

ESCOP Executive Committee Meeting
Minutes
November 14, 2011
1:45-5:00 pm
Marriott Marquis Hotel
San Francisco, CA

Approval of Agenda and Interim Actions – Lee Sommers

Interim actions included:

- Appointment of committee members
- CAC Calls
- Conference call with Doug Steele, Lyla Houglum, Meryl Broussard, Jim Richards and Mike Harrington to discuss principles for combining lines
- Conference call with Duane Houck, Robin Shepard, Doug Steele, Rick Klemme, Steve Slack and Mike Harrington to discuss budget line consolidation of Regional IPM Centers, Methyl Bromide Transition with S-L 3d Pest Management programs; Organic Transition with S-L 3d Sustainable Agriculture; and Water Quality moved to S-L 3d. This was the basis for a motion put forward to and passed by the BAC.

NIFA Update - Meryl Broussard

- Recognized that NIFA has incurred significant budget reductions due to loss of special grants and other funding cuts. This has resulted in travel budget cuts and reconsideration of how grants review panel meetings could be restructured as the panel meetings constitute approximately 65 % of the NIFA travel budget. There was also an Executive Order to cut travel by 20%.
- Budget cuts have forced the reduction of “departmental reviews”. (See Action Items below)
- There will be a retirement buyout with some 30 personnel in NIFA expected to take advantage of this option.
- Due to recent retirements, the Funds Management branch has had to replace and train new personnel. Concentrating on getting funds out to states and grant recipients.
- The AFRI synopsis for 2010 was recently published on the NIFA website.
- Approximately 33% of AFRI funds are going to foundational programs
- OMB 2013 budget directive includes instructions to plan for 5% and 10% cuts
- Farm Bill:
 - Provided technical amendments, no new initiatives
 - Mandatory programs will be lost if not reauthorized (e.g. Biomass R&D, Specialty Crops, Organic Ag, Beginning Farmer-Ranchers)

BAA-Policy Board of Directors Update – Steve Slack/Eric Young

- Elections: Steve Slack was elected as the ESCOP representative, Barbara Allen Diaz is the alternate.
- PBD will meet on Tuesday, November 14.
- The LEAD -21 program is seeking a new management entity. There are several applications for consideration. Four proposals received; University of Georgia, University of Florida, North Carolina State University and Ohio State University with review and decision in December.

Federal Budget Issues 2012 and beyond - Cornerstone Gov't Affairs, Jim Richards, Hunt Shipman

- FY'12 budget is expected later today, most lines are expected to be at/near the Senate recommendation
- FY '13 budget may include mandatory funds for research, possibly prescriptive such as to include some "special grants" activities
- There is congressional concern over some of the awards that NIFA has made e.g. recent "Peoples Gardens" awards. This has led to more oversight on RFAs in the future.

CLP-Farm Bill Status Report – Vernie Hubert/Mike Harrington

- All of the system's recommendations have been put into legislative language and forwarded to the Staff. About 2/3 of the recommendations have been accepted.
- Supercommittee offered up \$23 billion in cuts for the Farm Bill, approximately \$9 billion in programs will terminate the end of the current Farm Bill.
- Indirect cost rate (F&A). The current rate is 22% of full amount. APLU, Presidents and other are on record as wanting full negotiated IDC rates. However, ECOP (55%) voted against an increase.

Budget and Legislative Committee – Steve Slack /Mike Harrington

- Preliminary recommendations support maintaining current funding for the Hatch, McIntire Stennis, Evans Allen and AFRI.
- Final FY'13 priority decisions deferred to BAC February meeting
- Supercommittee actions could impact decisions regarding the FY'13 budget
- One-line budget proposal is off the table
- Joint motion from ECOP and ESCOP for budget line consolidation was distributed. The proposal, combining the lines listed below, was based on discussions in which the ESCOP and ECOP (as represented by their respective Chairs and BLC Chairs considered recommendations from the 406 Task Force as well as recent changes in the federal budget affecting the future of various lines. Lines to be consolidated:
 - Regional Pest Management and Methyl Bromide Transition be consolidated into Smith Lever 3(d) Pest Management.
 - Organic Transition be consolidated into Smith Lever 3(d) Sustainable Agriculture.
 - Water Quality/Resources be moved into single budget line within Smith Lever 3(d) (the location it was in the early 1990s).
 - Language providing for the intent of these programs are implemented needs to be included to assure that current philosophy and institutional eligibility (especially the 1994's) are maintained.
 - If Section 406 funding is threatened and/or proposed for elimination, immediate steps are to be taken by Cornerstone. 1994's concerned that moving lines to Smith-Lever 3d will make them not eligible for funds.
- Also need to develop a strategy to protect the Rural Development Center and Food & Ag Defense Initiative lines.
- BAC actions/recommendations to the Policy Board:
 - Approved ESCOP-ECOP motion to combine lines as above
 - Recommended Cornerstone contract renewal for another year and begin negotiating next 3-year contract

Science and Technology Committee: Roadmap Priorities – Bill Ravlin/Dan Rossi

- A small task force comprised of Ravlin and the EDs developed recommendations of future needs/ use of the Roadmap.
- Recognized that there are really only about 4 priorities with several cross-cutting themes e.g. sustainability, water, etc.
- A 4-5 page general consumption summary will be created.
- 50 responses to the priorities survey have been received. The priorities are not expected to change appreciably from what was presented at the ESS Meeting in Estes Park. Data will be finalized to ascertain the top 2-3 priorities with each challenge.
- A letter to the USDA and NIFA detailing the top priorities will be sent for consideration as new grants programs are developed.

Communications and Marketing Update; Kglobal Update, Moving Forward – Impacts and Data Mining – Jerry Arkin, Arlen Leholm, Jeffry Morris, Vice President, K-Global

- Extension has expressed a strong interest in joining the effort with Kglobal
- There is pressure from CARET to have a single voice with ESCOP and ECOP in the marketing effort.
- Arlen and Mike met with a small group from Extension to discuss how Extension might be incorporated into the plan.
- A meeting will be held in early January with Extension to discuss principles and approaches to implementation.
- Jeff Morris- we need to develop mechanisms by which “nuggets” can be mined from the system and fed to K-global.

Understanding the APHIS Biotechnology Quality Management System Program - Gretchen Flanley, Sherpa 360

The APHIS Biotechnology Quality Management System (BQMS) Program provides compliance assistance to the regulated community for the voluntary adoption of a BQMS. A BQMS serves as an important tool to help organizations involved in biotechnology research and development analyze the critical control points within their management system to better maintain compliance with APHIS regulations for the import, interstate movement, and environmental release of regulated genetically engineered (GE) organisms.

The Program provides:

- interactive training workshops with other BQMS Program participants and USDA officials,
- documented guidelines and templates to aid in the development of a BQMS
- a baseline assessment of current management practices in relationship to the BQMS standard
- one-on-one targeted assistance as needed
- internal audit training
- facilitated third-party audits of the organization’s BQMS
- acknowledgement of BQMS Program completion

The APHIS BQMS Program is available to interested parties in the regulated community who wish to validate their approach to APHIS regulatory compliance. Participation is limited based on available resources. To contact a BQMS Program representative, e-mail or call BRS.BQMS@aphis.usda.gov or (301) 734-6356

Building Capacity in Issues Management in the Land Grant System (NCERA223) - Faith Pepper, Ruth Borger, Dave King

- Issues management is an anticipatory, strategic management process to detect and respond appropriately to emerging trends or changes in the socio-political environment. Once identified, organizations can respond to the issues either directly or sometimes preemptively when the issue is in the potential stage; indirectly through actions like negotiations with affected groups; or by choosing when in the lifecycle of the issue the organization should respond. Issue management is a means for an organization to work with issues offensively and to seek opportunities through that work.
- See NERA223 project on the NIMSS for additional details.
- Impact Statements
 - Need to reinitiate the Impact Database process which had some 3500 entries.
 - Need to structure and link databases
 - Impact statements need to be consumable
 - Need a 3 year training cycle to assure broad understanding of what is needed in impact statements.

ACTION ITEMS:

ESCOP Vote on IDC Rate

Maintain current level - 1

Intermediate rate - 12

Full ICD – 0

Recommendation will be forwarded to CLP at its meeting on Tuesday November 15.

Motion: Slack/Ravlin “Request that the Policy Board send a letter to be sent to Cathy Woteki, and Chavonda Jacobs-Young “Encouraging USDA-NIFA to keep NPLs engaged in departmental reviews” Passed unanimously. Slack to carry recommendation to PBD meeting on Tuesday.

Other Business

Dina Reitzel will be stepping down as the CARET liaison to ESCOP to join the CARET Executive Committee

Connie Pelton Keys from KS will be the new CARET liaison to ESCOP

Doug Lantange will be replacing Ed Smith as the ECOP liaison to ESCOP

Upcoming Meetings:

Feb. 26-29, 2012 Joint AHS-CARET Meeting: Key Bridge Marriott 1401 Lee Highway, Washington DC

Feb. 27 (tentative), 2012 ESCOP Meeting: Key Bridge Marriott 1401 Lee Highway, Washington DC

July 25-26, 2012 Joint COPS: Savannah Marriott Riverfront, 100 General McIntosh Boulevard

Sept 24-26, 2012 ESS Annual Meeting and Workshop, Portsmouth, NH

Attendance:

K. Plaut, NCRA, J Kokini NCRA, M Broussard NIFA, B Shulstad SAAESD, E Young SAAESD, E Smith ECOP Liaison, D Benfield NCRA, B Ravlin NCRA, B Frost WAAESD, C Brooks ARD, O. McMeans ARD, J Hayes SAAESD, H Shipman Cornerstone, V Hubert Cornerstone, B Hess WAAESD, D Scholl NCRA, R Moore, SAAESD, C Watson SAAESD, B Brown SAAESD, S Mostaghimi SAAESD, J Edelson SAAESD, J Jacobsen WAAESD, S Slack NCRA, D Reitzel CARET, M Hoffmann NERA, D Rossi NERA, Lee Sommers WAAESD, M Harrington WAAESD, Doug Lantange ECOP