

WAAESD Fall Meeting Minutes

September 28th, 8:00-9:00 a.m.

Baltimore Maryland

WAAESD/WEDA Joint Session [Link to slide deck from the morning session.](#)

- I. **WAAESD Attendance:** Chris Davies, Scot Hulbert, Sreekala Bajwa, Chris Pritsos, Mark McGuire, Jodie Anderson, Leslie Edgar, Eric Webster, Walter Bowen, Laura Prihodko, David Gang, Glenda Humiston, Shawn Donkin, Bret Hess, Jennifer Tippetts (Recording secretary).
WEDA Attendance: Carrie Ashe, Deanne Myer, Peter Barcinas, Lindsey Shirley, Jeff Goodwin, John Born, Cody Stone, Wendy Powers, Ivory Lyles, Kristopher Elliot, Doreen Hauser-Lindstrom.
- II. **Welcome-** Chris welcomed members from WAAESD and WEDA.
- III. **Western Water Congress -** Bret started his report by providing the history that water was identified as a priority by the western region and then experts in water were gathered for a mini summit virtually. Following the mini summit an in-person meeting was held in Reno NV, in the spring of 2022. There are three working group committees that were formed from that meeting: a) value and capacity, b) finance, and an c) organizing committee. Doreen welcomed interested individuals to join the first value and capacity meeting on October 18th. The value and capacity committee is working on how to add value and increase membership. Bret shared the finance committee's objective is to find financial support for the activities of the WWN. The congress organizing committee has members that are on UCOWR (Universities Council on Water Resources), it was proposed to meet jointly as an opportunity for both groups. Mark questioned if there was an opportunity for rapid response funds from NIFA. Bret shared that the group is not ready for a full proposal at this time. The goal is to start building a roadmap to be used in future proposals.
- IV. **Mental Health Network Update-** Doreen shared that there is a conference scheduled in Las Vegas. Carrie Ashe shared that they are taking names of people who might be interested in attending and there might be funds available to assist with travel costs. They are looking for specialist and field faculty, please share names with Carrie, and an email will go out providing more information.
- V. **Western Region Strategic Communications-** Leslie shared that this committee has been going for a little less than a year. Leslie highlighted the playbook and shared that the group is transitioning into a working group that is focusing on Connect, Coordinate, and Communicate. Jennifer Alexander was selected as the western representative on the CMC. Leslie encourages directors to get their communicators involved in the working group to move impacts to the regional level. The commitment is nominal, and impactful on collective level. The next meeting is scheduled for October 5th.
- VI. **New Dean and Director Training-** Bret and Doreen have been discussing a new dean/director training that would be at every summer meeting. Bret shared some information that would be included in the training beginning with the history, organizational background, and the purpose. Chris Davies suggests adding the role of an administrative advisor for multistate projects. Cody suggested information on how we engage with FALCON and how that can lead to more combined advocacy. Ivory Lyles recommended adding something on political champions. Peter

B. recommended to include insular areas. Shawn recommended including how we can channel advocacy. Doug Steel stated that they are putting together a new advocacy training that would have the CGA involved and cover the appropriations process. Jodie asked for a list of the acronyms, and how they all fit together. Ivory suggested identifying the states with two administrative heads. Walter asked for an alignment of information between APLU and NIFA. Lindsey shared that we are doing better at communicating on this level, but there can be an educational gap on communicating on the next level up. Glenda recommended that APLU help fill that gap in having better communications. Glenda recommended a briefing for new Presidents and how we fit in and how we can work together. Chris Davies recommended this same presentation at APLU conference, where most Presidents attend. Ivory shared there was nothing about how we are marketing. It needs to be more than the 3 C's, and how we push our message further. Bret and Doreen will work on incorporating all these suggestions into the training.

- VII. **WAAESD/WEDA Joint Spring Meeting**- This meeting will be held at the SPUR campus March 27-30, 2023. Hotel accommodations will be at the Renaissance Inn, about four miles away from the campus. A big thank you to Doreen for arranging transportation, we will be shuttling members back and forth.

WAAESD Business Meeting

[LINK to WAAESD Agenda.](#)

- I. **Approval of WAAESD Business Meeting Agenda and Summer Business Meeting Minutes**- Chris Pritsos moved to approve and Leslie Edgar seconded the motion.
- II. **Interim Actions and Executive Committee Report**- Chris D. reviewed the actions. Glenda moved to approve the interim actions and executive committee report. Scot seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- III. **Regional Agricultural Innovation Hub Concept**- Sreekala presented her concept on the regional agricultural innovation hubs, where each of the participating hubs will host a different section. The complete details are still being vetted. The innovation hub will be university based, with the concept that the industry will help with the selection. There would be a combination of expertise from universities and companies in the industry. This is the ability to share and move ideas forward. Another piece is talent development and keeping talented individuals in the State. Sreekala asked members to break into smaller groups and to brainstorm what they would like to accomplish if they had a regional hub in their area. Glenda shared that they are participating in a Type 1 innovation hub already and that can be a building block for this idea. They also received an economic development grant where they are making a collaborative graduate program and a small technology hub. Glenda encourages us to look outside of USDA. Glenda also shared that the CA Department of Agriculture has been a big resource. Glenda shared not to recreate the wheel and collaborate with additional groups. Other suggestions included listing experts in various fields, so that we put together multistate projects since NIMSS would be an easy way to reach out. This would allow us to focus on networking of the hubs that are already in place. Each state has different laws, but how do we connect ag into other hubs like bio sciences or medical. Are there easy ways to establish MOU's. Some universities have a patent attorney on retainer but is there a way as a group we could have someone navigate legal issues. Mark suggested that we need to take the ideas to the next level and establish a business.

We could be better at developing marketing and business plans so that a business can become a reality. The group discussed potential industry partnerships. Glenda shared that the division of ag and natural resources is not receiving any of the patent revenue funding. She is currently working on getting this revenue source back to the division.

How should we structure the hub/spoke system for success? Glenda suggested going to different regions to gain buy-in and evaluate missing resources and generate collaborations. If you can make the case that everyone is more productive and efficient—we are amplifying food security. Chris suggested that if there was an ED, they could really lead the charge. Walter suggested that sometimes the universities come in and hinder the process. There are other ways to facilitate start-ups, and we can create a safe place. Glenda shared that people don't need to hire an R&D firm; they should use us. One of the best resources for the public would be research. Is there an approach to having an open source? How are we going to measure success? The number of connections, the degree of sharing, number of new services, the number of jobs created, royalties, number of patents, ISPR's, etc.

Sreekala is going to take the information from today, compile it, and share it with the group.

- IV. **MRC Report-** The Multistate Review Committee (MRC) goes through a process to review new and renewing proposals on a regional level. We also conduct a mid-term review of regional projects. W_TEMP_5177 is still in temp status because they assigned an individual to be the writer and he went to industry. The group has finally met and submitted the revisions needed. The mid-term reviews revealed who failed during the pandemic. If you are the AA, it is important to get your group together soon. Brent Elrod encouraged members to engage with their NIFA liaisons. NIFA has assigned a primary and an alternate.

- V. **Best Practices for Administrative Advisors-** There have been several concerns from the MRC during the mid-term reviews and it was suggested to generate a best practice for AA. David noted that all multistate committees should be looking for collaborative opportunities. Brent shared that NIFA can and should be a liaison to help make connections. What would be helpful is if the AA would help remind their committees to submit reports. David shared that he was recently appointed as an AA to a 4000-level project and had been attending their meetings. He receives very positive feedback, and the group has expressed appreciation for his attendance. It was also noted that not all groups feel that way.

- VI. **Treasurer's Report-** Bret presented on behalf of Gene. This is a seconded motion from the Executive Committee. Unanimous vote to approve.

- VII. **AES-ARS Relations Committee Report-** Mark shared that the working group has had great discussions. There was a significant turnover in ARS leadership. There have been no communications, and this is a problem. The work of the AES-ARS committee opening the door for future communications. Currently AES financially supports ARS and that is a financial risk. It is going to be difficult to come up with the new matching regulation. Mark asked for any suggestions. The goal is to find something that can be used at a regional level not a national level. Maybe we can have an onboarding process with new ARS members.

- VIII. **Farm Bill Listening Session-** Leslie shared that a document was shared with their Senator who sits on the Ag committee. He is very interested in making sure the Western Region is well represented. The Senator's staff met with Bret and Leslie, and there is a request to meet with the WAAES Executive Committee. They are specifically interested in the language in Title VII of the Farm Bill. Please review and submit any comments or recommendations to Bret. Shawn