- Step 2. Identify news hook
- Step 3. Connect and engage on social media
- Step 4. Introduce your story
- Step 5. Connect to the larger story at hand
- Step 6. End with your ask

TRADITIONAL MEDIA EXERCISE

How would you leverage a story from the National Impact Database for local, regional, and national audiences?



BREAK



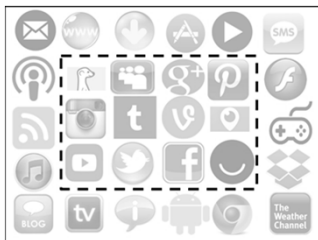
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DIGITAL MEDIA



DIGITAL MEDIA

Characteristics of social media include:

- Owned content
- Branded
- Community
- Interactive
- Group forming
- Conversational
- Voice



DIGITAL MEDIA

Ways to leverage social media include:

- Free platform to share information
- Tap into existing conversations
- Monitoring trends
- Enhance brand awareness
- Establish connections with thought leaders
- Establish unique voice



DIGITAL MEDIA

Social media influencers can:

- Expand your reach
- Act as validators
- Boost conversations
- Serve as a voice for your brand
- Enhance brand awareness



DIGITAL MEDIA

Every U.S. Senator uses Twitter. According to the Washington Post, here are the top ten U.S. Senate accounts in 2014.

Senator	Party	State	Followers	Following	Tweets
John McCain	R	AZ	1876259	310	8520
Cory Booker	D	NJ	1481730	78020	37777
Marco Rubio	R	FL	995419	2745	1656
Rand Paul	R	KY	427102	323	2080
Ted Cruz	R	TX	209988	7811	2351
Bernard Sanders	D	VT	209111	1408	9215
Vicent Fox	D	NV	199252	138	2545
Alan Franken	D	MN	172460	48960	1875
Mike Lee	R	UT	129964	2262	2674
Kirsten Gillibrand	D	NY	106347	389	7088

DIGITAL MEDIA

Almost every U.S. Reps. use Twitter. According to the Washington Post, here are the top ten U.S. House accounts in 2014.

Representative	Party	State	Followers	Following	Tweets
Bill Pascoe	D	NJ	3555	0	673
Jerry McNamee	D	CA	3539	321	603
Mathewine Mullin	R	OK	3518	1040	744
Elizabeth Esty	D	CT	3515	668	855
Richard Hudson	R	NC	3507	1022	1394
Allyson Schwartz	D	PA	3498	1323	611
Harold Rogers	R	KY	3485	412	1202
Rick Larsen	D	WA	3483	1164	2165
George Butterfield	D	NC	3433	265	756
Doc Hastings	R	WA	3391	647	762

DIGITAL MEDIA

How do you find social media influencers?

- Manually
 - You know your communities
- Using tools
 - Klout Scores - www.klout.com



DIGITAL MEDIA

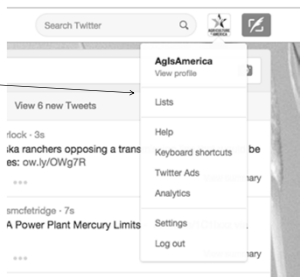
Known brand

High Klout score

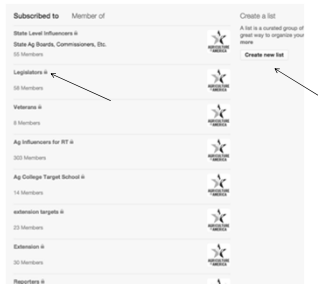
Active conversation

DIGITAL MEDIA

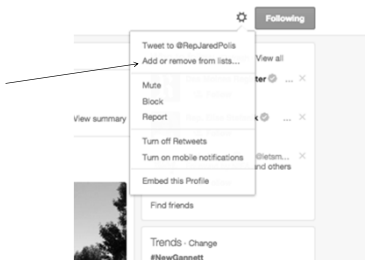
Utilize Twitter lists to keep track of influencers



DIGITAL MEDIA



DIGITAL MEDIA



DIGITAL MEDIA

Top social media best practices:

- Stand out
- Engage in conversations
- Start conversations



Remember, being silent is as bad as being offensive

DIGITAL MEDIA

Characteristics of a good tweet include:

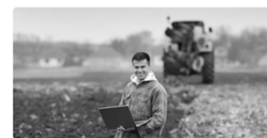
- Voice and style
- Visuals
- Regularity
- Messaging
- Hashtaging
- @ mentions



DIGITAL MEDIA

Top Tweet earned 2,931 impressions

Agriculture is one of the best fields for new college grads: 1.usa.gov/1L05vER via @USDA @USDA_NIFA #LGUImpact pic.twitter.com/Pr6aJae8lz



13 18 13

DIGITAL MEDIA

Best practices for engagement include:

- Pay attention to conversations in your space
- Think of good engagement like good social responsibility
- Not always a direct correlation to messaging
- Mentions
- Regularity
- Add value

DIGITAL MEDIA



DIGITAL MEDIA EXERCISE

Let's think about engagement and how we can create it.

- Why should we engage
- How should we engage
- Who could we connect
- What kind of stories could we share

DIGITAL MEDIA



- Why should we engage this
- How should we engage this
- Who could we connect
- What kind of stories could we share



DIGITAL MEDIA

We should engage with this post from the Senate AG Republican Committee because:

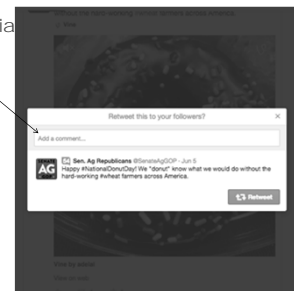
- Good content
- A target audience

We can:

- Easily connect it to messaging
- Easily tie-in school programs
- Easily connect to local influencers

DIGITAL MEDIA

Step 1. Engage with the post via a retweet with a comment



DIGITAL MEDIA

Step 2. Make connections to your local Congressman



DIGITAL MEDIA

Step 3. Make connections to state influencers



DIGITAL MEDIA

Step 4. Make connections to your Senator



DIGITAL MEDIA

Step 5. Make connections to your story



DIGITAL MEDIA

Remember, digital media is:

- Group forming
- An ongoing conversation
- Interactive
- A chance to grow your brand
- An opportunity to show added value
- Being silent is as bad as being offensive

CONNECT WITH US



@AgIsAmerica



Facebook.com/AgIsAmerica

CONGRESS

We will cover:

- How to get a meeting
- Topline recommendations
- Meetings with Members
- Meetings with staff



CONGRESS

Best practices to get a congressional meeting:

- Plan ahead
- Be flexible, offer 2-3 dates and times
- Specify what the meeting is about
- Bring the "big guns"
- Keep groups to four or less
- Follow up
- Schedule around voting days



CONGRESS

CONGRESS

Here are some other ways to get a congressional meeting:

- Your school's lobbyist
- Call the DC office, ask for the scheduler's email
- Look online for the scheduler's name or email

Remember:
the House email convention is:

first.last@mail.house.gov

And, the Senate email convention is:
first_last@memberslastname.senate.gov

CONGRESS

Tips to remember for meetings with Members include:

- Short, 15-30 minutes tops
- Less wonky
- More political
- Make top-level ties to the District or state
 - Meetings are different at local level
- Have a specific ask
- Bring a leave behind for staff



CONGRESS

Tips to remember for meetings with congressional staff include:

- They will be in their 20s
- You may not have a table
- Slightly longer meeting
- More in the weeds
- Have a specific ask
- Tie back to the District/State
- Establish follow up plan
- Bring leave behinds

Remember, staffers work really hard, don't get paid much, receive no accolades, and have very limited resources.



CONGRESS

The issues that are likely to resonate with Members of Congress and their staff include:

- The home district
- Jobs
- Economy
- Development
- Science and technology
- Manufacturing
- Export



CONGRESS EXERCISE

Let's discuss your previous congressional meetings.

- Did you follow any of our best practices
- What advice would you share
- What would you do differently next time



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



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Breakout Session I: Western Perspective Message Development.

Participants worked in small groups to develop succinct “elevator speeches” of 60 and, then, 30 seconds that would clearly articulate the Western Perspective. Groups then voted for the best ones, which are transcribed below.

Sara Delheimer to a decision maker: “The west is a vast and diverse region that produces the nuts, beef, dairy, and fruits that feed the world. This region is facing unique like drought, pests, and population growth and these issues aren’t restricted by state borders; they’re spread across the region. That’s why its so important that our LGUs work together to collaborate, share resources, and leverage funds to address these issues. With your support, our LGUs can lead the academic programs, extension programs, and research that will address these issues and help sustain ag for our future.”

Lyla Hoglum to a western region Senator: “Hi Senator, thanks for meeting with us today. I’m Lyla Hoglum. I’m representing the land-grant universities in the Western Region. I’m here to talk to you about fire, and wildlife in particular. I bet if you think back, you will know someone in your region who has been effected by wildlife. One of the things you may not know, however, is we talk a lot about suppression of wildfire and how much that costs. Its actually less than half of the actual cost of the impact of the fire. What really costs is the amount that it takes to recover after the fire. For individuals to recover, for communities to recover, for the economy to recover. What we’re asking for is five hundred million dollars over the next five years in order to help with that recovery. I hope you’ll consider that and hopefully we can talk about it again later. Thanks.”

Shane Schultz to a freshman Congressman from the western region: “Good morning Congressman. My name is Shane Schultz. I’m a council for ag research, extension, and teaching rep for the University of Wyoming which is part of the larger Western Region, which includes not only the Rocky Mountain west states, the west coast, Guam, and Hawaii, so you can understand the diversity not only of the geography, but of the people and also the crops that are grown and all the research that goes into that. For every research dollar invested in those universities, three dollars is returned, which is an important thing for you to understand since you are in charge of the money for the country. If you have any questions—I know it’s a lot to take in—I’d be happy to follow up with you.”

Jim Moyer to a Congressman on the Ag Appropriations Subcommittee: “Good morning, Congressman. I’m with a group of agricultural administrators who are responsible for the agricultural and natural resources in the Western Region. And I was just wondering if you were familiar with all of the resources, all the contributions that are made by the western region in terms of our food, vegetables, produce, and natural resources that we provide for the enjoyment of many of the citizens of this country. We would like your support and, if possible, we would like to schedule some time with you at a future date so that we could explore these in more detail and that you would be prepared to support the initiatives of the western region. Thank you.”

Kim O’Neil to Gov. Otter (ID): “Greetings Governor Otter. I’m Kim O’Neil from the University of Idaho. I just came from working with land-grant institutions across the west where we identified what the western agenda was to meet the critical issues that are facing our states in the west. Specifically, in

Idaho, the University of Idaho is poised to address our water issues. I'd invite you to come to the Aberdeen Research and Extension Center to meet some of our top water engineers and join the conversation to help us address issues surrounding water specifically in Idaho."

Glenn Whipple to County Commissioner: "Commissioner Bowser, I'm glad that I was able to run into you today. I understand that you are representing the Wyoming County Commissioners Association at the NACO Board Meeting in Washington next week. Before you go, I'd like to talk to you a little bit about a western initiative to increase funding for land-grant universities that would support the kinds of extension and research activities that you see as being important in your county. For example, wildfire, invasive species, and, of course, I know water is very important to you. We are asking the support of the NACO Board in our lobbying effort to secure this funding. So, if you could support us, we would appreciate it. Thank you."

Scott Reed to a new County Commissioner: "Well, Mr. Commissioner, congratulations on your new appointment. You'll be making some important decisions around a complicated landscape of public and private land. More than half of your county is owned by the public and the other half is concentrated in private land that is very productive around a range of natural resource and food commodities. You might want to pay attention to issues. I like to think about three issues: water, wild things, and wildfire. And you can look to your land-grant university to offer research-based information to help you make decisions over policies at the local level and those policies will need to emphasize productivity and profitability of the enterprises in your county. Natural resources, sustainability, and all of the social benefits that people will enjoy by being residents of your county."

Chuck Gay to a Congressman: "I'm here advocating for the western land-grant universities and, in particular, Utah State University and we have a new Western Agenda that is looking at all those issues that impact the quality of life of your constituents. We have a great document here—I don't have time to go into detail—but I'm going to put that in your hands. I can connect you to your state's people and they can get more detail. Here's my card. I'd be pleased if you'd call me back and I can help you out."

Jim Hollyer as part of a normal conversation with a Director: "So the west is a major trading partner with Asia. Director, I know that you are pro-trade, according to your track record. Training workers for the green economy is something that Asia is starting to wake up to, can expand our economy, and grow the middle class. In three of our western land-grant universities, we are poised to roll our green training programs. If we can secure two point three million dollars for these programs over a five-year time period, we believe that we can generate an economic impact of ten point five million dollars. Basically, a five-times return on investment. We'd appreciate your support of this idea."

Jeff Steiner in an elevator speech: "Hi John, I'm Jeff Steiner. I'm representing the western association of land-grant universities' experiment stations. We really need to do something about the water shortages we have right now in the west. Those are affecting our capacity to be able to train up a new workforce, to be able to work with our private partners in helping to create jobs and if we don't get some additional resources to move that agenda forward, it's going to be affecting your district, our states, and the whole western U.S."

Mike Harrington to Colorado's Governor Hickenlooper: "Hello, Governor Hickenlooper. My name is Mike Harrington. I work with the colleges of agriculture in the western region. As you know, agriculture in Colorado is approximately seven point two billion dollars; it's an important industry in the state. But, did you know that the west produces over four hundred specialty crops; fruits, nuts, and vegetables. And states in the west lead in production in milk, and cheese, and potatoes and such things as that. But this leadership role is not without challenges. As you know, the west is facing a major drought and the Western Governor's Drought Forum has highlighted that and I want to make you aware that the land-grant universities have proposed a hundred million dollar a year water security effort over the next five years. We'd appreciate your support of that and we appreciate your support of Colorado State and all of the western land-grant universities."

Breakout Session II: Filling Gaps

Associations met to identify a pressing issue that deserves attention and that the association can influence and developed an action plan to address that issue.

Western Association of Experiment Station Directors

Gap selected to be addressed is a combination of several items on the list of gaps identified during the 2014 meeting in Lake Tahoe: Using science-based solutions in conservation of threatened and endangered species.

Where are we today?

- Research projects on biology/ecology and sage (CSU, YWYO, UI, MSU, ?ONR, OSU, WSU)
- Decisions are made based on emotional/human values
- Environmental groups influence policy
- The 'act' is being misused in some cases to support a particular group's agenda
- Western Governors recognize the need and support the concept of using science-based information to guide policy
- States have some common approaches for addressing ESA; local working groups/local projects (incentives/hab. Exchanges in CO, WY, MT,NV,UT)
- Lots of efforts are underway
- Others than AES are doing a lot in this area
- Social media provides very poor data- major source of info to public
- Model/systems needed to address fundamental issues
- Researchers/faculty contributing data to USFWS for listing decision (direct and via pubs)
- Different states have their approaches to address a species challenge
- Criteria/question to be addressed when investigating T&E species for policy decisions
- Researchers/faculty contributing to state-level plans for SAER conservation
- Research/engagement activities on how to address threats to SAER from O + G (mitigation strategies)
- There are others that know a lot more about this than me
- Research/engagement activities to develop/test BMPs for livestock grazing and SAGR
- Recent symposium: International Sage Grouse Forum (proceedings publically available) Nov. 2014 USU hosted
- Concern re: listing of Species (method of choosing)
- Quite a bit of peer reviewed research published and more on the way.
- Quite a lot of unanswered questions on specific species across their range
- Different views on what constitutes science and science-based solutions.
- Not much known on economics and social impacts.
- Scientists are interested in providing information on threatened and endangered species.
- Several LGUs are working on threatened and endangered species.
- Extension has experts who could contribute to threatened and endangered species.
- Misinformation (of misuse of) about species abundance, importance (ecological), and evaluation methods.

- Each state coming up with unique approaches – some common and some divergent.
- Some of the strategies being proposed to address T&E species are based on “cultural best practices” and not necessarily on science-based ideas/solutions.
- AES faculty can be competitive regarding T&E species → discrediting each other and competing to get \$\$ allocation from US Fish and Wildlife Service, USDA, etc. Need standards on how to deal.
- Politics often trump science.
- W/IN OR ETS research is fragmented.
- Outcomes of task forces influenced by make-up of committees.
- There is new funding to pursue work on sage grouse and like more to come.
- Habitat issues, which interact with climate change, fire, etc., underlie many T&E species issues.
- Exponential increases in potential listings with no funding for good science.
- Lawyers drive the issue, not scientists.
- State plans, no regional planning.
- Specific species population are under scrutiny.

The group’s assimilation of the meaning of the Snow Card brainstorm on “Where Are We Today?”

1. Need a model system for incorporating science into ESA evaluations
2. We are not coordinated in our planning for involvement in ESA evaluations
3. We are confronting a lot of junk science in ESA evaluations; need to ensure good science is somehow recognized in ESA evaluations

Where do we want to go?

Increase the influence of Western Region LGU science in USFWS ESA listing decisions.

How will we get there?

- A MRF Rapid Response project will be initiated to address the use of science in ESA.
- John Tanaka will serve as the Administrative Advisor.
- He and Sarah Lupis will draft a statement of issues and justification to circulate for comment to the Directors.
- A set of objectives was developed.
 - What is the existing process for submitting science to USFWS?
 - How are LGUs currently engaged in the existing process?
 - How can LGUs be better engaged in the existing process?
 - Do we have any recommendations on how the process can be improved?
- Directors will look for the appropriate people to serve on this committee.
- Sarah and Mike will support this initiative via meeting coordination, facilitation.
-

Western Academic Program Directors

#11. Develop and off cross-institution courses/regional course-sharing to increase workforce development in mission critical areas.

Where are we today?

- Examined and discussed existing cross-institutional course sharing programs (i.e. WICHE ICE, AG-IDEA) and found them not universally compatible with the Western Land Grant universities.
- Identified and discussed barriers to cross-institutional course sharing.

Where do we want to go?

- Develop modality to allow cross-institutional course sharing.

What are we going to do?

- Colorado State University (CSU) and University of Wyoming (UW) will develop a cross institutional memorandum of understanding (MOU) allowing CSU students to take and earn credit from a single graduate course taught by a UW faculty member.
- The MOU will be distributed to the WAPD membership and each member will engage their university administration in discussions on if and/or how the MOU could be executed locally.
- WAPD members are encouraged to investigate other possible modes of cross-institutional course offering (Plan B's) in case the CSU/UW model is not compatible beyond the two institutions.
- WAPD members will communicate through quarterly phone conferences and at various meetings (National APLU, National APS) to update group on progress.

Specific Task:

- Nancy Irlbeck will distribute existing CSU/UW MOU. Nancy Irlbeck and Donna Brown will develop final CSU/UW MOU and distribute it to the group.
- Mike Harrington/Sarah Lupus will to establish Dropbox for WAPD membership to share documents.
- Members will discuss the CSU/UW MOU with their university administration to see if something similar could be implemented.
- Dave Shintani will setup first conference call on week of August 10 to discuss CSU/UW MOU. This initial call will be made between current active WAPD members (CSU, MSU, OSU, UH, UI, UNR, USU, UW).
- Dave Shintani will send out request to entire WAPD membership to establish an inventory of programs that would benefit from cross-institutional course sharing system and corresponding course content needs.

Western Extension Directors Association

Where are we?

- We are doing well within our states, but could do better regionally

- Partnerships and collaboration do exist among states, but there is no formal program or structure to promote collaboration.
- Not as engaged with regional associations/groups (e.g., Governor's association) to obtain recognition as we should be
- We tell our story poorly
- We are all providing training and support for Extension people as individual states but could be more effective if collaborated.

Where do we want to go?

- Coordinate on a regional training approach for Extension employees, particularly new employees (**the group chose this goal to develop an action plan for)
- Develop a strategy and approach to collaborate/interface more effectively with the Western Governors' Association (WGA) (*the group spent a small amount of time at the end of the session discussing action items for this goal)
- Create a structure/process to encourage regional collaboration, particularly with respect to shared positions between states
- Tell our story better to potential partners, including the development of PR products that promote what Extension professionals accomplish every day.

Action items for regional training initiative

- Mark will visit with western region representative of National Association of Extension Program and Staff Development Professionals (NAEPSDP) before next conference call.
- Develop list of key competencies for new employees.
- Each CES Director will visit with key people on their team about this effort by next conference call.
- Each CES Director will explore mechanisms to ensure participation.
- Fred will connect to E-Extension before next conference call.
- Jeff will contact WRPLC to inquire about inventory of training resources that had been completed in the past by next conference call.
- Next conference call: September 17 at 3-5 pm pacific time.

Action items to connect to WGA

- Mark and Fred will connect to WGA with regard to endangered species.
- WEDA will explore opportunities to fund and place a fellowship (possibly as part of a sabbatical) with WGA. If this is successful, may be opportunity to target a fellowship each year on the key goals/initiatives of WGA.

Messaging

July 14, 2015

Overview

During the 2015 Western Region Joint Summer Meeting, we discussed the importance of message development, messengers, and media. We identified several best practices for message development; good messages should:

- be brief;
- connect to national narratives;
- help further multi-year narratives;
- incorporate news hooks;
- be customized to your audience;
- reinforce your editorial calendar;
- and, help connect your story to current conversations.

Key Messages and Topic Trends

Key messages from our session include:

- Agriculture is science in action.
- Western Land-grant Universities produce the fruits and vegetables essential for your diet.
- Agriculture is food and careers.

Top message topics amongst our identified audiences include:

- We help create careers, which spurs economic development.
- This [success story, research, teaching, extension, etc.] is a result of our collaboration.
- This [success story, research, teaching, extension, etc.] is your dollars at work.
- We help preserve the Western lifestyle.

Specific Message Topics for Specific Audiences

We identified several types of audiences as well as broad message topics from the Western Agenda and Perspective that would likely resonate with them. However, each message and topic should be tailored to best appeal to each audience.



Our audiences can be broken down into external, internal, federal, state, and other categories. The full list of identified audiences and topics is as follows:

External Audiences

- Federal
 - Legislators, specifically Members of Congress
 - Message Topics: these issues affect your state or district; these issues align with your policy priorities and agenda
 - USDA
 - Message Topics: rural development; food safety
 - USDA Forest Service
 - Message Topics: watershed; wildfires; endangered species; conservation; urban vs. rural public lands
 - USDA NIFA
 - Message Topics: competitive grant programs; how dollars are being
 - USDA NAREEE
 - Message Topics: working landscapes; rural vs. urban landscapes; bioenergy; relevancy and adequacy of budgets; emphasis on research and education
- State
 - Western Governors' Association
 - Message Topics: we are a resource for your policy and WGA-designated staff; we find address solutions, including those unique to the West; we know the West is valuable
 - Legislators
 - Message Topics: how tax dollars are being spent; results of working together
 - Agency Heads, specifically Departments of Health, Wildlife, and Agriculture
 - Message Topics: how tax dollars are being spent; food safety; we produce the food we need for healthy diets
 - County Commissioners
 - Message Topics: community and economic development; natural resources; wildfires; we help enhance your tax base; land and water issues
- Other
 - League of Women Voters
 - Message Topics: food quality; food safety; nutrition
 - League of Conservation of Voters



- Message Topics: natural resources; conservation; water; fire; endangered species
- Teachers Unions, Primary and Secondary Educators
 - Message Topics: food; careers; science; health; wellness; food safety
- Master Gardeners, Master Food Preservers
 - Message Topics: be our spokesperson/messenger/validator; collaboration; explain research in detail; educate to help understand the broad context
- 4-H
 - Message Topics: careers; volunteers; STEM; educate to help understand the broad context
- Sportsman Coalition
 - Message Topics: natural resources; preserve the Western lifestyle; water; endangered species; public land management; animal health; collaboration
- Commodity Groups, e.g. Grain Growers, Farm Bureaus
 - Message Topics: commodity research; demographics; population growth
- Health Care Industry, specifically nutritionists and dieticians
 - Message Topics: food safety; health; wellness; childhood obesity; affordability of food; food production
- Business Leaders, e.g. Chefs on the Food Network
 - Message Topics: impact of agriculture; food safety; food affordability; economic development
- Agricultural Foundations, e.g. Kellogg
 - Message Topics: “bang for your buck,” collaboration
- Professional Organizations
 - Message Topics: science literacy; careers; economic development
- Industry Partners, e.g. companies that provide tractors
 - Message Topics: importance of private giving; come meet us; careers; return on investment; students are future employees
- Current, Future Students
 - Message Topics: career opportunities; return on investment; science; research; focus on the positive; be on the offense and address attacks on science; connect to the problems students see at home
- Alumni
 - Message Topics: collaboration; instill a sense of pride
 - Medium: Reach via alumni magazines and newsletter

Internal Audiences

- APLU, especially CARET
 - Message Topics: participation; collaboration
- Faculty, staff
 - Message Topics: examples of specific research that fits within you goals; include Western Agenda in your plan of work; incorporate themes from the Western Agenda in your publications
- Key donors
 - Message Topic: our collaboration helps leverage your dollars
- Communications Offices, specifically Offices of the President
 - Message Topics: collaboration, this project matters because; great work is already being done at your university and here's how
- Other Colleges within your University, specifically Colleges of Natural Resources and Human Sciences
 - Message Topics: your research fits with our priorities; did you know you're part of a land-grant university, partnership
- Provosts, Administrators, Board of Trustees, Deans, Directors, Presidents, Vice Presidents, Department Heads
 - Message Topics: strength in unity; STEM; our output (students and careers) are valuable
- Other instructions, especially the 1994s and other non-land grant Colleges of Agriculture
 - Message Topics: careers in science; we're partners to educate students; water rights

Messengers

In kglobal's message testing research, we found that scientists and researchers were regarded as the most credible messengers when discussing agricultural topics, specifically water security, health, and wellness. However, other messengers include but are not limited to:

- Students
- Current alumni
- University President
- CARET representatives
- AHS representatives



- Faculty

Media

Using traditional and digital media, we can share the Western Perspective and Agenda. In kglobal's message testing research, we found that most national survey respondents and participants in our regional focus groups referenced online news sites as their primary source of news. When considering traditional media efforts, we must account for corresponding news sites in our communications strategies and efforts.

Likewise, it's imperative to cross-promote, or share, traditional media content on our digital media platforms. Digital media also allows us to highlight teaching, research, and extension updates in real time.

Action Items

Following this discussion, the group created a list of immediate, short-term, and long-term action items. They include:

- Develop a one sentence tagline about the Western Perspective and Agenda for all press collateral, i.e. "As part of the Western Agenda,..."
- Develop a CARET-specific presentation
- Put the Western Perspective and Agenda document on each university's website
- Develop a one-page summary about the Perspective and Agenda that can be a takeaway for specific audiences
- Develop a one-page summary template that each university can customize and tailor to their state and/ or a designated research topic
- Develop an interactive, short video discussing the Western Perspective and Agenda, i.e. Here's an introduction to the West
- Develop a recruitment, career-focused campaign that references the Western Agenda
- Develop a public website dedicated to the document itself
- Execute a Western Agenda Summit with keynote speakers and break-out sessions

Closing Session Plus/Delta Joint Session Evaluation

Plus

- Western Governor's Association representation and the chance to mix with their representative
- There was total engagement by participants
- Good agenda
- Facilitation in breakout sessions
- Interactive working format
- General collegial attitude of participants

Delta

- Use of social media – need for 'quality control'
- Reduce cost of the meeting
- Integrate APD better in the agenda/program
- More opportunities for outcomes among associations/regions; specific topics that overlap among associations were still not competed integrated
- Even more integration to resist going back into our silos.