

ESCOPE Communication and Marketing Committee
Conference Call Notes
June 1, 2004
10-11 am EST

Participating: Jerry Arkin (GA) Chair, Wendy Wintersteen (IA), Cameron Hackney (WV), Jim Spurling (CSREES), William Ravlin (OH), Ron Lacewell (TX), Colin Kaltenbach (AZ), Elbert Dickey (NB), Brian Meyer (IA), Ron Pardini (NM), Mary Duryea (FL), Tom Fretz (MD) NERA.

- I. Introductions: Brian Meyer, Director of Agriculture Communications, ISU was introduced. Brian has been working with Dr. Wally Huffman at ISU on the revisions to the Counterfactual Study (CFS) to produce the lay documents.
- II. Counterfactual Study: Fretz provided an overview of the history and current state of the CFS. General agreement that the CFS was initiated to counter arguments from OMB, Congress, and perhaps agencies that the “best research” was that which resulted from competitive funding sources. Study was conceived to demonstrate the impact of formula funds, and how to document their impact.

Arkin noted four key elements of the CFS as currently presented

- Emphasis on the stated returns on investment from formula funds
- Formula funds largely unchanged over time
- Changes to the formula distribution will benefit few, and harm many
- Agricultural productivity continues to increase in light of decreased funding

Overall assessment of the CFS papers - they do not yet hit the mark. Concern that they need more impactful examples, more contemporary examples.

- Is it possible to quantify the 56% rate of return figure? Can this be stated in real \$\$ terms?
- What is the target audience for the CFS papers? Who do we want to impact?
- How do we communicate the CFS?

Lacewell noted that the CFS papers are a good starting point, but are still using impact examples that are much too traditional. CFS papers are currently prepared are still to focused on “cows and plows”, but rather need to find success stories or impact statements that relate.

- Nutricuticals
- Health
- Environment
- West Nile Disease
- Rapid response / detection – BSE
- Restoration of Ecosystems

- Water
- Bioterrorism – In responding to the creation of new bioterrorism centers, noted that the multi-university teams of the winning proposals came from the LGU's, demonstrating our ability to be responsive with up to date, cutting edge information. Would not have been possible without the formula fund base. No formulas – no base to allow LGU's to be responsive.

More importantly, how do we use formula funds to improve health and welfare of all citizens? Is this too broad of an example? Too global?

Any revision of the CFS should result in a 1-pager, with bullets and impacts that relate to contemporary issues.

Ravlin – noted the OARDC Battelle Study on impacts. Jobs and health are created. Stress the impacts in terms of jobs, creation of wealth, and development of international markets, new valued added products. This is what the public relates to.

Duryea – Stressed the need for the revised CFS synopsis to be a 1-pager. Lots of punch, but not forgetting that formulas are an important part of the funding equation.

Dickey – noted that extension is part of the formula. Possible to stress responsive to weather related issues. Formulas provide us with the ability to respond.

Wintersteen – Current CFS papers do not capture the current crisis in funding that many have or are currently experiencing. Study data set only through 2000, yet many have experienced even greater declines in funding since 2000.

Kaltenbach – Need to stress that the formula funds are an investment in any revision of the CFS. Try to state any impact statements in hard \$\$ terms.

Duryea – possible second 1-pager to highlight rapid response of system to crisis issues. Possible topic for the future.

Spurling – CFS revisions should stress impacts that Congress and staff can relate to (that's why Congress likes special grants!)

B. Meyer – Suggested that those participating review the impact statements in the USDA impact portfolio. Requested that we get impacts as bullets, to him within two weeks. Forward to: bmeyer@iastate.edu

Timeline for completion of the revised CFS – late fall for use in the next federal funding cycle.

- III. Science on the Hill Exhibit – update. Science on the Hill is the responsibility of the Policy Board of Directors. Dean Cathy Woteki (ISU) will chair the Science on the Hill Committee. Exhibition date set for March 1, 2005. No decisions to date if the exhibit will have a thematic focus. Still under discussion. Space to be held for the Science Roadmap. More information to come.
- IV. Next meeting of the ESCOP Communication and Marketing Committee. Arkin suggested that the next meeting be a face-to-face in the fall of 2004. Possible September meeting in Washington DC. Fretz to survey the committee regarding September dates and availability. Informational: PBD /CARET to meet in DC September 11-15, 2004. September 16th suggested as possibility.

Agenda might include:

- Discussion and bringing the CFS to closure
- Meeting with staff from Congressional offices, OMB, etc. What is it you need from us – How can we help?
- Meeting with university governmental relations staff from selected states. Viewpoint from the Governmental relations staff.

Prepared June 2, 2004
Thomas A. Fretz