



NERA

Northeastern Regional Association
of
State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors Meeting

The Admiral Fell Inn
Historic Fell's Point, 888 South Broadway Street, Baltimore,
MD 21231

March 25-26, 2008

Minutes

Robin Morgan, Chair and Mike Vayda, Acting-Chair

In Attendance:

Robin Morgan (DE), Chair
Michael Vayda (VT), Vice-Chair
Tom Brady (NH)
Tom Burr (NYG)
Steve Goodwin (MA)
Ian Hart (CTS)
Bradley Hillman (NJ)
Michael Hoffman (NYC)
R. Cesar Izaurralde (DOE/PNL)
Dan Kugler (CSREES)
Max Martin (NRSP6)
Bruce McPheron (PA)
Christopher Neefus (NH)
Daniel Rossi (NERA)
Fred Servello (ME)
Hunt Shipman (Cornerstone)
Kirby Stafford III (CTNH)
Dariusz Sweitlik (USDA-ARS-NAA)

William Vinson (WV)
 Rubie Mize (NERA), Recorder

MAJOR DECISIONS

- Approved the draft agenda for this meeting as posted in url---
<http://www.nera.umd.edu/workshop/NERAAgendaMarch2008.html>
- Approved the minutes of the NERA meeting held at Philadelphia, PA on September 25, 2006, as posted in url---
<http://www.nera.umd.edu/workshop/NERAMinutesSept2007.html>
- Approved the MAC recommendations, posted in this url, and as follows:
<http://www.nera.umd.edu/workshop/MACReportMarch2008.html>
 1. Approve the following proposals:
 - NE_TEMP1423: Biological Improvement of Chestnut through Technologies that Address Management of the Species, its Pathogens and Pests [NE1015], 10/2008-9/2013.
 - NE_TEMP1461: Genetic Bases for Resistance and Immunity to Avian Diseases [NE1016], 10/2008-9/2013.
 2. Return proposals to the technical committees to address concerns raised by the Multistate Activities Committee:
 - NE_TEMP1422: Postharvest Biology of Fruits [NE1018], 10/2008-9/2013.
 - NE_TEMP1442: Commercial Greenhouse Production: Component and System Development [NE1017], 10/2008-9/2013
 3. Defer decision for NE_TEMP1441: Conservation and Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources [NE009], 10/2008-9/2013, subject to a submission of a 5-year budget plan with justifications for regional off-the-top funding.
 4. Approve the following Requests to Write Proposals for Coordinating Committees:
 - "Balancing Natural Resource Recreation Management, Human Well-Being, and Community Resilience", 10-2008 to 2013.
 - "Urban Landscape Assessment Of Ecological, Biological, Economic, Sociological, and Psychological SerActings", 10/2008-9/2013.
 - "Northeastern Corn Improvement Conference (Renew of NEC 29)". 10/2008-9/2013.
 5. Approved FY2009 regional off-the-top funding for NE-59 in the amount of \$40,788.
- Approved the following nominations:
 - Dr. Ian Hart (CTS) for NE1024: Whole Farm Dairy and Beef Systems for Environmental Quality, 10/2005-9/2010
 - Dr. Ian Hart (CTS) for NE1028: Mastitis Resistance to Enhance Dairy Food Safety, 10/2007-9/2012
 - Dr. Mark Robson (NJ) for NRSP4: High Value Specialty Crop Pest Management, 10/2004-9/2009
 - Dr. Tom Brady as NERA Representative to the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Extension Committee (NE-SARE)
 - Dr. Christopher Neefus as NERA Representative to the Northeast Regional Aquaculture Center (NRAC)

- Approved the submission of NE1015-Biological Improvement, Habitat Restoration, and Horticultural Development of Chestnut by Management of Populations, Pathogens, and Pests, as the region's nomination for the national Multistate Research Award.

THE JOB JAR
(Work Assignments for the Executive Director)

- Inform USDA-CSREES on actions taken by the NERA Directors.
- Inform ESCOP of NERA actions on the FY2009 off-the-top requests.
- Assist in the planning for the 2008 Northeast Summer Joint Session to be held at Bethesda, MD on July 13-15.
- Follow-up submission of NE1015 as the region's nomination for the Multistate Research Award, and invite the technical committee to give a presentation at the Summer Joint Session.
- Follow-up suggested topics for best practices:
 - "What are we doing as a system to prepare our next generation leaders?"
 - Moving formula funds tied to tenure track positions to state funds (NH-Tom Brady)

Tuesday, March 25, 2008

1. Call to Order - Acting Chair Mike Vayda

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 am. The first day of the meeting was chaired by Vice-Chair Mike Vayda.

2. Comments from the Members (States/Stations Updates) - Acting Chair Mike Vayda

Each member gave a brief summary of administrative and budget issues in their institutions and states.

3. Agenda Modification (Additions/Deletions) and Approval - Acting Chair Mike Vayda

The motion made to approve the draft agenda as posted, was seconded and approved.
<http://www.nera.umd.edu/workshop/NERAAgendaMarch2008.html>

4. Approval of the September 17, 2007 Meeting Minutes - Acting Chair Mike Vayda

The motion made to accept the minutes posted was seconded and approved.
<http://www.nera.umd.edu/workshop/NERAMinutesSept2007.html>

5. Interim Actions by the Chair and NERA Executive Committee Report - Acting Chair Mike Vayda

[Actions Taken by NERA Chair](#)

6. Multistate Activities Committee Report distributed for consideration on March 28, 2007 - Bill Vinson

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/workshop/MACReportMarch2008.html>

The MAC report and recommendations were distributed so the directors can review them before the discussion tomorrow.

7. **CSREES Update - Dan Kugler, CSREES**

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/march2008meeting/CSREESReportMarch2008.pdf>

8. **Report from Cornerstone, Budgets FY08-09-10 and Farm Bill Update - Hunt Shipman, Cornerstone**

The 2008 appropriation indicates return to normalcy compared to 2007, with an increase of \$43.5M compared to 2006. The President's FY09 budget consistently moves towards decrease of formula fund. Debate on the earmarks is ongoing at the Senate. Some senators want them in the Farm Bill text. "Sunset" of special grants should have started in 1997. Earmarks can be a good way to jumpstart projects for pressing needs, but there should be a way to end or transition to another more stable funding stream.

The big issues in the Farm Bill discussions are indirect costs and IFAFS. An extension of the law is expected by April 18. The press reports a breakthrough or a breakdown. There may be a new Farm Bill soon, and if not, an extension of the current Farm Bill. There is a real threat of the elimination of IFAFS. There will be a significant increase for research in specialty crops in the proposed Farm Bill.

On authorizations vs. appropriations, the strategy is to turn appropriations in our favor. TAG or "targeted advocacy groups" composed of CARET delegates are trained and they meet with members of the Ag. Appropriations Subcommittee.

9. **ESCOP Report - Bruce McPheron and Steve Goodwin**

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/march2008meeting/ESCOPReportMarch2008.pdf>

ESCOP's position on IFAFS is to retain mandatory authorization for new funding if a new structure is implemented. There should be new money associated with the new Farm Bill, and not simply a reallocation.

On the Marketing Plan, Chair MacPehron reported that ECOP will now cover \$100K of the \$300K costs to implement the program. Built into the plan is an annual evaluation of the "proof of concept" that will determine future funding direction. CSREES is also cooperating and will help run reports/outputs from their database that can be used as materials.

All the regions will be nominating projects for the The Multistate Research Award. Dr. Hillman will work with Dr. Vayda to put forward a nomination for the NE1015 chestnut research project. This project emulates our collective vision on what a multistate project should be. A motion was made to nominate NE1015 for the multistate research award. The motion was seconded and approved. The technical committee will be invited to give a presentation at the summer meeting's Monday luncheon. NEED is also planning to have their regional award presentation at the summer meeting.

Dr. McPheron praised the work of the Executive Directors behind the scene, and encouraged the NERA directors to be more involved with national issues. AS ESCOP Chair, he now realized how much groundwork is being done to put issues in the forefront, disseminate and collect feedback from the system.

He has monthly meetings with Dr. Hefferan wherein issues of shared interests are discussed. There is still a need to increase the understanding of NPLs on how the land-grant system operates, particularly those who do not have land-grant background. A suggestion was made that perhaps it would be a worthwhile exercise to exchange summer sabbaticals between the agency and the land-grants.

The ESCOP Science and Tech. Committee will be revising its charge to make it more relevant. As part of its charge, this committee is looking into modifying the NRI priority setting exercise. The agency wants priorities to be more focussed. The Social Science Subcommittee was asked to analyze the economic and social implications of the Farm Bill. It will also assist CSREES in mining its listening session database. Dr. McPherson also asked the Science and Tech. Committee to think about communicating science or increasing science literacy. We need to continue to be the source of unbiased knowledge and be proactive in disseminating facts in a manner that the public can understand and accept as based on well founded, proven research.

10. **NRSP-1/One Solution - Mike Vayda and Bill Vinson**

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/march2008meeting/OneSolutionReportDec2007.pdf>

The NRSP-1 Technical Committee and the NRSP Review Committee members met in Washington, DC, in late November. Minutes of that meeting are in the link above. Issues that remain are:

1. Losing relevance when homogenizing the reporting system. Definition of participants in FNEP vs. NRI projects, for example, are very different and these are not captured in generic report formats.
2. Different levels of decision-making. NRSP-1 technical committee members from CSREES are only involved with the hardware/software decisions. Program representation is needed in the discussions related to policy and reporting requirements.
3. Limited budget continues to be a constraint.
4. Will One Solution be a duplication. Federal reporting -'reports.gov' or 'grants.gov' is underway and everyone will be required to report through this system.
5. Who's driving the issue? Not USDA, but OMB. We are referred to as "stakeholders", not "partners". This means we really do not have any input on the design of the reporting system.

A one-year extension for NRSP-1 to October 2010 was approved by ESCOP at the Sept. 2007 meeting. This will allow evaluation of CRIS, NIMSS, POW and other reporting systems as they relate with One Solution. A proposal will be drafted, but no guarantee was given for future funding.

11. **NRSP-6 Report - Max W. Martin, Program Manager, NRSP-6 US Potato Genebank**
[Max Martin's PowerPoint Presentation entitled, "Preserving the Popular Potato"](#)

There is general feeling that the review conducted of the germplasm centers and projects commissioned by ESCOP needs to be revisited. The recommendation by the committee for a *status quo* is not adequate. There must be a way to consolidate and create a better structure to manage the centers. How about the Farm Bill funding for specialty crops - can it be used for genome banks? Has there been any initiative to protect the collection

for future generations. These collections are like libraries of national treasures, hence, secured funding is important.

12. Energy Discussion

- Northeast Renewable Energy and Conservation Working Group Survey Results - Dan Rossi

<http://northeastenergy.umd.edu/>

The working group that was formed after last year's Summer Joint Session had designed the survey and so far about 80 energy experts are now recorded in the database. The Working Group will co-host a regional conference with the Northeast Sun Grant that will be held on August 26-28, 2008, at the Penn State Conference Hotel.

- USDA REE Energy Science, Education, and Extension Strategic Plan - Mike Hoffmann

<http://www.ree.usda.gov/news/strategicplanletter.shtml>

The energy strategic plan is posted in this url. The committee is still looking for champions from the land-grant. The champions do not have to be directors. They can be faculty or department chairs. The group will meet in September 2008.

USDA/REE will hold its second annual Bio Energy Awareness Days (BEAD II) on June 19-22, 2008, in Washington, DC. Institutions are invited to "develop exhibits that contribute to the theme of clean and efficient sustainable energy and energy conservation and efficiency". There is also a competition called the "Grand Challenge". The challenge is for institutions to "present their vision of U.S. agriculture and/or forestry's contribution to the energy economy in 2017". The deadline is April 15.

[Click here for USDA's Letter of Invitation for BEAD II](#)

[Click here for detailed info on the Grand Challenge](#)

- Northeast Sun Grant Initiative Update - Larry Walker

Dr. Walker gave a brief overview of the NE Sun Grant Initiative. Dr. Tom Fretz is providing the leadership of its competitive program. There were 39 proposals last year and 69 this year. The database developed from the NE Working Group's survey may be a useful source of peer reviewers for Sun Grant. However, the survey did not include Ohio and Michigan, so a suggestion was made to include affiliate members. We are competing with regions/states that are better supported politically and are focussed on feedstock. There are no demo farms in the NE and based on DOE maps, there are very few feedstocks in the NE. The NE is not a major player in the biofuel debate, so we have limited access to biofuel funding, although 25% of the national energy consumption is in the Northeast. Is there a need for a caucus? We need to mobilize our delegates and identify champions for the NE. The Northeast Regional Conference will be a good venue to inventory our options, challenges and opportunities in the region and perhaps build a consortium of institutional and political leaders.

13. **OED Report - Dan Rossi**

ED Dan Rossi gave the following report:

[OED Accomplishment Report.pdf](#)

14. **Proposed NERA Budget for FY 2008-2009 - Mike Vayda, Acting Chair**

Closed session. A motion was made and the proposed budget, with an increase of 4% for salaries of the NERA staff, was seconded and passed.

15. **Best Practices Session: "Funding Farm Animal and Farm Operations" - Steve Goodwin**

16. **Final comments and adjournment for the day's meeting - Mike Vayda, Acting Chair**

Acting Chair Mike Vayda thanked everyone for participating in the lively discussion and asked the directors to review the MAC report for tomorrow's discussion. The meeting was adjourned for the day at 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 26, 2008

17. **Multistate Activities Committee Report - Bill Vinson**

<http://www.nera.umd.edu/workshop/MACReportMarch2008.html>

#3. NE_temp1422- Postharvest Biology of Fruits [NE1018]

The main concern of the directors is the lack of expertise on economics and nutrition in the technical committee. How will the committee address Objective 3 ["...optimize market returns and promote increased consumption of health beneficial fruits..."]? There are two ways that MAC members mentioned can be done in the revision: (1) pare it down [limit the objectives] to the expertise/strengths of the members of the technical committee (2) identify colleagues who can address Objective 3. Objective 3 was deemed essential to the project and the directors felt that this project should now move to this direction.

"Does the group want to keep the antioxidant study portion of the project?". It will also broaden the scope if a nutritionist is involved to study, for example, antioxidants of blueberry/cranberry. Historically, this group is focused on apples. The directors want to see that scope broadening in the new project. To address Objective 3, it is not sufficient to have consultations/interaction with nutritionist/clinicians. They need to be part of the project, as well as an economist and/or an expert in marketing.

Advisor Brad Hillman will work with the committee in getting the proposal revised addressing the concerns expressed. The technical committee will be asked if they want to keep the antioxidant portion of the study, or just fold it into one of the objectives.

#6. NE_TEMP1442: Commercial Greenhouse Production: Component and System Development [NE1017]

The directors agreed with the specific concerns by MAC as follows:

1. Why does the project not have an economist to assess the cost effectiveness of the technology that has been developed over the years?
2. Is the technology transferable? The outreach plan should be more specific, and get Extension more involved in its development. Perhaps use technology such as eXtension's Communities of Practice where basic and applied research come up with deliverables that can be measured.

3. It may be useful to have a summary under each objective explaining how the activities of the individual states will come together, and not just a listing of each state's activities. Interdependence should be clearly demonstrated.

The motion made to approve MAC's recommendation to return the NE_temp1422 and NE_temp1442 proposals to the technical committees for revision was seconded and approved.

#4. NE_TEMP1423: Biological Improvement of Chestnut through Technologies that Address Management of the Species, its Pathogens and Pests [NE1015]

#7. NE_TEMP1461: Genetic Bases for Resistance and Immunity to Avian Diseases [NE1016]

The motion to accept MAC's recommendation to approve item nos. 5 and 7, NE_temp1423 and NE_temp1461 respectively, was seconded and passed.

#5 NE_TEMP1441: Conservation and Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources [NE009]

MAC amended its recommendation for a conditional approval. The technical committee will be requested to include a 5-year budget plan similar to the format required for NRSPs.

The recommendation was seconded and passed.

Note: This conditional approval is tied up with item #12, off-the-top budget request for FY09. Decision was deferred.

#8 and #9 are Requests to Write Proposals for two new projects as follows:

#8 - "Balancing Natural Resource Recreation Management, Human Well-Being, and Community Resilience"

#9 - "Urban Landscape Assessment Of Ecological, Biological, Economic, Sociological, and Psychological Services"

The directors felt that the committees need time to develop these projects, and hence will be encouraged to form 2-year coordinating committees (a.k.a. development committees). The motion to approve the requests was seconded and passed.

#12 for NE9 Off-the-top Request

See notes above for #5 NE_TEMP1441: Conservation and Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources [NE009]. Request is tied to the proposal, so decision on funding request was deferred.

#12 for NE59 Off-the-top Request

A motion was made to accept MAC's recommendation to approve the NE59 off-the-top funding request for FY09 in the amount of \$40,788. NE59 will undergo a midterm review before its revision. The project will also be requested to submit a 5-year budget plan with the revision. The motion was seconded and passed.

#12 for FY09 Off-the-Top Funding Requests and Proposals for NRSPs - The directors decided to discuss the NRSPs separately.

- NRSP-1 - [\[Budget Request\]](#): Recommends approval at requested amount of \$346,829 consistent with the 3% annual increase as recommended by the NRSP Review Committee.

NRSP-1 was approved for extension to 2010 at the ESCOP meeting in Sept. 2007. There is no commitment for continued funding beyond 2010. A review of NRSP-1 will be conducted.

The motion made to accept MAC's recommendation for off-the-top funding for FY09 for NRSP1 at \$346,829 was seconded and passed.

- NRSP-4 - [\[Budget Request\]](#)[\[Extension Request\]](#)[\[IR-4 Letter\]](#): MAC recommends approval at \$481,182 consistent with the approved 5-year budget plan. NRSP-4 requests a one-year extension to FY2010. The one year extension is needed as the strategic plan is being developed to incorporate stakeholder input. A formal review will be conducted in the spring of 2009. Efficiencies of the project will be looked at as well as extreme measures for future plans/directions, and reduction of off-the-top support.

A motion was made to approve the extension to 2010 and the off-the-top for FY2009 in the amount of \$481,182. Request for succeeding years will be considered with the new proposal. The motion was seconded and passed.
- NRSP-5 - [\[Budget Request\]](#): Recommends approval at \$145,678 as recommended by the NRSP Review Committee returning the funding level to FY06.

NRSP-6 - [\[Budget Request\]](#): Recommends approval at \$150,000 at the same level as FY2008.

A motion was made to approve MAC's recommendations for NRSP-5 and NRSP-6, with the stipulation that these projects will be reviewed closely, when they come up for renewal, if they are still wise investments for off-the-top funding. The motion was seconded and approved.
- NRSP-7 - [\[Budget Request\]](#): Recommends "final" one-year off-the-top funding at \$325,000.

A motion was made to approve the FY2009 off-the-top funding in the event that the line item is not restored to ensure continuation of the project. Off-the-top support was approved last year when the special grant was taken out of the federal budget. The proposal for a 5-year off-the-top support should be submitted in NIMSS just like the other NRSPs. The motion was seconded and passed.
- NRSP-3 - [\[Budget Request\]](#)[\[NRSP temp3 Proposal\]](#): Not all stations benefit from NRSP-3. Should consider developing a multistate project and allowing individual directors to decide on funding. Do not support renewal.

NRSP-8 - [\[Budget Request\]](#)[\[NRSP temp8 Proposal\]](#) is in NIMSS]: Question off-the-top funding for NRSP-8. Other funding mechanisms should be considered. Do not support renewal.

NRSP_temp101 - [\[NRSP temp101 Proposal\]](#)[\[Attachments with Budget\]](#): The directors question the merit of NRSP_temp101 as a national research support project. What are the deliverables? Should consider developing a regional multistate project. NERA does not support the proposal..

Since NERA does not support the NRSP-3, NRSP-8 and NRSP_temp101 proposals, the motion is to fund them at \$0 level for FY2009. The motion was seconded and approved. There will be another opportunity to discuss the proposals

and the reviews at the summer meeting. The directors requested that results of the review be e-mailed to them right after the NRSP Review Committee meeting.

18. Discussion of NERA Multistate Research Portfolio - Bill Vinson and Dan Rossi

- [Review of the NE Multistate Research Portfolio - Brief Analysis](#)
- [NE Research Priorities Vs. Multistate Portfolio](#)
- [Multistate Projects by Region and Type](#)
- [Multistate Project Participation by Region](#)
- [Multistate Project Participation by NE Stations](#)

Dr. Rossi made an analysis of the current NERA multistate portfolio and he put forward the following for the directors' consideration:

- More formal identification and communication of multistate priorities
- Targeting of new multistate activities
- Director commitment to support targeted activities
- Application of relevancy test to proposals and possible employment of stakeholders, extension personnel, and/or department chairs in review process (request to write phase)
- Concerted effort to engage extension specialists and educators in multistate activities
- Promotion of more extension and research activities (ERA projects)

The list of priorities were taken from what Dr. Rossi heard during his visits and meetings with the station directors. Do we have the right people engaged in the right projects? Should some projects be classified as ERA (extension, research, academic) instead of multistate (NE)? Creating ERAs may provide a more welcoming environment for scientists to collaborate. Can we be more targetted on our approach? Can we support formation of new projects? In the near future, we might want to brainstorm about using the residual NERA fund to jumpstart new projects on issues where scientists are already working together, e.g. bioenergy, agriculture with rural/urban interface. The summer meeting may be a good opportunity to discuss this with extension. Dr. McPheron suggested looking at the portfolio again and identify projects with extension FTEs. If they are up for renewal, we should engage our extension counterparts and determine whether the new projects should be formed as ERAs.

19. Climate Change Discussion - R. Cesar Izaurrealde, DOE/PNL

[Dr. Izaurrealde's PowerPoint presentation entitled "Climate Change and Agriculture: Challenges and Opportunities"](#)

Dr. Mike Hoffmann indicated that climate change may be one topic where a coordinating committee can be formed. We can focus on responses to climate change and mitigation practices.

20. Discussion of Summer Joint Session Meeting Program - Dan Rossi/Mike Vayda

The planning committee had drafted a program with the theme "Delivering the Land Grant Mission in an Urban Setting - Best Practices for the Northeast". What areas in research are we working on that we can bring to the table? What are extension/research issues that we can jointly address at the summer meeting. It may be worthwhile to invite our legislators and get feedback. The power of rural to influence legislation is waning

so we need to target new audience or new group of stakeholder and get them to support us.

Dr. McPheron mentioned that there is the Pennsylvania Metro Initiative. There is commitment to work in Pittsburgh and they are now looking at research and extension work that they can benefit from. There are use and needs for our expertise. Issues include -- conversion of lands, development of markets for locally sourced food, and urban pest control tied with NIH asthma project. There are also significant environmental concerns in urban settings. Academic programs also need to cater to these audience. How do we become competitive in recruiting students from this pool? There are effective marketing strategies being implemented to attract these students. Some institutions have experienced an increase of about 10% in their College of Ag. enrollment. How do we prepare students for emerging opportunities, such as greening of urban communities?

Suggestions/comments can be sent to Dr. Mike Vayda or Dr. Dan Rossi.

21. **Nominations Committee Report - Chair Goodwin and Bruce McPheron**

Names were put forward for the following positions:

- Dr. Ian Hart (CTS) as Advisor for NE1024: Whole Farm Dairy and Beef Systems for Environmental Quality, 10/2005-9/2010
- Dr. Ian Hart (CTS) as Advisor for NE1028: Mastitis Resistance to Enhance Dairy Food Safety, 10/2007-9/2012
- Dr. Mark Robson (NJ) as Advisor for NRSP4: High Value Specialty Crop Pest Management, 10/2004-9/2009
- Dr. Tom Brady (NH) as NERA Representative to the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Extension Committee [NE-SARE]
- Dr. Christopher Neefus (NH) as NERA Representative to the Northeast Region Aquaculture Center Board [NRAC]

The motion made to accept the above nominations was seconded and approved.

Advisors are still needed for the following:

- Advisor for NE1016: Genetic Bases for Resistance and Immunity to Avian Diseases, 10/2003-9/2008 and NE_TEMP1461: Genetic Bases for Resistance and Immunity to Avian Diseases, 10/2008-9/2013.
Note: Contact Dr. Bradley Hillman (NJ).
- Advisor for NRSP7: A National Agricultural Program for Minor Use Animal Drugs, 10/2004-9/2009

22. **Increasing Federal Funding for Agricultural and Natural Resources Research in a Competitive Environment - Chair Robin Morgan**

The current climate is good for agriculture and energy, noted Dr. Morgan. It is a reality though that attempts every year are made to convert formula funds to competitive. We need to brace ourselves and look at the next generation of funding structures. USDA is not considered a "science" agency like NSF. This will be apparent in the new Farm Bill, if it passes. There is a need to come up with bold ideas for ag. system research. Converting food to fuel land impacts is one issue where we are better positioned. There are NIH training grants for agriculture, and CAPS programs that are funded at higher

level. For some institutions like UNH, it costs more money to have USDA grant. We need champions inside NSF. It is also a reality that a large number of stations are dependent on formula and state match, and formula funds are not growing. There is a need to develop an action plan to move to competitive. The new Farm Bill will present an opportunity for a bold transformation for the system.

23. Future Meetings:

- Summer Meeting: July 13-15, 2008 at the Hyatt Regency in Bethesda, Maryland
- ESS/SAES/ARD Workshop and NERA Fall Meeting: September 22-24, 2008 in Traverse City, Michigan

Chair Robin Morgan thanked everyone for the lively discussion and wished everyone safe travel.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 p.m.



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