

Item 5.0

Agenda Item: WAAESD Spring Business Meeting Minutes

Presenter: Leslie Edgar

Action: For Approval

Background Information:

WAAESD Spring Meeting

March 29-30, 2023

Attendance: Glenda Humiston, Chris Davies, Scot Hulbert, Mark McGuire, Shawn Donkin, Leslie Edgar, Jodie Anderson, Sreekala Bajwa, Claire Montoya (guest), Chris Pritsos, Eric Webster, Gene Kelly, Bob Godfrey (USDA NIFA guest), Justin Derner (guest), Tara McHugh (Virtual ARS Guest), John Dyer (ARS Guest), Amy Bibby (guest), Bret Hess, Larry Chandler (ARS guest), Jennifer Tippetts (recording secretary).

Willow Creek SPUR Campus, Wednesday Minutes

- I. **Announcement:** Amy Bibby shared information regarding the Research Center Administration Society (RCAS) and encouraged members to attend or send some of their center leaders. For general information contact Vaughn Skinner, RCAS Communications Officer Jskinner@uark.edu 479-841-3362 [HTTP://thercas.org](http://thercas.org)
- II. **Spring Meeting Location:** The group discussed a location. Mark volunteered Boise. The group also discussed meeting in Reno every other year.
- III. **Approval of the Agenda:** Motion to approve the agenda. Unanimously approved.
- IV. **Approval of the 2022 Fall Meeting Minutes:** Leslie reviewed and presented the meeting minutes and made the motion to approve. Shawn seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.
- V. **Chair Interim Actions & Executive Committee Report:** The list of interim actions and executive committee report was presented as a seconded motion from the Executive Committee. The report was prepared by reviewing results of email balloting and minutes of the Executive Committee's meetings since the fall business meeting. In addition to signing on to several letters of support for agricultural research funding, the Executive Committee took several significant actions over the past 5 to 6 months. A written response was submitted to NIFA's call to inform their research priorities for the next five years. The response merged significant topics outlined in the ESCOP Science Roadmap and the Western Agenda, and concerns were expressed regarding NIFA's seemingly lack of interest in the partnership with LGUs and the burden some of their recent notifications have placed on the LGUs. Items included on the WAAESD business meeting agenda represented many of the other actions the board has taken. For example, the Executive Committee will have more discussion on Creating a Regional Voice, Farm Bill priorities, and the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists. The Executive Committee also encouraged Bret to attend the NCFAR annual meeting and reception on the Hill instead of attending the CARET/AHS meeting. Unanimous vote to approve.
- VI. **Excellence in Leadership Award Nomination:** After deliberations among the Executive Committee, Scot was pleased to report that Glenda Humiston is the Western Region's winner of the Excellence in Leadership Award. Congratulations, Glenda!
- VII. **MRC Update:** The agenda for last MRC meeting was included in the meeting materials. Bret provided a synopsis of the MRC deliberations.
 - a. W_TEMP_5002: Accepted with minor revisions.
 - b. W_TEMP_1198: Accept with major revisions. One suggestion was to convert to a WERA or the second suggestion was to join with W_TEMP_2188.
 - c. W_TEMP_1195: Accept with major revisions. Suggest moving to WERA, unless there is more coordination presented.

- d. W_Temp_2023: Accept with minor revisions. Recommend requiring Jacob Decker as AA for the project. Bret has spoken with Jacob, and he is agreeable.
- e. W_Temp_2188: Accept with major revision. One suggestion is to recruit members from W_Temp_1198.
- f. W_Temp_4009: Accept with minor revisions.
- g. W_Temp_5147: Accept with major revisions. The project requires major edits for clarification including updating the milestones.
- h. W_Temp_5186: Accept with minor revisions.
- i. WERA 1: Accept with minor revisions.
- j. WERA 1013: Review postponed.
- k. WERA 1014: Accept with minor revisions.
- l. WERA-1053: Evolution of WDC urban agriculture committee. Accept with major revisions. Recommendations include selecting more of a focus area.
- m. Reviewed nominations for multistate research award. W_TEMP_4045 was recommended to be moved to the national level. Nominators will be given an opportunity to revise the nomination to address concerns identified by MRC.

VIII. **International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists:** A presentation regarding the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) was presented by Bill Payne at last year's Western Region Joint Summer Meeting. The request from IYRP was to donate funds that would be used for production of a documentary on Rangelands in North America. The agenda brief in the packet described the documentary concept in greater detail. Also included in the packet was a draft of a letter that will be sent out under WAAESD's cover. The letter will include a link to a donation site. The WAAESD Executive Committee agreed to serve as a fiscal sponsor, so donations will go to an account for IYRP that is managed by WAAESD. Bret showed two videos that were made to promote donations. Members asked if there was a plan for additional fundraising if not enough funds are initially generated? Bret answered yes, the idea is to seek additional sponsorship beyond the first \$50,000 from corporate and industry sponsors. The project has already been discussed with several major science societies. Range Scientists may be interested in contributing personally. The only action needed is to donate with the request to distribute.

IX. **WAAESD Farm Bill Discussions:** Leslie shared that New Mexico has a Senator on the Farm Bill committee, Senator Ben Ray Lujan, who asked specifically what he can do to provide support to the West. Bret and Leslie made recommendations on behalf of the region. The highly specific set of changes recommended to the Farm Bill staffers were included in the meeting briefs. There were three main topics: conversation via access to EQIP and CIS; a comprehensive evaluation of germplasm; and rural prosperity via access to broadband, and creating of regional agricultural innovation hubs. The work Bret has been doing with WGA is also linked. As a region, trying to expand our voice is imperative. The staffers are engaging and asking questions that continues to build that relationship. Sreekala shared that their staffer called and asked directly about agricultural innovation associated with the Farm Bill. The Montana Senator met with three universities to determine how rural states can benefit. Leslie encouraged directors to share this information with their congressional delegates. It is encouraging to have WGA supporting these recommendations as well.

X. **AES-ARS Partnerships:** Scot shared AES centers that have shared space with ARS have been considering ways to work better together. Larry has been providing leadership from ARS. Larry shared the discussion and document are timely. The North Central region is meeting this week as well to have the same discussion. We have more and more issues with people who are not aware of the joint roles. There are also differences in ethics, financials, and facilities being utilized and shared. Tara McHugh is our new representative and has been involved in the conversations. Hopefully collectively there is a way we can continue to move forward. Shawn shared that he holds quarterly meetings with their ARS staff to help himself and ARS. Shawn requested to be on the working group. Leslie shared that they have the ARS leadership attend meetings twice a year. Leslie shared that we need some strategy to make sure everyone is at the table to discuss the value of ag and natural resources. Sreekala generated an onboarding process for their new staff but is still unsure that it will be successful with staff turnover. Glenda shared that they are including ARS in grant proposals and that makes the grants more competitive. Glenda is also a fan of the work completed by ARS. Larry encouraged ARS to attend more of our meetings to have these types of discussions. Shawn shared that we have the commonality of stakeholders that do not care where the information comes from, their perspective is that we are a team. Scot asked the group for suggestions on this process moving forward. Sreekala asked if there is mutual alignment with the congressional staff? Larry shared if there was more communication regarding the asks from the congressional staff, they would be happy to coordinate efforts. Jodie asked that the communication flow both directions. The group continued discussions and agreed to continue to move this initiative forward.

XI. Justin Derner has made the trip down from Cheyenne to deliver a presentation on the progress he and his colleagues have made on the [Long-term Production Datasets](#).

Chris P. questioned how often they are looking to acquire data sets? Justin said they do an annual evaluation and select data to upload. They look for approximately 100 years of data. The hope is that with increased awareness they could gain more data. Justin requested recommendations for future data points: Justin.derner@usda.gov. The Gund Ranch in Nevada is a great example. A zoom meeting is scheduled to determine what the data looks like and if they need help digitizing. Scanners can be loaned out, if you would like to maintain the integrity of the original files. Several members agreed to reach out to some of their contacts.

Shifting gears, a draft of recommendations for new leaderships and administrators was included in the meeting packet. This document evolved as experiment station directors from the West and Northcentral Region met with Larry Chandler and several other area director colleagues throughout the US. The main objective outlined in the document is to make an effort to meet leaders and learn about the partner relatively soon after starting in a leadership role.

XII. **ASCEND Presentation:** Continuing with the partnership theme, a presentation regarding an effort for USDA to be part of the cancer moonshot was shared. Bret shared <https://www.mrfimpacts.org/> as a data source for John and Tara. Bret also shared the crosswalk data showing that 141 multistate projects directly align with projects related to food & nutrition security as another great resource.



Dyer_ASCEND_WAA
ESD_03.29.23.pptx

- XIII. **Climate Horizon Scan:** The meeting materials included a description of the climate horizon scan that Gene and colleagues proposed to NIFA. Considering there has been a fair amount of interest in the subject, Gene was asked to provide an overview and update on progress that has been made to-date.



S%5e0T%20Meetin
g%20NCRR%20Upd:

- XIV. **Western Water Network/Congress:** The agenda brief is the narrative from a conference grant that the Finance Committee submitted to NIFA to host a congress and workshop. Also in the packet is a sponsorship flyer that was prepared by the Finance Committee. Bret shared the speakers and invited attendees. The idea is to produce manuscripts from each session to submit to the UCOWR publication. The final day will be a workshop, where the goal will be to generate a vision paper. Western SARE has provided a sponsorship grant for \$10,000. This grant is in addition to the NIFA funding and would be close to funding the entire conference. Bret asked for recommendations for additional sponsorship funds to pay for the remaining costs of the conference.

Thursday, March 30, 2023, Minutes

- I. **WAAESD Goals:** Starting last year, and due to overlap between when the Chair and Chair-elect take office, the two work together with the ED on establishing the organizational goals. Sreekala reviewed the UNR evaluation form that is required to be completed annually. The annual evaluation also requires goals for the next year. The three goals generated this year are as follows:
- a. Strategic Direction 1. Strengthen functional relationships with regional and national partners.
 - b. Strategic Direction 2. Foster multistate collaborations.
 - c. Strategic Direction 3. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Chris Davies asked if there was a way to have representatives from the 1994s at each meeting. Bret agreed to speak with John Phillips, but each 1994 does not have a lot of capacity. Jodie liked the idea of going to the 1994s instead of having them come to us. Could we have a volunteer that would be involved in FALCON? Bret agreed to investigate some opportunities and bring options back to WAAESD. WAAESD members agreed that if we invite a 1994, we should pay their way. John Phillips will be invited to the Fall business meeting to help build a strategy for moving forward. Scot offered that this can also be a topic of conversation at the summer meeting when we meet with the tribal college to ask what WSU could do to engage.

Treasurer's Report: Gene reviewed the Profit & Loss statement for last year January-December 2022. We have received payment from all members. There was a net income of \$5,151.22 for the year.

WAAESD has been asked to serve as a fiscal sponsor for WRAOM (Western Region Administrative Officers Meeting). We help facilitate their annual meetings by signing hotel contracts and running the registration. This year, after receiving registration and paying the hotel bill, there are funds remaining in the amount of \$6,087.23. It was recommended that WAAESD hold the funds rather than the universities continuing to pass funds to the next host. A recommendation was made to move those funds into a separate bank account to follow best practices. A separate account for Western Region Administrative Officers Meeting for \$6,087.23 will be set up with Gene, Bret, and Jennifer as signatories on the bank account.

Gene reviewed the current financials for January and February 2023, we have a balance of \$231,981.75.

The treasurer's report was approved unanimously.

- II. **Approval of 2024 Budget Proposal:** Gene presented the 2024 proposed budget on page 18 of the meeting packet. The decision to reduce the balance is reflected with a proposed deficit of \$64,655. The projected account balance for 2023 will be \$137,550 because assessments will not be increased. Assessments may not need to be increased until 2025.
The seconded motion passed unanimously.
- III. **NRSP Proposals:** Every spring meeting, WAAESD has a chance to review NRSP proposals and offer comments to the NRSP-Review Committee before they meet. Mark welcomed Noelle Cockett to present on behalf of NRSP8.
- IV. **NRSP8 Presentation by Noelle Cockett:** Noelle is asking to extend genomics by including new and different members at upcoming meetings. Noelle asked what other opportunities there are? Shawn shared that there may be a great opportunity to incorporate with the multistate projects that do not have any genomics, could there be a connection? Glenda shared that she is grateful for Noelle's passion. Chris P. asked if there were different grant resources that would support this work. Chris' understanding is NRSP should be used to fund projects that are harder to secure funding. Noelle shared that the money is leveraged to secure greater funding. This would be a great opportunity to expand genomics into other areas. There are two paths moving forward: a) NRSP capacity project and b) a proposed RCN in NIFA. Bob Godfrey shared that would be a correct assessment. There is a lot of bleed-over of genomics into other animal projects. RCN is where the fundamental research will continue. Bob shared that NIFA is still working with NSF on an evolutionary biology program, the next meeting is April 12-13, at the NCBA office in Denver. Shawn asked what areas Noelle would like to work in. Noelle shared that reproduction would be a good start. Chris Davies shared that people think they know about genetics but that is not always the case.
- V. **NRSP11 presentation by Deanna Osmond:** Mark clarified that the request is \$212,000 for three years. This is an example of an emerging innovation project. Deanna would appreciate a response and suggested implementations for the project. Gene asked if nitrogen or carbon were included. Deanna shared with limited funding in the beginning they chose to start small. The hope is that the federal government would fund the project and then they could expand the elements. Gene shared a suggestion to strengthen the proposal to work on nitrogen because nitrogen directly correlates to climate change. Deanna shared that she has primarily worked with

nitrogen most of her life, and agrees with Gene, but it is much more challenging to work with nitrogen. Potassium and phosphorus are much easier to work with. Gene recommended connecting with Kevin Kephart for the opportunity of smaller grants that could establish some state labs. Deanna shared that the group has evaluated the labs and the algorithms they use, and they need more consistency. Gene is supportive of the project.

NRSP Proposal Review- Members recommended to approve both projects.

- VI. **Creating a Regional Voice**- Leslie introduced Claire Montoya, a regional communicator, to join for the work session discussion. Leslie also thanked WAAESD for their sponsorship to provide and co-host an afternoon workshop with the other regional research associations. The workshop seems like a reasonable follow-up to last year's presentation on the Western Region Strategic Communications Steering Committee rollout of the Strategic Communications playbook. This year's workshop will be an opportunity to begin implementation of the playbook. Claire has asked that members make sure their communicators are engaged. Claire also asked for five of the top topics from each institution to be submitted via communicators by May 1. The group asked for a copy of Claire's presentation so they can follow up. One of the challenges is staff turnover. The goal is that the outcomes generated will be reviewed at ACE, and presented at our summer meeting so we can have a list of the top regional topics. CMC tried to collect communicators' contact information in the West. The last update was about a year ago, and that is the list that Claire and Jennifer are working from for invitations to the communication's group. If you have developed a one-page flyer for your congressional delegates that would be a great example of work to submit for the top five topics. WAAESD paid a \$1,000 sponsorship to host the ACE conference, and this is AES focused.
- VII. **Review of Summer Meeting Agenda:** Gene recommended inviting his dean to join the advocacy panel for the west.
- VIII. **Spring meeting location:** Ivory volunteered to have Oregon host next year's spring meeting. WEDA is not in favor of rotating to Reno every other year.
- IX. **ES COP Committee Reports**
- Budget and Legislative Committee:** There are two representatives from each region, Sreekala and Shawn are the representatives from the West. There are more liaisons than members and the liaisons tend to drive the conversation. Anton Beckerman is the new chair, and they just held a meeting with members only to determine a strategy moving forward. Shawn has been on the committee from both NC and now the West. The long-term goal for the Section is 14% for capacity funds. BLC will continue to push advocacy for research funding and if the Farm Bill is passed then focus on implementation. Currently, the infrastructure bill has a requirement for matching that would limit participation by many states.
- Diversity Catalyst Committee:** Jodie shared that the meeting times are not the best, but it is a great group that meets. This past year they developed and adopted a mission statement and plan of work including initiatives for the year. The biggest piece is submitting nominations for DEIA awards. Jodie asked the members to think about how we can tell our story better when it comes to DEIA by submitting nominations from the West. There are both individual and team awards given.
- Science and Technology Committee:** Chris Davies reported that the committee has discussed the Blue-Ribbon results and recommendations on collaborations. Climate Horizon Scan has been a

wonderful collaborative network along with Western Water Network. There is discussion regarding new information for the website and how that can promote recognition for AES. STC will be selecting the winner for excellence in multistate research award. There is a need to produce collateral to launch the full brand beyond just the website.

National Plant Germplasm Coordinating Committee: There are 20 locations, 8 of which are in the West. Each location is supported by multistate project funding. The last meeting was in June of 2022 and a new meeting will be scheduled soon. Some of the challenges include increased operation costs and the need for additional funding. The committee wants to increase exposure and create awareness. The committee recognizes a need for younger generations to be involved with the aging staff, however, there are not a lot of courses offered in the specialty. Managing GMO's and learning how to better categorize are continuous projects. In 2021, the Pullman location mailed out 220,000 packets of seed, 2/3 was mailed to public and primarily domestic.

Digital Marketing Committee: Chris P. shared this was an initiative he started as the ESCOP chair. The group reviewed the new website and how we are going to keep material current. Please check out the website: www.aginnovation.info.

Non-Profit Committee: Chris P. also started this initiative as ESCOP chair. Because of how well a non-profit has worked for WAAESD, it was questioned if we could have a non-profit on a national level. There was a lot of concern, and a committee was formed to explore the possibility and potential. The committee met with numerous groups to fully explore and focus on what we (ESCOP) would want a non-profit to look like. The committee can now say that they would like to have a non-profit and continue to define what that looks like. A presentation will be made at the fall ESS meeting. Gene shared that one aspect that was not covered yet would be the accessibility to take donations. The idea is to pilot the program for three years.

X. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Leslie Edgar, Secretary, June 9, 2023

