

Minutes of the Meeting of The Western Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors



Pier Five Hotel

Baltimore, MD

September 23, 2002

Summary of Actions

Agenda Item	Action
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2.0	Approved Agenda and Minutes of July 2002 Meeting
5.0	The WAAESD policy on multistate project numbers will reflect that RCIC will determine if there is justification for retaining a project number and that a project number will be retained only if there is a strong and compelling justification for retaining the old number.
6.0	A straw vote of the members present indicate that they favor the structure of the NRSP Advisory Committee and the timeline as described in the background information provided.
7.0	The WAAESD Chair will appoint a subcommittee of the Executive Committee to work with the Directors of Cooperative Extension and Academic Programs. The subcommittee's responsibility will be to develop an agreement on the partnership on multistate activities.
14.0	Approved Adjournment of Meeting

Attendance:

Alaska	Carol E. Lewis	Montana	Don Kress
Arizona	C. Colin Kaltenbach	Nevada	David Thawley
Colorado	Lee Sommers		Roger Lewis
Guam	John Brown	New Mexico	LeRoy Daugherty
Hawaii	Catherine Chan-Halbrendt	Oregon	Ching Yuan Hu
	Doug Vincent	Utah	H. Paul Rasmussen
Idaho	Richard Heimsch	Washington	Sandra Ristow
	Phil Berger	Wyoming	Jim Jacobs
		Others:	H. Michael Harrington (ED)

Agenda

Fall WAAESD Meeting

8:00 am -12:00 noon

September 23, 2002

Baltimore MD

8:00	1.0	Introductions and Announcements
8:05	2.0	Adoption of Agenda, Approval of Minutes of July 2002 Meeting
8:15	3.0	Interim Actions of Chair
8:20	4.0	Treasurers Report
8:30	5.0	NIMSS Status, Multistate Project Numbering
9:00	6.0	NRSP Task Force Recommendations
9:30	7.0	Future agreement with Extension and Academic Programs
10:00		Break
10:30	8.0	Discussion of By Laws
11:00	9.0	MAPs Implementation
11:15	10.0	Future Meetings:
	10.1	Spring 2003 Meeting Plans and Topic
	10.2	Summer 2003 Meeting
11:35	11.0	Resolutions
11:40	12.0	Other Business
11:50	13.0	Changing of the Guard
12:00	14.0	Adjourn

AGENDA BRIEFS

Agenda Item 1.0

Introductions and Announcements

Presenter: L. Daugherty

Background:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Daugherty.

Action Requested: For Information

Agenda Item 2.0

Adoption of Agenda, Approval of Minutes of July 2002 Meeting

Presenter: L. Daugherty

Background:

The motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda as circulated and posted on the WAAESD web site.

The motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the July 14-17, 2002 meeting as posted on the WAAESD web site.

Action Requested: Approvals of current agenda and minutes of July 2002 Meeting

Action Taken: Approved agenda as circulated and posted on the WAAESD web site.
Approved the minutes of the July 14-17, 2002 meeting as posted on the WAAESD web

Agenda Item 3.0

Interim Actions of Chair

Presenter: L. Daugherty

Background:

A joint memorandum from Tony Nakazawa, James Wangberg and me was sent to all Administrative Advisors regarding Multistate Project and Coordinating Committee Annual Reports. This memorandum sent to western region AAs and to the national AES Directors list serve, asked AA of western region projects not to authorize any annual meetings until all reports are submitted.

Action Requested: For Information

Agenda Item 4.0

Treasurers Report

Presenter: S. Quisenberry

Background:

Kress reported that all of the 2003 assessment invoices have been sent out.

Action Requested: For Information

Agenda Item 5.0

NIMSS Status, Multistate Project Numbering

Presenters: H. M. Harrington / H. Sykes

Background:

NIMSS Status

All of the Western region projects have been fully operational in NIMSS since late 2001. Directors, administrative advisors and others who are authorized to have administrative access to the system have received training. Harriet continues to serve as a resource and answer questions as they arise. We have been working with CSREES to further implement the paperless management system, most recently developing the program language to complete the "Addendum Approval or Other MRF Project Information" notification to CSREES.

We have requested that extension directors be provided with administrative access so that they are able to approve extension faculty participation on multistate projects. We also continue to work with CSREES, the Region EDs and Administrative Assistants, Directors, AAs and others to utilize the system to the fullest extent.

Project Numbering

As you may recall, the association wanted the option of retaining existing numbers when projects are renewed. Accordingly, we arranged for program language changes in the NIMSS to accommodate this request.

Recently, CSREES has indicated that project renewals using the same number would require a strong justification. This is, in part, driven by perception that projects go on

forever continuing to do the same things and also by the need to be more accountable. Of course, project objectives appropriately change over time as does the overall focus to a certain extent. This leads to the question: When should the title and number change in the evolution of the project?

The approvals made at our recent summer meeting resulted in three project renewals (W-133, W-177, and W-185) that were forwarded to CSREES for approval using the same number. Approvals of these projects were delayed due to weak justifications for retaining the same number.

We recommend that the association adopt a policy statement on project numbers and have developed the attached draft for discussion.

DISCUSSION DRAFT

WAAESD Policy on Multistate Project Numbers

The WAAESD policy is to assign new numbers to projects that are continuing unless there is a strong and compelling justification for retaining the old number. If there is a strong desire and justification to retain the project number, a letter stating the justification will be submitted to the WDA Office at the time of the renewal request. For those projects that are renumbered, the old number will be placed in parentheses at the end of the project title so that project history can be followed and previous work can be traced.

The _____ will determine if there is justification for retaining a project number.

Either or both of the following two strong arguments must be made in order to retain a project number. 1) The project has established a unique relationship with stakeholders and clientele groups such that the project number has significant meaning to those groups. 2) The project has long term objectives such as variety trials that transcend a project cycle; or projects in which tracking and identification of samples are tied to the project number. Examples include plant breeding and animal genetics projects where products are referenced to the multistate project number.

Identification of the project to the participants or a project's publication history does not constitute strong justification.

Action Requested: Input on policy on MRF project numbering.

Action Taken: The motion was made, seconded, and approved that the WAAESD policy on multistate project numbers will reflect that RCIC will determine if there is justification for retaining a project number and that a project number will be retained only if there is a strong and compelling justification for retaining the old number.

Agenda Item 6.0

NRSP Task Force Recommendations

Presenters: L. Sommers / H. M. Harrington

Background:

In March of 2002, ESCOP Chair Richard Heimsch appointed a Task Force to “develop a strategic management plan, for the NRSP program with the report to be presented at the Fall 2002 Workshop in Baltimore”. The plan was to cover all aspects of the NRSP program including: original intent of the program; current activities, identification of new priorities; review, renewal or termination of NRSPs; and phase out of “off the top” funding and/or transition to other funding authorities. The Task Force met in Memphis June 20-21 2002 in sessions led by Liesel Riechle of the Social Sciences Research Center at Mississippi State University using computerized facilitation technology.

Participants

Eric Young, North Carolina State University
Preston Jones, USDA-CSREES
Larry Miller, USDA-CSREES
Sally Maggard, USDA CSREES
Robert Seem, Cornell University
Dan Rossi, Rutgers University
William Trumble, University of New Hampshire
Alfred Parks, Prairieview A&M
Gary Lemme, Michigan State University
Lee Sommers, Colorado State University
Gary Cunningham, USDA CSREES
Vicki McCracken, Washington State University
Nancy Cox University of Kentucky
David Mackenzie, NERA

Daryl Lund, NCRA
Tom Helms, SAAESD
Sam Donald, ARD
Michael Harrington, WAAESD

The recommendations of the Task Force follow:

**(DRAFT) REPORT OF THE
NRSP TASK FORCE
September 2002**

Introduction. This report represents the penultimate step in our effort to make much needed improvements in our National Research Support Project (NRSP) program and portfolio. We expect the final step to be adoption of its recommendations by the Experiment Station Section of the NASULGC Board on Agriculture Assembly and the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service, USDA. Activities et sequence that have lead to the development of this report include:

1. An informal, on-line survey conducted by Dr. David MacKenzie (two reports available at <http://129.2.12.6/nrspsurvey/shortresults.cfm> and <http://129.2.12.6/nrspsurvey/longresults.cfm>).
2. Subsequently an in-depth survey and analysis was conducted by Liesel Ritchie and her staff from the Social Science Research Center (SSRC), Mississippi State University under sponsorship of a Cooperative Agreement from CSREES. The survey included three groups: the first was individuals who had served on the Committee of Nine (C-9); the second were persons who currently serve as administrative advisors for NRSPs; and, the third were directors who were not currently and/or had not previously been directly involved with NRSPs. The report from this activity entitled, "National Research Support Projects: An Evaluation of Processes" is available on the ESCOP website at <http://www.escop.msstate.edu/nrsp-eval-report.pdf>).
3. These survey efforts led to the establishment of the current NRSP Task Force charged to develop recommendations on a new management structure and policies for the NRSP portfolio. The Task Force held a one-day, noon to noon, facilitated planning session led by Liesel Ritchie and her staff from the SSRC Decision Support Laboratory (DSL). Participating Task Force members included: Nancy Cox, Gary Cunningham, Sam Donald, Mike Harrington, T. J. Helms, Preston Jones, Gary Lemme, Daryl Lund, Sally Maggard, Vicki McCracken, Larry Miller, Alfred Parks, Daniel Rossi, Robert Seem, Lee Sommers, William Trumble, Richard Wootton, and Eric Young.

Task Force Meeting

Many issues were discussed during the Task Force meeting as reflected by the volume of comments recorded by the DSL staff. A 45-page summary of all input during the NRSP Task Force meeting is available upon request. Identification of those issues of greatest immediate importance were:

- a. Lack of consistent and strenuous review process.
 - b. Need to streamline current convoluted and cumbersome processes.
 - c. Perceived lack of national focus.
 - d. Perceived sense of entitlement; i.e. once established, NRSPs continue in perpetuity.
 - e. Need to transition projects to other sources of funding.
 - f. Need to gain flexibility to initiate new efforts in high priority areas.
 - g. Need to distinguish between 'research support' and 'research' projects.
 - h. Need for relevance review and stakeholder input.
 - i. Need for a formal oversight committee
- j. Need for improved communications of accomplishments and impacts.

The next step was to identify teams (subcommittees) to address these issues and to prepare written reports for presentation during the ESS meeting in Baltimore, MD, in September 2002. Four writing teams were identified to focus on the following broad areas:

- a. Criteria for Project Establishment and Renewal; Procedures for Review and Approval. Team members were Lee Sommers (Lead), Mike Harrington, Bill Trumble and Larry Miller.
- b. Role of the (an) Advisory Committee. Team members were Daniel Rossi (Lead), Preston Jones and Vicki McCracken.
- c. Timelines for Project and Budget Processes (including sequence and time frame of key events). Team members were Eric Young (Lead), Daryl Lund, Robert Seem and Nancy Cox.
- d. Communications: Communicating Accomplishments and Impacts. Team members were Gary Lemme (Lead), Sally Maggard and T. J. Helms.

Each writing team was asked to examine the following areas related to their assignment:

- Current Situation (How does the system now operate?)

- Problems with the Current Situation (A brief explanation of problems or concerns.)
- Recommendations

Reports of each of the writing teams have been integrated in subsequent sections herein.

I. Criteria for NRSP Establishment and Renewal

Current Situation

The policies and procedures governing National Research Support Projects (NRSPs) are detailed in the national “Guidelines for Multistate Research Activities” that were originally adopted by the Experiment Station Section at the annual meeting held in New Orleans, LA on September 26, 2000. The current version of these Guidelines is available at <http://www.escop.msstate.edu/draftdoc.htm>.

According to the “Guidelines”, the definition of an NRSP and the policies governing the program are as follows:

“National Research Support Projects (NRSP): NRSPs are made up of 4 administrative advisors (one appointed from each SAES regional association) a CSREES representative, and scientists from SAES and elsewhere, as appropriate. This type of activity focuses on the development of enabling technologies, support activities (such as to collect, assemble, store and distribute materials, resources, and information) or the sharing of facilities needed to accomplish high priority research. NRSPs are eligible for of-the-top funding.

NRSP AAs will present budgets to their regional associations at their spring meetings. SAESs will vote on the NRSP budgets and the votes (electronic or otherwise) from each region will be tallied by the respective ED no later than June 1. The EDs will then pool the votes and forward a single recommendation to CSREES for funding in the next fiscal year. Requests from a NRSP for budget changes that are necessitated by extraordinary situations should be brought to the attention of the regional associations for consideration at their spring meetings.

NRSPs will be reviewed in their fourth year (i.e., one year prior to the scheduled termination date) and the results of this review will be available prior to the spring meetings of the regional associations. Projects may be reviewed at other times during the course of the project if a review is deemed necessary based on consultation with the project AA's.”

The format for requesting the establishment of an NRSP appears in Appendix B of the National Guidelines available on the ESCOP website (<http://www.escop.msstate.edu/guidelines.pdf>).

Problems with Current Situation

Specific criteria for evaluation and review of current and proposed new NRSPs do not appear in the guidelines. This fact is clearly reflected in the concerns voiced by respondents to the surveys of the Directors with similar concerns also expressed by members of the NRSP Task Force.

II. NRSP Advisory Committee

Current Situation

Since the dissolution of the Committee of Nine, there has been no single SAES entity with the general oversight responsibility for national research support projects. Existing projects receive very limited annual progress reviews at the regional level. Annual budgets are reviewed and are typically funded at the previous year's level plus or minus any proportional change in Hatch appropriations. Once projects reach the end of their approval terms (typically five years), a revised project proposal is reviewed by each region. More recently projects have undergone an external review. Approval for renewal of a project requires support from at least three of the four regions. Once projects are initially authorized, they usually are reauthorized. With the exception of NRSP 7, reauthorization of the project is also reauthorization of off-the-top funding, even though annual approval of project budgets is required from 3 of the 4 regions.

In theory, new NRSP's are initiated by (a) scientist(s) and/or director(s). Before a proposal can proceed it must be sponsored by a region and an administrative advisor is assigned to work with a writing committee. When the proposal is finalized, it is reviewed by each of the four regions and must be approved by at least three of the four regions. In reality, there have been very few new projects proposed in recent years and none actually approved. Hatch funding for the NRSP portfolio has remained relatively constant at \$1.6 million. Directors have been reluctant to approve any additional off-the-top funding.

Problems with the Current Situation

There is overall dissatisfaction with the current process for review, approval, funding of NRSP's and with the composition of the NRSP portfolio. Neither directors nor scientists have confidence that the current SAES process yields the highest and best use of the limited resources available to the SAES system.

Under the current system, there is no systematic linking of the NRSP portfolio with national priorities. The review and approval process occurs at the regional level and in turn focuses on regional needs rather than national needs. Without a mechanism like the Committee of Nine, there is no national oversight or discourse concerning national needs relative to research support. Current ESCOP mechanisms focus on research needs but not needs relative to research support activities.

There are also no commonly accepted and applied standards or criteria for reporting or evaluation of the progress of individual projects. As a result, there is no serious annual progress reviews conducted on existing projects. Such standards and criteria also do not exist to evaluate project revisions or new projects. Without commonly applied criteria or a mechanism for general oversight, there tends to be little consistency in decision-making concerning NRSP's with the exception of a consistency in the lack of real decisions being made. There is also no current mechanism for obtaining stakeholder input on the portfolio of approved projects.

Current projects have no required sunsets relative to off-the-top funding. There is no requirement or incentive for projects to transition to other sources of funding. Decisions concerning the approval of a project are not separated from decisions concerning off-the-top funding. Current projects tend to continue to receive funding year after year with no expectation that they will migrate off these funds. As a result, directors tend to be reluctant to authorize or even entertain proposals for new projects. The current portfolio, therefore, has become stagnant and is not responsive to changing needs.

Finally, there is no single SAES institution which is responsible for marketing this aspect of our system. While NRSP projects have made a very significant difference to land grant research capabilities and the constituents we serve, outcomes are generally not well documented nor are impacts demonstrated in a systematic way which promotes the overall system.

III. NRSP Project and Budget Initiation and Renewal Process and Timeline

Current Situation

The current NRSP approval process is listed below as it appears in the Guidelines for Multistate Research Activities (Appendix N). No time frame is indicated, only the sequence of actions and who is responsible.

Action	Responsibility
1. Preparation of proposal (Appendix B) and a	Sponsoring Director and Selected

Table of Resources (Appendix E)	Participants; Directors
2. Approval of proposal to create the Activity	Regional Associations
3. Notify Multistate Research Office, CSREES	Executive Director
4. Assignment of Administrative Adviser(s)	Chairs, Regional Associations
5. Assignment of CSREES Representative	Multistate Research Office, CSREES
6. Authorization of first meeting and invitation to participate	Lead, Administrative Adviser

Currently, NRSP budgets are presented to the regional associations by their Executive Directors (ED) at their spring meetings. SAES members of each regional association vote on the NRSP budgets and the votes (electronic or otherwise) from each region are tallied by the respective ED no later than June 1. The EDs meet with a CSREES representative and make decisions on funding for the next fiscal year based on the regional votes. Requests from a NRSP for budget changes that are necessitated by extraordinary situations are also brought to the attention of the regional associations for consideration at their spring meetings. NRSPs are to be reviewed in their fourth year (i.e., one year prior to the scheduled termination date) and the results of this review are to be available prior to the spring meetings of the regional associations. Projects may be reviewed at other times during the course of the project if a review is deemed necessary based on consultation with the project AAs.

Problems with the Current Situation

Primary problems and concerns with the current project and/or budget approval process and time line are listed below.

1. Annual approval for budgets are regionally based, rather than nationally based and may not necessarily represent the majority opinion of the Directors.
2. The annual budget approval process used currently is not appropriate. Any new process should have tentative budget approval for the entire 5 years. A change in the annual budget should only be made for exceptional circumstances and when unexpected needs arise in the project.
3. Time-line for process of initiating a new project or revising a current project is not defined.
4. Project reviews are not completed in a consistent manner prior to project rewriting and initiation of the approval process.

5. Budget must be approved on a yearly basis for projects approved for a five-year period.

IV. Communications: Communicating Accomplishments and Impacts

Current Situation

Organized efforts to communicate accomplishments and impacts vary greatly among the NRSP groups. Some, like NRSP-4 for example, have budgeted for a communications professional who prepares quality print and web-based information for stakeholders, SAES administrators, congressional delegations, and project participants. However, most of them do not have an organized communications effort as part of their activities, communicating their accomplishments and outputs through presentations at professional society meetings and industry activities.

Websites have been established for all the projects. A Google search for “NRSP” identified projects 3-8. However, the content and user friendliness of these websites varies greatly. Many of them are located on regional SAES servers and are difficult for the uninformed user to navigate. (The very excellent website for NRSP-1 is administered through CSREES and thus, is not specifically identified as a part of the NRSP program.)

Stakeholder communities of some NRSPs are actively engaged and lead organized communications efforts with industry members and congressional delegations. Generally those that have made serious efforts to communicate accountability and impact have been successful in increasing budgets through industry contributions or congressionally directed USDA allocations.

Problems with Current Situation

Scientific assessment of project impact is not an objective of any of the NRSPs and little effort is made for most projects to measure the impact of their accomplishments. Most communications efforts have focused on outputs and accomplishments and not impacts. Generally, if impacts are reported, they are merely estimates and do not represent the project in its totality.

Many NRSPs have been in existence for an extended period of time; their mission and audience have evolved and they find it very difficult to begin a communications program at this late date. Project membership does not generally include a communications or impact assessment specialist. And, although they may be excellent scientific writers, few scientists have been appropriately trained to write impact statements.

Stakeholder engagement throughout the life of a project is critical to an effective communications program. It is difficult to bring stakeholders into the process if they have not been actively involved in the past. One project that recently began to rotate their annual meeting among the regions as a means to encourage communications had three industry representatives in attendance at their meeting.

Shrinking NRSP budgets have increased the difficulty to hire communications professionals to lead their public awareness and accountability efforts. Some groups have utilized SAES communications specialists in developing educational material, whereas others have relied solely on the scientists within the project team.

V. Task Force Recommendations

The following recommendations are made by the NRSP Task Force for changes in the NRSP process and management.

A. General

1. Develop a specific definition for an NRSP considering the difference between 'research support projects' and 'research projects' including criteria addressing who benefits from the project, what data/products result from the project and the project outputs (e.g., what they are and who uses them).
2. Encourage use of a NRSP approach for activities requiring the existing mechanism for multi-agency funding of a program while also needing minimal off-the-top funding.
3. Establish and implement a rigorous review process for new and existing NRSPs with the costs shared by CSREES and the NRSP.
 - a. Use external scientific peer review panels to address program quality
 - b. Involve stakeholders in the review process to address program relevance
4. Develop and implement a transition plan for certain of the current NRSPs. This plan may include some continued minimal investment in each NRSP from off-the-top funding.

B. Criteria

1. Establish specific criteria for initiating and renewing NRSPs in the "Guidelines for Multistate Research Activities." Subject new and existing NRSPs to a rigorous external review conducted by a review team consisting of scientists and stakeholders utilizing the following criteria:

- a. Contribution to national priorities established by ESCOP, CSREES, NAREEB and/or other relevant entities. Using this input, the Advisory Committee will propose suitable national priorities to the ESS.
- b. Relevance to stakeholder needs.
- c. Extent of partnering with other agencies and subsequent leveraging of off the top funds.
- d. Relationship of project to other NRSPs and national priorities
- e. Review of a common set of measures for each NRSP:
 - i. Outcomes
 - ii. Outputs
 - iii. Impact
 - iv. Leveraging of funds
 - v. Stakeholder feedback

C. Procedures Related to Criteria

- 1. Revise current guidelines on format and process for submitting NRSP proposals. Currently, the brief, 3-page format used for a coordinating committee/information exchange group (Appendix B of the guidelines) is completed to propose a NRSP. Modify the guidelines to require information on the following:
 - a. Relationship to national ESCOP and CSREES priorities.
 - b. Timelines, outcomes, and impacts.
 - c. Budget based on annual off-the-top funding needed for 5 year period.
 - d. Funds contributed by other federal/state/private sources.
 - e. Plan and timeline for transitioning to other funding sources (project may require 5, 10 or more years before transitioning can occur).

D. Advisory Committee

- 1. Role of the Advisory Committee
Creation of a National NRSP Advisory Committee (hereafter referred to as Advisory Committee) with broad oversight responsibility for the NRSP portfolio is recommended. The proposed committee is to be charged with providing general oversight, consistency in review and approval processes, and a national perspective relative to research support needs. It is important that the committee avoid micro management of individual projects.

While playing a gatekeeper function for the SAES system, it is also important that the committee's role is clearly advisory to the system. It should make recommendations to the Experiment Station Section (ESS) concerning existing and new projects. A key component of their role is the implementation of sun-set clauses. The committee would be expected to bring its recommendations to the annual ESS meeting, currently held in September.

As the committee will be representative of the SAES system and expected to know more about the NRSP portfolio and their individual directions, it is important that its recommendations are seriously considered. In fact, it has been recommended that to reverse or reject one of its recommendations, the ESS should require a three-quarter plurality in voting against the recommendation.

One of the specific charges to the committee will be the use of national priorities and needs as a basis for the review and evaluation of existing and new NRSP projects. It will be responsible for assuring that the NRSP portfolio is monitored and is responsive to needs. The committee will be expected to identify specific areas of research support needs or at least utilize input from an established ESCOP mechanism such as the Planning Committee because of their focus on emerging issues and needs. The committee should have the authority to proactively identify research support needs. It has also been suggested that the committee have resources available to seed the creation of new NRSPs responsive to emerging needs. One way to make such resources available to the committee would be to establish it as a new NRSP, thus allowing the use of off-the-top funds for the conduct of its business.

The committee will be directly responsible for the annual review of progress for existing NRSPs. It will need to establish and communicate to participants in the NRSP system, appropriate criteria for evaluating project progress towards stated goals.

Relative to the evaluation of revised and new projects, the committee will oversee review by peer and merit panels. It should develop criteria for the reviews, select reviewers, assist in establishing protocols for review, and prepare the specific charge to the panels. Utilizing the results of the reviews and the committee's understanding of national research support needs, the committee will prepare recommendations concerning revised and proposed projects to the ESS.

A final role for the committee will be one of broad advocacy for the NRSP system. It will insure the documentation of system and individual project impacts. It will serve as the point entity for marketing the system and bringing it to national level prominence.

2. Advisory Committee Composition

Of utmost importance, the committee should have representation from each of the regions. Other possible representation might include:

- Executive Directors
- CSREES
- Stakeholders
- Cooperative Extension
- ARD
- Scientists
- ESCOP/ESS

The committee should be representative of the diversity of the SAES system including the breadth of areas of research and education not necessarily well represented under current structures. At the same time, it is critical that the size of the committee remain manageable (as suggested at the Task Force meeting in Memphis (“the best committee is two folks when one is absent”).

We recommend the following possible composition in light of these criteria:

- a. One representative from each of the five regions; the representative would be appointed by the regional association chair and should be a current or past member of a MRC. Each region should also designate an alternate to insure representation.
- b. One representative from Extension appointed by the ESCOP Chair following the recommendation by the ECOP Chair.
- c. One representative from CSREES, preferably a National Program leader appointed by the Administrator, CSREES and appointed by the ESCOP Chair.
- d. One stakeholder representative, perhaps a CARET representative, also appointed by the ESCOP Chair.
- e. Two regional executive directors also appointed by the ESCOP Chair. One of the executive directors should be from the same region as the chair of the committee, serving as vice chair.
- f. The chair of the committee will be one of the representatives from the four SAES regions. This position should rotate among the four regions.

3. Terms of Appointment

The term of appointment to the committee should be three years. The terms should be staggered so as to provide continuity to deliberations. The chair of the committee should rotate among the four SAES regions.

The committee should meet physically once per year prior to the September ESS meeting. Other business of the committee should be conducted electronically through conference calls and e-mails. All expenses will be borne by their respective institutions. An alternative source of funding for travel could be off-the-top funds if the committee were to be established as a NRSP.

E. Review and Approval Timelines for a New NRSP or Renewal of an Existing NRSP

1. NEW NRSP

Anytime	<p>Sponsoring Director(s) submits request to establish an NRSP writing committee to the sponsoring regional association’s Executive Director following that region’s standard process for initiating new multistate activities. Sponsoring regional association assigns lead Administrative Advisor and solicits names of Co-advisors from other Executive Directors. Sponsoring regional association follows normal process for approving the establishment of a writing committee and solicit additional participants.</p> <p>NRSP writing committee membership, in consultation with Administrative Advisors, prepares initial project proposal, including projected five-year budget. Administrative Advisors submit the project proposal and projected five-year budget, along with names of several qualified peer reviewers, to the NRSP Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee solicits peer reviews by scientist familiar with the area and transmits review results along with Committee comments to Administrative Advisors.</p> <p>NRSP writing committee revises proposal and budget based on review.</p>
Not later than Oct 1	<p>Administrative Advisors submit revised proposal and five-year budget, along with peer review comments, to Advisory Committee and Executive Directors (transmission of materials to Executive Directors throughout this process implies subsequent transmission to members of corresponding regional associations)</p>
Oct-Feb	<p>Advisory Committee reviews proposal and budget and sends comments with initial recommendation to Executive Directors.</p> <p>Appropriate regional committees review the project proposal and</p>

	projected five-year budget and report to association at their Spring meeting
Feb-Mar	Regional associations discuss project proposal and projected five-year budget, along with Advisory Committee recommendation, at their Spring meetings and Executive Director transmits comments and/or concerns to the Administrative Advisors and Advisory Committee.
Apr-June	NRSP Committee addresses any comments and/or concerns through further project and/or budget revisions and/or separate responses.
July 1	Final project proposal, projected five-year budget, and any additional responses are transmitted to Advisory Committee and the Executive Directors.
July-Aug	Regional associations discuss the final proposal and budget at their summer meeting, or the appropriate regional committee reviews the proposal and budget, and Executive Directors transmit comments to Advisory Committee.
September	Advisory Committee reports at the ESS Fall meeting on the final project proposal and projected budget, and its recommendation. SAES Directors vote (one vote per institution contributing off-the-top funding) on approval of the project and five-year budget. A two-thirds majority vote is required to overturn the Advisory Committee recommendation.
October 1	Approved NRSP starts five-year cycle with five-year budget approved.

During Project Term (years 2-4)

January	<p>NRSP Committee submits annual report and detailed budget for subsequent fiscal year to Advisory Committee and Executive Directors by January 15.</p> <p>Advisory Committee reviews annual report and budget and transmits any comments to Administrative Advisors and Executive Directors.</p> <p>If there's no change in total annual budget from approved five-year budget, Executive Directors transmit report and budget to regional associations for their information.</p> <p>If a change in the annual budget from the approved five-year budget is requested, a detailed justification must be submitted to Advisory Committee and Executive Directors, and change request is reviewed through the following process.</p>
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Feb-Mar	Regional associations review budget change request during Spring meetings and transmit comments to Advisory Committee.
Apr-Sep	Advisory Committee interacts with CSREES and NRSP Administrative Advisors to determine and approve any budget changes for the next year.

2. RENEWAL OF AN EXISTING NRSP

Year 4	<p>NRSP committee decides to renew project as NRSP and notifies Advisory Committee and CSREES.</p> <p>NRSP committee drafts initial renewal proposal and five-year budget.</p> <p>CSREES and the Advisory Committee jointly arrange for review of NRSP that is due to terminate at the end of year 5. Review organizer consults with the Advisory Committee and NRSP Administrative Advisors regarding review protocol, charge, etc.</p>
Not later than Sep 1	Administrative Advisors submit renewal proposal and five-year budget to Advisory Committee and Executive Directors.
Sep-Nov	Review team conducts review of past four years progress and renewal proposal and transmits report to Advisory Committee and Administrative Advisors.
Oct-Feb	<p>Appropriate regional committees review report and renewal proposal with five-year budget and report to association at Spring meetings.</p> <p>Advisory Committee reviews proposal and budget and sends comments with initial recommendation on renewal to Executive Directors.</p>
Feb-Mar	Regional associations discuss renewal proposal and budget along with Advisory Committee recommendation, at their Spring meetings and Executive Director transmits comments and/or concerns to the Administrative Advisors and Advisory Committee.
Apr-June	NRSP Committee addresses any comments and/or concerns through renewal proposal and/or budget revisions and/or separate responses.
July 1	Final renewal proposal, five-year budget, and any additional responses are transmitted to Advisory Committee and the Executive Directors.
July-Aug	Regional associations discuss the final renewal proposal and budget at their summer meeting, or the appropriate regional committee reviews the proposal and budget, and Executive Directors transmit comments to

	Advisory Committee.
September	Advisory Committee reports at the ESS Fall meeting on the final project proposal and projected budget, and its recommendation. SAES Directors vote (one vote per contributing institution) on approval of the project and five-year budget. A two-thirds majority vote is required to overturn the Advisory Committee recommendation.
October 1	NRSP approved for renewal starts five-year cycle with five-year budget approved. NRSP not approved for renewal receives one-year extension (with budget equal to 5th-year budget) to transition off NRSP funding to other sources or downsize project.

F. Communications

1. A communications plan with identified target audiences should be a component of all new and renewal project proposals.
2. A plan to measure project impacts should be included in all new and renewal project proposals.
3. Stakeholder communities should be identified and an engagement plan outlined in all new and renewal project proposals.
4. Annual reports should identify communication activities, accomplishments, and impacts.
5. Stakeholder communities should be encouraged to coordinate educational efforts with Congress.
6. A professional quality communications piece highlighting the unique national role of the National Research Support Projects and their impacts should be prepared for use by SAES Directors with their congressional delegations and stakeholder organizations.
7. CSREES Communications should highlight the unique role of NRSP projects and their impacts as part of the agency's communications related to its overall portfolio of research support activities for use by the research community, congressional delegations, and stakeholder organizations.

Action Requested: For Information

Action Taken: A straw vote of the members present indicate that they favor the structure of the NRSP Advisory Committee and the timeline as described in the background information provided.

Agenda Item 7.0

Future Agreement with Extension and Academic Programs

Presenter: H. M. Harrington

Background:

The current agreement with Western Extension Directors and Western Academic Programs supporting the office operations extends to June 30, 2003. At present, the extension directors provide 15 % and academic programs contribute 4% with the WAAESD making up the remainder of the office budget.

This “gentlemen’s agreement” was consummated at the Lake Tahoe summer meeting with a passed motion to “evaluate the split portion of the position in 2 years”. (See <http://129.82.121.243/webpub/S2000min.pdf>). As currently conceived, the split portion of my responsibilities relates only to the functional integration of multistate projects as specified in the position description. However, my assessment of the needs requires that I add value to both groups in additional ways as appropriate and I have made efforts to do so.

My assessment of the current status of the partnership is that significant progress has been made in increasing functional integration. This is reflected in joint planning for the recent Joint Summer Meeting, the development of new Multistate Projects, and the initiation of modification in the NIMSS to provide administrative access for Extension Directors. We have also developed a joint evaluation process for the Executive Director’s position that was endorsed by all three groups. The results of the ED evaluation should provide additional evidence that the partnership is a desirable activity for the future.

I recommend that the Association take steps to extend this agreement for a period of at least three years. This could be accomplished by an ad hoc committee of directors from each of the groups who would develop a draft MOA.

Action Requested: Initiate discussion and agreement development

Action Taken: The WAAESD Chair will appoint a subcommittee of the Executive Committee to work with the Directors of Cooperative Extension and Academic Programs. The subcommittee's responsibility will be to develop an agreement on the partnership on multistate activities.

Agenda Item 8.0

Discussion of By Laws

Presenter: H. M. Harrington

Background:

LeRoy Daugherty has appointed a committee of Colin Kaltenbach, Jim Jacobs, himself and I to review the association bylaws and make recommendations on changes. This group will be bringing possible changes to the association at our Spring meeting in accordance with the appropriate notice requirement.

Earlier I suggested possibly adding new language under “Article II Purpose” to reflect our joint effort with the Western Directors of Extension and Academic Programs and including some detail as the purpose and function of RCIC. There may be additional changes desired.

The bylaws can be found at
<http://www.colostate.edu/Orgs/WAAESD/wdaman/index1.html>

Please feel free to make any suggestions regarding the By Laws to any of the group.

Action Requested: For Information

Agenda Item 9.0

MAPS Implementation

Presenter: J. Jacobs

Background:

Attempts to enhance federal support for agricultural research and extension activities conducted at Land Grant Universities have met with concerns that accountability is inadequate for any new formula funding increases for specific initiatives. To address this concern a joint ESCOP/ECOP task force has proposed a new organizational framework, referred to as Multiple Activity Programs or MAPs, to rapidly respond to new formula funds with national research and extension initiatives and track expenditures, outcomes and impacts. Their purpose is to greatly facilitate reporting multistate and multi-functional collaborations with direct accountability of outcomes and impacts whenever practical, and to link those reports to investments and USDA performance plans. MAPs are organizing frameworks for tracking expenditures of new formula funds (and funds from other sources) for research and extension initiatives of national scope, and for reporting results from and impacts of those programs.

In August the ESCOP and ECOP chairs appointed a joint ad hoc committee to (1) develop implementation details for MAPs, and (2) to recommend procedures for reporting and accounting of new formula funds that are programmatically directed.. The committee consists of Daryl Lund, Eric Young, and Jim Jacobs from ESCOP, Dick Wootton, Mary Gray, and Keith Smith from ECOP and Cheryl Oros from CSREES. The committee has had one conference call on August 16, 2002.

It was decided during the conference call that due to the changes within CSREES and the new extension reporting system under development (EASE), that there may be a solution to the accountability problem without developing a new procedure. Dr. Oros is investigating what barriers exist to USDA/REE/CSREES accepting new formula funds that are programmatically directed, including accountability requirements and current reporting mechanisms. This analysis will provide the committee a rationale for the desirability of continuing with the developing of the new MAP procedure to account for integrated, programmatically directed formula funds through CSREES.

Action Requested: For Information

Agenda Item 10.1

Spring 2003 Meeting

Presenter: Catherine Chan-Halbrendt

Background:

Chan-Halbrendt reported that arrangements had been made at the Radisson Kaua'i Beach Resort for the meeting. The group rate will apply for four days before and after the meeting, which is March 23-26.

Tentative Schedule and Information:

Draft

Spring Meeting March 23 to 26, 2003

Radisson Kauai Beach Resort

4331 Kauai Beach Drive

Lihue, HI 96766

Tel: 1-888-805-3843

March 23	RCIC Meeting
	Registration
	Reception at Hotel
March 24	Introductions and Announcements
	Approval of Agenda, Minutes
	Chair's Report
	Officer's Report
	Future Meetings
	Lunch at Hotel
	Discussion of an Item (to be determined)
	Banquet at Hotel with Speaker/Entertainment
March 25	Whole Day Tour
March 26	Half Day
	Continuation of Topic Discussions

Topics for in-depth discussion are suggested to be: Audits, including OIG Plan of Work audits; and Agro-Security audits. Guests from institutions who have experienced one or more of these audits may be invited.

Action Requested: For Information

Agenda Item 10.2

Summer 2003 Meeting

Presenter: C.Y. Hu

Background:

What: 2003 Western Regional Joint Summer Meeting

Where: Inn at Otter Crest, Newport, Oregon

When: July 13-16, 2003

More information: http://agsci.orst.edu/directors_summer_meeting/

*Note: We are still in the planning stages for this meeting and would appreciate your suggestions. We would like the theme to be centered on a regional issue. If you have any suggestions on a regional issue or would like to give us some ideas of your interests in Oregon for our tour, please send your comments to CY Hu (chingyuan.hu@oregonstate.edu) or Mike Burke (mike.burke@oregonstate.edu).

Action Requested: For Information

Agenda Item 11.0

Resolutions

Presenters: R. Cavalieri and D. Snyder

Background:

There have been no changes in leadership in the Western Region since the 2002 Summer Meeting. Therefore, no resolutions were presented.

Action Requested: For Information

Agenda Item 12.0

Other Business

BAA Policy Board

Presenter: C. C. Kaltenbach

Background:

The BAA has developed a new formula for assessments for the advocacy expenses. The formula will be based on 60% of base formula funds and 40% on all other funds administered by CSREES.

One bill per institution will be sent (there will be no ES, AES, APS, or ICOP split). Due to the application of the new formula, there will more impact on the North Central region. The assessment for CARET is rolled into the total assessment, with a total of \$1.1 million for advocacy activities.

Action Requested: For Information

Agenda Item 13.0

Changing of the Guard

Presenter: L. Daugherty

Background:

Daugherty presented a gavel and the responsibilities of WAAESD Chair for 2003 to C. C. Kaltenbach.

Action Requested: For Information

Agenda Item 14.0

Adjournment of Meeting

Presenter: C. C. Kaltenbach

Background:

Kaltenbach called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Action Requested: Adjournment of meeting

Action Taken: Motion was made, seconded, and approved to adjourn the meeting.

END