

Report and Recommendations

NORTHEAST MULTISTATE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE MEETING

March 02, 2022

9:00-10:00 am Zoom Teleconference

In attendance: Jan Nyrop (Cornell, Chair), Matt Wilson (WVU), Puneet Srivastava (UMD), Jason White (CT-New Haven), Cindy Fitch (WVU/NEED), Rick Rhodes (NERA), David Leibovitz (NERA)

MAC decisions and discussion

- ESS/Northeast Excellence in Multistate Research Award selection ([view the 2022 call for nominations](#))
 - We want to consider both the published award rubric (5-year project cycle focused) and the underlying sentiment of the STC (long-term outcomes) in selecting a project and submitting a nomination.
 - NE1962 *Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Other Green Environments: Understanding Human and Community Benefits and Mechanisms* (Matt Wilson, AA) was proposed.
 - For future years we may consider:
 - NE1731 *Collaborative Potato Breeding and Variety Development Activities to Enhance Farm Sustainability in the Eastern US*
 - NE1727 *Influence of ovary, uterus, and embryo on pregnancy success in ruminants*
 - **The MAC unanimously recommends supporting NE1962 as this year's nominee.**
- ESS / Northeast Excellence in Leadership Award selection ([view the 2022 call for nominations](#))
 - NERA Executive Committee recommends Jody Jellison as this year's recipient.
 - Served an extra stint as outgoing Chair of NERA through leadership turnover across the region.
 - Led the ESCOP Science and Technology Committee, provided a Northeast voice in a national leadership role.
 - Rick is drafting a nomination for NERA's consideration during the Spring Meeting
 - **The MAC unanimously recommended moving Jody's nomination forward to NERA.**

NRSP Discussion

- NRSP_temp1: *Multistate Research Information Management and Impact Communications*, 10/1/22-9/30/27. [Renewal of NRSP1, Northeast AA: Bill Miller, Massachusetts]
 - NRSP1 is a "capacity/core" NRSP; not intended to sunset after 5 years.
 - NRSP1 supports NIMSS and the Multistate Research Fund Impact Communications program.
 - One component of this renewal is ensuring a link between NIMSS and the new NIFA Reporting System.

- **The MAC unanimously recommends supporting the renewal of NRSP1.**

Requests to Write (requires MAC approval only)

- General Discussion: The MAC should discuss the “request to write” requirements at a future meeting. We often receive submissions that look like full project proposals rather than just the issues and justification section – the additional information is helpful. NERA will scan the other regions for their request to write requirements and set this discussion topic aside for the next MAC meeting.
- NE18940: *A regional network of social, behavioral, and economic food systems research*, 10/1/22-9/30/27. Submitted by Cristina Connolly, UConn. [Primary reviewer: Rick Rhodes]
 - AI has been used for production data and could also be used for post-farmgate products and activities.
 - Work involving AI and application of big data is a point of interest at all LGUs.
 - Participation from three regions (NE, NC, W) is anticipated.
 - This arrived written as a full proposal and will be accepted as a request to write.
 - The objectives of the project (in the “Objectives” section) are not “researchable” and read like the objectives of a coordinating committee. The technical team has embedded objectives in the “Methods” section. Those should be incorporated into the “Objectives” section.
 - The team will be encouraged to expand its outreach plan.
 - **The MAC unanimously approves this request to write, with a request to revise the Objectives and the Outreach Plan.**
- NE18946: *Green Stormwater Infrastructure*, 10/1/22-9/30/27. Submitted by Christopher C. Obropta (Rutgers) and Michael Dietz (UConn). [Primary reviewer: Puneet Srivastava]
 - Topic area is suited to extension and environmental science faculty.
 - There is only one direction mention of agriculture in the proposal.
 - Looks like a Northeast-centric project, examines more urban/suburban area than rural.
 - The MAC should recommend a revision to clearly identify the agricultural elements that the will work address. As written, the proposed work is focused in urban and suburban areas and pays little attention to how addressing stormwater issues in urban/suburban areas would benefit agriculture. The only mention of agriculture is in a single sentence "Also, how can more GSI be used to treat rural and agricultural drainage issues?" This is considering agriculture in its broadest incarnations.
 - **The MAC unanimously approves this request to write, with a request to the technical team that the proposal make a strong connection to agriculture and multi land-use stormwater management. The MAC suggests that the PIs put this project in a bigger context taking a systems approach. For example, the PIs should mention that urban/suburban areas are part of mixed land use watersheds and reducing peak flows and runoff volumes and improving water quality through GSI will improve flow and water quality of streams, rivers, lakes, and bays (e.g., Chesapeake Bay, Delaware Bay, etc.) downstream of urban and suburban areas, thus supporting aquaculture production. Also, GSI (e.g., rooftop gardening, constructed wetland, urban/suburban farming, etc.)**

that are agriculture-related should be specifically mentioned and supported by this effort.

Request to Approve Peer Reviewed Multistate Activities (MAC recommendations to NERA)

- NE_TEMP2249: *Sustainable and Inclusive Rural Economic Development to Enhance Housing, Health, Entrepreneurship, and Equity*, 10/2022 – 09/2027 [Renewal of NE1749, AA: Peggy Brennan – Rutgers] [Primary reviewer: Jan Nyrop]
 - The group responded appropriately to the peer reviewers.
 - The project is very broad in its objectives, and there are no explicit researchable questions asked throughout the proposal.
 - This group has a long history and has accomplished a lot over the years, but there isn't a clearly identified direction for the next 5-year cycle.
 - Are we approving projects because the groups follow protocol? Or do we approve projects because we are supportive of the research?
 - Rick Rhodes sits on the Northeastern Regional Center for Rural Development Board of Directors and works with some individuals associated with this team. This is a productive group, but does the proposal require revision?
 - **The MAC recommends reaching out to request final revisions by the technical team and moving this project forward to NERA for full approval.**
- NE_TEMP2251: *Tourism Resilience and Community Sustainability: Adaptation and Recovery of Rural Businesses and Destinations*, 10/2022 – 09/2027 [New project, AA and Primary reviewer: Matt Wilson – WVU]
 - This group has been awarded a NERA planning grant and has been funded by NIFA to support multistate research activities around quantifying and increasing the adoption of rural tourism.
 - The group addressed the reviewers' comments and expanded its prospective participation beyond the LGU community.
 - Very productive group before having an inaugural multistate project in place.
 - Doug Arbogast (Technical lead) is an Extension faculty member at WVU who is interconnecting with research activities.
 - Social science project is welcome in the Northeast portfolio.
 - Outreach Plan is exemplary
 - **The MAC recommends moving this project forward to NERA for full approval.**

Informational items

- A number of multistate activities are currently undergoing peer review:
 - NE_TEMP2227 *Contribution of Ovarian Function, Uterine Receptivity, and Embryo Quality to Pregnancy Success in Ruminants*
 - NE_TEMP2220 *Multi-state Coordinated Evaluation of Grape Cultivars and Clones*
 - NE_TEMP2248 *Mastitis Resistance to Enhance Dairy Food Safety*
 - NE_TEMP2202: *The Equine Microbiome*
- A number of multistate activities are in the final throes of drafting a full proposal or preparing for peer review:

- NE_TEMP2105: *Motivations for Growing Industrial Hemp: Farmers, Producers, Processors, Manufacturers, Retailers, Consumers, Citizens, and Policymakers*
- NE_TEMP2201: *Mycobacterial Diseases of Animals*
- NECC_TEMP2202: *Formal Structure for the Minor Use Animal Drug Program*
- NE_TEMP2210: *Improving Forage and Bioenergy Crops for Better Adaptation, Resilience, and Nutritive Value*
- NEERA_TEMP2104: *Northeast Region Technical Committee on Integrated Pest Management*
- NE_TEMP2231: *Collaborative Potato Breeding and Variety Development Activities to Enhance Farm Sustainability in the Eastern US*

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