



Thanks to all of you that attended the joint session in Washington, DC. We especially appreciated the hospitality extended by Sabine O'Hara and her University of the District of Columbia colleagues: it made for an engaging and successful meeting!

“Science is built up of facts, as a house is built of stones; but an accumulation of facts is no more a science than a heap of stones is a house.” - Henri Poincaré, *Hypotheses in Physics*, in *Science and Hypothesis*, 1905, Walter Scott Publishing, London.

### Action items:

- The summer planning committee sought attendee input for the joint session. We're seeking your input about the entire meeting. Was there something that you particularly liked and valued? Was there anything that fell into to “don't do that ever again” category? We'd value hearing any candid reflections that you might share.
- During the NERA business meeting, we engaged in a robust but brief conversation about the challenges of indirect cost return (ICR or F&A) and the suggestion was made to use the challenge as the basis for a NERA conversation. I'm seeking informational background about your institution. I have access to your on-campus and off-campus ICR rates. I seek institutional and college-level policies about ICR. For instance, one NERA institution requires a minimum 18% ICR on all grants and contracts. Faculty from the institution can apply to an agency for a non-ICR bearing grant, however, the faculty/scientist much provide the college with 18% from unrestricted funds. Please forward your policies to me.
- Doug Steele is seeking directors who are interested in participating in an invitation-only meeting in December dedicated to Gene Editing in Livestock. If you're interested, please give me a heads up by Friday, June 21. I'll forward a list of prospective NERA participants to Doug.
- Matt Wilson (WVU) is seeking input about the philosophy of your station on management of Hatch projects. As Matt shares “We have in recent time pushed to have every single faculty member have a unique Hatch project, even for those that might also be part of a Multi-State Project.” What's your secret sauce to managing Hatch projects? Do you encourage umbrella or multidisciplinary, multi-investigator projects? Please send your thoughts to me, I'll collate and share with Matt and you. You can also correspond directly with Matt ([Matt.Wilson@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:Matt.Wilson@mail.wvu.edu).)

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### Reminders/Updates:

- Last week, we solicited you to gauge your interest in serving on an ad-hoc advisory group to NIFA to assist with making recommendations on the move from the national capital region (NCR) to Kansas City

We've included all your [comments to the solicitation](#) on the NERA website. To summarize: for the those that responded, each shared that the move of NIFA outside the NCR was a poor idea. Likewise, responders noted that there were few, if any, good ways to divide the NIFA staff among two locations. Of the groups that could be moved, several directors noted that the Operations group (including the Office of Grants and Financial Management, Budget Staff, and Communications Group) could be re-located. Alternatively, the top tier of the Program staff (Deputy Directors and Division Directors) should remain in the NCR. Several directors noted that bifurcating the NIFA staff would have a crippling effect on the agency and slow response times and impede performance. Only one director recommended who should be on the ad hoc committee and suggested that the Executive Directors from Extension and the Agricultural Experiment Station serve. No directors volunteered to participate; no surprises there.

- A draft of the [minutes from the 6/4 – 6/5 NERA business meeting](#) are now ready for your review.
- The [annual list of accomplishments of the OED](#) is posted on the NERA website in anticipation of the annual review of the ED and Coordinator.

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### **Informational items:**

- The University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources has four positions available including [Home Horticulture Educator and Master Gardener](#), [Program Management Specialist](#) (repost), [Agent Associate – 4-H Youth Development](#), and [Core Facility Director](#).
- The annual Experiment Station Section meeting will be held in conjunction with Cooperative Extension in Nashville, TN on September 23 - 26, 2019. The [2019 Joint ESS/CES-NEDA Meeting site](#) is now open and it includes a summary, agenda, and hotel and meeting registrations. Register early; we'll be doing a face-to-face NERA meeting at this joint session.



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