



North Central Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors

219th Meeting

Via Zoom, 8 am to 11 am, CT; 9 am to 12 noon ET

Tuesday, March 30, 2021

Meeting AGENDA, [MINUTES](#) below

Time (CT)	Agenda Item	Topic	Presenter(s)	Action Requested
8:00 am	1.0	Call to Order and Roll Call	George Smith, NCRA 2021 Chair	
	2.0	Approval of Fall 2020 Minutes: (https://www.ncra-saes.org/agendas-minutes)	George Smith	Approval
	3.0	Adoption of the Agenda	George Smith	Approval
8:10 am	4.0	Reading of the Resolutions	Shawn Donkin	Approval
8:20 am	5.0	Interim Actions of the Chair 5.1 NCRA Nominations for ESS Leadership Award 5.2 NCRA FY2022 Office Budget 5.3 NCRA Letter Sign-ons	George Smith	5.1 Presentation of the EC's recommendation/other nominations/vote to approve final candidate 5.2 Approval of the FY22 NCRA budget 5.3 For information
8:35 am	6.0	NIFA Update and Discussion Session	Parag Chitnis, Deb Hamernik	For information, open discussion

9:20 am	7.0	MRC Report and Recommendations Approval Votes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New/renewal multistate proposals • Midterm reviews • NC1100 FY21-26 Proposal and OTT Budget • NC Multistate Research Award Winner 	Hector Santiago, Chris Hamilton	Approval of MRC recommendations as presented
9:35 am	<i>Break – 10 min</i>			
9:45 am	8.0	Emerging Issues Multistate Project Discussion	George Smith, Hector Santiago	For discussion
10:30 am	9.0	NRSP-RC Report	Doug Buhler, Jeff Jacobsen	For information
10:35 am	10.0	NCRA Office 2020/21 Activities & Accomplishments	Jeff Jacobsen, Chris Hamilton	For information
10:45 am	11.0	Executive Session (Jeff, Chris, and other non-NCRA members log off)	NCRA Directors Only	Discussion session
11:00 am	<i>Adjourn</i>			

Future Meetings:

- Joint COPs Meeting, July 2021 (Virtual)
- NC Mini LGU Meeting, TBD (Virtual, hosted by University of MO)
- Fall ESS Meeting, September 26 to October 1, 2021, Squaw Valley Alpine Meadows, Olympic Valley, CA
- APLU Annual Meeting, November 2021, Dates and Location TBA
- Joint CARET/AHS Sessions, Dates in 2022 TBA, Washington, DC
- NCRA Spring Meeting 2022, March 28-30, Marriott Suites Oldtown Scottsdale, AZ

Meeting MINUTES for 3/30/2021

Attendees: Marshall Martin (Purdue, retired), Hector Santiago (UNL), George Smith (MSU), Joe Colletti (IA State), Deb Hamernik (NIFA), Shawn Donkin (Purdue), Bernie Engel (Purdue), Gary Pierzynski (OH State), Anne Dorrance (OH State), German Bollero (Univ IL), Bill Barker (UW-Madison), Archie Clutter (UNL), Shibu Jose (MU), Parag Chitnis (NIFA), Doug Buhler (MSU), Marty Draper (K-State), Greg Cuomo (UMN), Tala Awada (UNL), Frank Casey (NDSU), Jeff Jacobsen (NCRA), Chris Hamilton (NCRA, recorder)

Agenda Item	Topic	Notes	Action Taken
1.0	Call to Order and Roll Call	Chair Smith called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone for joining.	None, for information, see attendee list above.
2.0	Approval of Fall 2020 Minutes: (https://www.ncra-saes.org/agendas-minutes)	Chair Smith asked if anyone had any changes to the Fall 2020 minutes and that anyone voice any objections to approval. No objections were given and the minutes were approved.	Consensus was approved to use a modified approval process given virtual meeting. Fall 2020 NCRA meeting minutes approved as posted.
3.0	Adoption of the Agenda	Item 5.3 title changed to “NCRA Letter Sign Ons”	Agenda approved with the change noted.
4.0	Reading of the Resolutions	Shawn read the resolution of appreciation for Marshall Martin. The NCRA members on the call celebrated and thanked Marshall for all his service with the NCRA. Marshall thanked the group for their friendship, knowledge gain from interactions, and appreciated the collegial nature of NCRA over many years.	Resolution approved as read by the NCRA and is included in the minutes below.
5.0	Interim Actions of the Chair 5.1 NCRA Nominations for ESS Leadership Award 5.2 NCRA FY2022 Office Budget 5.3 NCRA Letter Sign-ons	5.1 George identified Deb Hamernik as our unanimous winner of the ESS Leadership Award. All were in strong agreement and no other nominations were brought forward. 5.2 NCRA FY2022 budget was discussed and approved as distributed. Unclear at this time if and when MSU compensation reductions due to C19 will be reversed. Chris will attend the LEEAD21 training program in 2021. Funds for this are available in our existing budget.	5.1 Deb Hamernik approved as the NC winner of the ESS Excellence in Leadership Award. 5.2 NCRA FY2022 office budget approved as distributed.

		<p>5.3 When letters come to Jeff for agriculture research advocacy sign-on by NCRA, he brings those to the attention of the NCRA EC and if that group approves, sign on occurs as the association, NCRA.</p>	<p>5.3 None, for information.</p>
6.0	NIFA Update and Discussion Session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parag thanked the group for inviting him to the meeting and gave a few NIFA updates. • Current administration’s budget is still unknown, but the science priorities are very important. The focus are pretty clear based on what’s been in the media: climate, economy, racial equity, serving disadvantaged populations, and workforce development. • Nomination for Deputy Secretary of Agriculture (Dr. Jewel Bronaugh) is now on the Hill for approval. She has strong ties to the Land-grant system and was a dean at West Virginia State. • The new NIFA director, Carrie Castille, has been engaged and responsive to LGUs requests and needs. • Deb: Training session being held today for reviewing plans of work. We expect to get these reviews done on time even with a limited number of NPLs at this time. • Q: Thoughts on the new administration’s priorities, especially climate change? A: We are putting together some NIFA teams to see what these priorities will look like and working with LGU researchers to fill knowledge gaps in these areas. • Q: Diversity, equity, and inclusion, how will this be integrated into NIFA priorities? A: We are looking at NIFA staff diversity and starting there, then 	<p>None, for information and discussion.</p>

		<p>extending efforts to existing funding programs as well as creating additional ones to underserved communities. For example, the current AFRI foundational program funding has been increased and some offer a partnership program with additional funds for 1862s that partner with underserved institutions. Please let us know if you are aware of other ways we can help and improve upon this effort.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill Barker thanked NIFA for the New Beginning for Tribal Students Programs (NBTS), but requested eliminating the match requirement, as it can be very difficult for minority serving institutions to achieve. • Q: How do you partner with non-LGU HSI (Hispanic Serving Institutions) working towards the new administration’s priorities: A: We support HSI agriculture program efforts, they don’t need to be LGUs to partner with NIFA. • Q: The need for more joint agency programs are needed, allowable costs, F&A, and matching requirements continue to be areas of concern for LGUs. Where is the Secretary of Ag on these issues? A: We’re in the early discussion phase of setting up a meeting between him and APLU leadership. Jeff will make sure that Doug Steele at APLU has all of these topics queued up for when the meeting takes place. • Greg mentioned that adding more 1994s to the McIntire Stennis program reduces support for existing Forestry programs. We don’t want to change the eligibility law, so increasing appropriations is needed. 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shibu: We're hearing about major changes in the Hatch proposal submission process, what's happening with this? A: We are working to streamline the process and reduce redundancy as much as possible in the new NIFA reporting system. We're still working on what this will look like and how it will work. Late May/early June is the expected rollout as of right now, so please continue submitting as you have been.• Please define what Hatch/umbrella project approvals look like. Parag: Our process now is to look at the existing law, then our current processes, as well as what's been added since then. We've been in touch with the research EDs and plan to speak with directors soon on what is really needed. Also, there's a need to better define criteria for NIFA review and if it's admin or scientific. AES offices want to know exactly what NIFA is looking for, so perhaps we could include in our internal AES reviews.• NIFA needs help from AES offices to eliminate the submission of projects that do not fall under the NIFA agriculture mission. Sometimes, proposals with a health or animal conservation focus come through and need to be rejected.• Q: Will there be USDA link to the Biden admin effort with infrastructure? Parag: we don't know yet what will be in the bill, nor have we provided input in this area. LGUs are invaluable for providing us this information, needs, etc., though. Many NCRA members have been directly involved with the infrastructure effort (ARIA) and how it touches on the Biden admin's priority areas.	
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<p>7.0</p>	<p>MRC Report and Recommendations Approval Votes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New/renewal multistate proposals • Midterm reviews • NC1100 FY21-26 Proposal and OTT Budget • NC Multistate Research Award Winner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hector called attention to the MRC brief included below with the requested action items, NC1100's proposal and 5-year business plan, and the NCERA137 nomination for the NC regional winner of the Excellence in Multistate Research Award. • Hector also indicated that each new/renewal project proposal was discussed robustly by the MRC during our 3/22/2021 meeting. • Jeff also mentioned the firmer MRC deadlines in place for submitting project proposals on 12/1. • Shawn suggested that when meetings are authorized, AAs should please call attention to the reporting requirements. • Bill Barker suggested that bolding the member names in the report Publications section is also very useful and should be encouraged. • Jeff: The NCRCD (NC Regional Center for Rural Development) RFA moved the Center from MSU to Purdue in 2020. The \$25,000 OTT funds are in addition to NIFA support and matched by NCCEA. Our \$25,000 is distributed/tracked via multistate project NC1100. • Hector and Marty briefly discussed NCERA137 and its nomination for the Multistate Award. Jeff/Chris will work with a K-State communications person and the identified technical committee members for polishing up the nomination for the national competition. Jeff described the polishing process and next steps for national submission. NCERA137 will also receive a certificate of award very soon from the NCRA. 	<p>All MRC recommendations were NCRA approved as distributed.</p>
<p>8.0</p>	<p>Emerging Issues Multistate Project Discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The initial proposal presented in the agenda briefs was developed by the NCRA Executive Committee, 	<p>The group discussed the presented proposal and</p>

		<p>because of many discussions on re-imagining multistate committees, to help the program be more impactful and better stimulate collaboration with some funding to accompany a few projects that match regional and national priorities. Currently, the focus is on climate, based on the Biden administration priority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Options B, C, and D came out of MRC discussions and would not need to be mutually exclusive from option A. Option A is a bit more flushed out than the others, since it's been discussed more thoroughly. • Mechanisms to assist committees to find each other and meet in a cross-disciplinary manner could be very useful. Climate change would be a great start for this effort. • Funding would initially come from the NCRA office carry-over funds at MSU. • The group engaged in open discussion on the proposal language, benefits, and potential options/outcomes should we support this proposal model. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There's a need to factor in the faculty effort required to get a multistate project approved. Not a lot of funds available, but a lot of time and effort required for proposal development, reporting, etc. ○ This is a good proposal, funding reasonable and seems to be worth the effort to apply. Recommend we stay with \$60,000 and not go lower. ○ Would matching fit into this model, maybe in the future? 	<p>agreed that the effort is worth pursuing further with a formal RFA. Frank Casey, Bill Barker, and Shibu Jose volunteered to develop the RFA with Jeff and Chris, for NCRA review and possible approval at the summer NCRA meeting.</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Is there a better way to improve finding collaborators across the system? NIMSS project search can be hard to find. ○ Could use this project to flush out collaborative efforts to enable our use of earmarks. ○ Should an emphasis be on major grant program applications, cross-disciplinary? ○ Team/relationship building is important to include in the RFA. Leading edge symposia, conferences? Maybe have it be more of a planning committee grant, rather than a research one. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● George asked if there is enough support for this program to move forward and request volunteers to flush out an RFA to discuss at the summer NCRA meeting. The group is supportive of continuing this effort and RFA development. Shibu, Bill, and Frank volunteered to help with RFA development. 	
9.0	NRSP-RC Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NRSP-RC committee only needs to evaluate the NRSP8 midterm review this year. The committee will meet via Zoom on June 2 and will then share its recommendations with the regions. ● Doug rotates off as NRSP-RC Chair effective 9/30/2021, but will remain on for a final year as a committee member. 	None, for information.
10.0	NCRA Office 2020/21 Activities & Accomplishments	Jeff and Chris highlighted a few items from their 2020 activities and accomplishments.	None, for information.
11.0	Executive Session (Jeff, Chris, and other non-NCRA members log off)	Jeff and Chris logged off for this portion of the call, allowing for the NCRA directors to discuss and conduct their annual review.	None, for discussion.
<i>Adjourn – Call adjourned at 12 noon CT</i>			

Item 4.0: Resolutions

Presenter: Shawn Donkin, NCRA Resolutions

NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION DIRECTORS

WHEREAS Marshall A. Martin, Ph.D., Professor of Agricultural Economics, Assistant Dean of Agriculture at Purdue University, and Senior Associate Director of the Indiana Agricultural Experiment Station has retired from Purdue University as of December 31, 2020 after completing 44 years of outstanding research, teaching, outreach, and administrative service,

WHEREAS Dr. Martin began his post-secondary education at Iowa State University and earned a B.S. in Agricultural Economics in 1966, and then served as Director and a teacher at the Instituto Rural de Montero, Montero-Santa Cruz, Bolivia where he taught vocational agriculture courses in animal nutrition, farm management, extension methods, crop production, soils, and community development and upon returning to the US earned an M.S. in Agricultural Economics from Purdue University.

WHEREAS Dr. Martin once again ventured abroad as a visiting graduate instructor in the Department of Applied Social Sciences in the Superior School of Agriculture, University of São Paulo, Piracicaba, São Paulo, Brazil where he also conducted research on Brazilian agricultural development as part of earning a Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from Purdue University in 1976,

WHEREAS Dr. Martin joined the faculty of Purdue University in Agricultural Economics in 1976 with a research, extension, and teaching appointment and pursued research in the area of U.S. agricultural policy, international trade, and technology assessment with special emphasis on pesticide use and biotechnology,

WHEREAS Dr. Martin has engaged in scholarly activity that has led to over 175 peer reviewed publications, invited papers, research bulletins, experiment station reports, extension publications, 6 book reviews, 4 book chapters, and 2 published books, that is coupled with the broad sharing of these works in English, Spanish, and Portuguese, and the education and development of over 50 graduate students,

WHEREAS Dr. Martin has been distinguished as a recipient of several awards including the Hovde Award of Excellence in Service to the Rural People of Indiana, induction into the Purdue University Book of Great Teachers, receipt of the Certificate of Distinction from the Purdue Agricultural Alumni Association, the Block "P" Award from the Purdue University Department of Bands, the Beck Hybrid's Beyond the Fence Award as a Friend of Indiana Agriculture, and the Special Boilermaker Award from the Purdue Alumni Association, just to highlight a few,

WHEREAS Dr. Martin has actively represented Purdue Agriculture and contributed to building stakeholder relationships with the Indiana Crop Improvement Association, Indiana Soybean Alliance, and the Indiana Corn Marketing Council, the Indiana Wine-Grape Council, and Agricultural Alumni Seed Improvement Association, Inc., the Indiana Pork Board and the University-Industry Consortium,

WHEREAS Dr. Martin provided leadership to the development of agricultural biotechnology by accepting, in 2000, the appointment by then Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman to the USDA Agricultural Biotechnology Advisory Committee and reappointment by Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman in 2001.

WHEREAS Dr. Martin provided excellent leadership to the NCRA as Chair in 2006, as chair of the North Central Region food and agricultural policy research committees NCT-118, NC-152, and NC-169, and as Administrative Advisor to the multistate research committees NCERA197, NC1034, and NCAC12,

WHEREAS Marshall is a thoughtful, caring, approachable, responsive, intelligent, kind, appreciative, exceptionally dependable, perceptive person and has many other quality characteristics too numerous to mention, all which have led him to be an outstanding person and leader,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE RESOLVED on this day of March 30, 2021, the NCRA does hereby extend their sincere gratitude for his many years of friendship and invaluable contributions to the North Central Region, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that an original of this resolution be provided to Dr. Martin and that a copy be filed as part of the official minutes of this meeting.



Item 5.2: FY2022 NCRA Office Budget and State Assessments

Presenters: Jeff, Chris

Action Requested: Approval of FY2022 Budget

Please note:

- There is no change in the requested FY2022 total office assessment from FY2021 or FY2020.
- State individual assessments for FY2022 have been adjusted slightly from 2020 based on the updated 3-year rolling average of received Hatch Multistate.

NCRA FY2022 Proposed Budget with Working FY2021

INCOME				
	<u>FY2020</u>	<u>FY2021</u>		<u>FY2022</u>
Description	Final	Budget	YTD***	Budget[#]
State Assessments	483,849	483,849	483,849	483,849
Account Carryover (MSU Actual)	47,431	96,463	96,463	tbd
TOTAL INCOME	531,280	580,312	580,312	483,849

EXPENSE				
	<u>FY2020</u>	<u>FY2021</u>		<u>FY2022</u>
Description	Final	Budget	YTD	Budget

NCRA				
Regional Initiatives	-	-		
	-			
NCRA Subtotal	-	-	-	

MICHIGAN STATE				
Executive Director Salary*	217,464	217,464	210,214	208,765
Fringe**	51,735	56,878	46,394	46,074
Office Operating	1,768	3,000	961	3,000
Travel	19,694	35,000	95	35,000
Training	-	-	-	-
MSU Admin/Service Fees (\$5/month as of FY20)	60	60	40	60
MSU Subtotal	290,721	312,402	257,704	292,899

U of WISCONSIN				
Assistant Director Salary****	82,339	84,638	83,387	86,032
Fringe***	33,204	34,702	34,189	35,273
Office Operating	2,969	3,000	415	3,000
Travel	3,177	12,000	60	12,000
Training*****	174	500	9,750	500
Meeting Support	-	2,000	-	2,000
UW Admin/Service Fees (now 5% CALS, 7% UW)	14,601	18,358	17,760	16,657
UW Subtotal	136,463	155,198	145,560	155,462

TOTAL EXPENSE	427,184	467,599	403,264	448,361
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BALANCE	104,096	112,713	177,048	35,488
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*MSU Salary (and related fringe) temporarily reduced (by 4%) to \$208,765 as of 9/1/2020.

**MSU FY20 fringe 26.155%, FY21 ~22.07%

***UW estimated fringe: ~ 41% (includes monthly UW term leave fee).

****UW FY20 and 21 less than budgeted due to furlough days taken for both FYs.

*****LEAD21 invoice for Chris' training.

#FY22 budget still TBA, so we're using FY21's numbers as placeholders.

NCRA Accounts at MSU and UW

Account at MSU	FY20	FY21	FY22
MSU Starting Balance	47,431	96,463	129,461
MSU Income	483,849	483,849	483,849
MSU Budgeted Expenses	290,721	312,402	292,899
MSU Budgeted Expenses + UW invoice	434,816	450,851	448,361
Estimated MSU Ending Balance/Carryover	70,703	129,461	164,949
Actual MSU Ending Balance/Carryover*	96,463	tbd	tbd
Account at UW	FY20	FY21	FY22
UW Starting Balance	9,117	16,749	-
UW Income	-	-	-
UW Expenses	136,463	155,198	155,462
Actual UW Ending Balance/Carryover	16,749	tbd	-
<i>UW Operating Reserve (3 mo)</i>	<i>35,000</i>	<i>35,000</i>	<i>35,000</i>
<i>Estimated UW Invoice to MSU**</i>	<i>142,000</i>	<i>138,449</i>	<i>155,462</i>
<i>Actual UW Invoice to MSU</i>	<i>144,095</i>	<i>tbd</i>	<i>tbd</i>

*We have now included in the FY2020 MSU carryover all of the budgeted MSU fees that were never charged in 2017-2020.

**UW will invoice MSU mid-quarter for actual expenses (\$33,792 in August 2020; \$33,792 in November 2020; \$33,792 in February 2021, and ?? in May 2021 to cover final 2021 expenses). This number is lower than previously presented due to fewer FY2020 expenses and thus more carryover than originally budgeted.

FY2022 NCRA Assessment Distribution by State						
State	60% State Equal Share Assessments	40% Proportional to State's Share of MRF*		FY20 Assessment (+\$50,000, Salary, fringe, fees) Approved 4/2019	FY21 Assessment	PROPOSED FY22 Assessment
Illinois	\$24,192	9.88%	\$19,119	\$43,351	\$43,351	\$43,312
Indiana	\$24,192	8.33%	\$16,114	\$40,339	\$40,339	\$40,306
Iowa	\$24,192	10.38%	\$20,090	\$43,938	\$43,938	\$44,283
Kansas	\$24,192	7.65%	\$14,814	\$39,038	\$39,038	\$39,007
Michigan	\$24,192	8.77%	\$16,967	\$41,194	\$41,194	\$41,159
Minnesota	\$24,192	8.74%	\$16,909	\$41,136	\$41,136	\$41,101
Missouri	\$24,192	7.80%	\$15,105	\$39,329	\$39,329	\$39,298
Nebraska	\$24,192	8.86%	\$17,141	\$41,369	\$41,369	\$41,334
North Dakota	\$24,192	5.88%	\$11,382	\$35,584	\$35,584	\$35,575
Ohio	\$24,192	9.47%	\$18,324	\$42,555	\$42,555	\$42,517
South Dakota	\$24,192	5.93%	\$11,479	\$35,695	\$35,695	\$35,672
Wisconsin	\$24,192	8.32%	\$16,094	\$40,320	\$40,320	\$40,287
TOTAL	\$290,309	100.00%	\$193,540	\$483,849	\$483,849	\$483,849
*Proportion of State share of MRF based upon rolling 3-year actual average (FFY18-20) as provided by NIFA. NRSP and NC off-the-top allocations (IA, MI, NE, WI) not included.						

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Item 8: MRC Report

Presenter: Hector Santiago, MRC Chair 2021

Actions Needed: NCRA approval of the MRC seconded motions described in the items below.

MRC FY21 Members: Hector Santiago, MRC Chair; Bill Barker; German Bollero; Bernie Engel; Anne Dorrance; Jeff Jacobsen, ex-officio; Chris Hamilton (recorder)

On Tuesday, March 22, the NCRA MRC met via Zoom to discuss reviews of new/renewal NC multistate projects, NC projects up for midterm review, the new NC_temp1100 proposal and 5-year budget for the funds going to the newly relocated NCRCD (North Central Regional Rural Development) at Purdue University, our NC nomination for the ESS Excellence in Multistate Research Award, the proposed Emerging Issues NC Grant program, and NRSP8's midterm review. The latter two items will be discussed in more detail as separate NCRA spring meeting agenda items.

Based on those discussions, the MRC respectfully requests the following actions from the NCRA membership:

1. [New/Renewal Projects](#): **Action requested:** Approval of all the new/renewal project recommendations listed in the table below.
2. [Midterm Reviews](#) : **Action requested:** Approval of all the new/renewal project recommendations listed in the table below. All projects are recommended for continuation.
3. [NC1100 FY21-26 Proposal and OTT Budget](#): **Action requested:** Approval of the MRC recommendation to approve the NC_temp1100 proposal with minor revision and the NC_temp1100 5-year \$25,000 OTT NC regional trust budget as presented.
4. [NC Multistate Research Award Submission, NCERA137](#). **Action requested:** Approval of the recommendation to have the NCERA137 submission serve as the NC winner of the Excellence in Multistate Research award and be forwarded on as our regional nomination to the national award.

1. New/Renewal Proposals:

MRC Name	Project/Proposal #	Title	NIMSS Proposal Link with Full MRC Review Text Under "Reviews"	MRC Recommendation
Hector, Jeff	NC1100 (NC_temp1100)	A Systems Perspective to Community Resilience	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18833	Proposal: Defer approval pending minor revision. Would like to see more information on how NC1100 will dovetail with other related regional projects, along with the minor housekeeping issues identified in Jeff's NIMSS review. Budget/Business Plan:
Hector	NC1029 (NC_temp1209)	Applied Animal Behavior and Welfare	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18776	Defer approval pending minor revision.
Hector	NC1192 (NC_temp1192)	An integrated approach to control of bovine respiratory diseases	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18831	Defer approval pending minor revision.
Hector	NCERA219 (NCERA_temp219)	Swine Production Management to Enhance Animal Welfare	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18800	Approve.
German	NC_temp1212 (new committee, was NCDC236)	Exploring the Plant Phenome in Controlled and Field Environments	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18782	Defer approval pending minor revision.

German	NC1195 (NC_temp1195)	Enhancing nitrogen utilization in corn based cropping systems to increase yield, improve profitability and minimize environmental impacts	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18786	Approve.
German	NC1196 (NC_temp1196)	Food System Interventions and Collaborations to Improve Food Security, Diet Quality and Environmental Sustainability	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18791	Disapprove.
German	NC1203 (NC_temp1203)	Lipids In Plants: Improving and Developing Sustainability of Crops ("LIPIDS of Crops")	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18796	Approve.
Bill	NC_temp1213 (new committee)	Sources and fate of ammonia across the landscape	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18780	Approve, but carefully reevaluate for collaboration and coordination with NC1187 at midpoint.
Bill	NC1190 (NC_temp1190)	Catalysts for Water Resources Protection and Restoration: Applied Social Science Research	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18775	Approve.
Bill	NCCC170 (NCCC_temp170)	Research Advances in Agricultural Statistics	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18780	Defer approval pending edit to successfully demonstrate efficacy of multistate funding above and beyond that offered by other collaborative venues such as professional meetings for statisticians.
Bill	NCERA59 (NCERA_temp59)	Soil Organic Matter: Formation, Function and Management	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18793	Defer approval pending edit to expressly demonstrate

				multistate-committee-enhanced collaboration between members.
Bernie	NC_temp1211 (new committee, was NCDC235)	Precision Management of Animals for Improved Care, Health, and Welfare of Livestock and Poultry	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18777	See MRC review in NIMSS for suggestions on project improvement as it goes along. Approve.
Bernie	NC1034 (NC_temp1034)	Impact Analyses and Decision Strategies for Agricultural Research	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18787	See MRC review in NIMSS for suggestions on project improvement as it goes along. Approve
Bernie	NC1194 (NC_temp1194)	Nanotechnology and Biosensors	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18797	Approve.
Bernie	NCCC65 (NCCC_temp65)	Indicators of Social Change in the Marketplace: Producers, Retailers and Consumers	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18806	Approve.
Bernie	NCERA101 (NCERA_temp101)	Controlled Environment Technology and Use	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18794	Approve.
Anne	NC1030 (NC_temp1030)	Sustainable and Resilient Systems: Transformative Response to Disruptions by Families, Businesses, and Communities	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18799	Approve.
Anne	NC1193 (NC_temp1193)	Promotion of Health and Nutrition in Diverse Communities of Emerging Adults	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18802	Approve pending minor revision to consist of replacing the disallowed, exclusive text in the governance section.

Anne	NC1197 (NC_temp1197)	Practical Management of Nematodes on Corn, Soybeans and Other Crops of Regional Importance	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18774	Defer approval pending minor revision.
Anne	NCERA222 (NCERA_temp222)	Integrated Pest Management	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18823	Defer approval: Expand on role with North Central IPM Center – and ensure that all members are listed in this NCERA committee.
Jeff	NCCC212 (NCCC_temp212)	Small Fruit and Viticulture Research	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18795	Approve.
Jeff	NCERA221 (NCERA_temp221)	Turfgrass and the Environment	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18783	Defer approval pending minor revision.
Jeff	NCERA13 (NCERA_temp13)	Soil Testing and Plant Analysis	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18801	Defer approval pending requested revision.

2. Midterm Reviews:

MRC Name	Project/Proposal #	Title	NIMSS Proposal Link with Full MRC Review Text Under “Reviews”	Midterm Review Comments
Chris for all	NC2172	Behavioral economics and the intersection of healthcare and financial decision making across the lifespan	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18455	Good activity and reporting present in NIMSS. Good AA review. Recommend continuation.

	NC2042	Management Systems to Improve the Economic and Environmental Sustainability of Dairy Enterprises	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18446	Good activity noted in NIMSS, but 2018 report was just a list of station reports. AA was asked to ensure future reporting is collaborative and multistate in focus, not a copy/paste from REEport. Excellent NCAC12 review, good NCAC6 review. Would like to see more collaborative efforts.
	NC1170	Advanced Technologies for the Genetic Improvement of Poultry	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18416	Good activity noted in NIMSS, but previous reports are mainly lists of station reports. AA asked to ensure future reporting is collaborative and multistate in focus, not a copy/paste from REEport. Excellent AA review. Excellent NCAC6 review. Recommend continuation.
	NC213	Marketing and Delivery of Quality Grains and BioProcess Coproducts	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18441	Only one meeting and report in NIMSS, so Chris reached out to AA to check on activity on 10/28. 2020 meeting cancelled due to C19, but Exec Comm meeting monthly. Excellent AA review. Good NCAC1 review, good NCAC12 review. Recommend continuation.
	NC3169	EFNEP Related Research, Program Evaluation and Outreach	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18456	Assigned midterm review on 9/8. Good activity and reporting present in NIMSS. Recommend continuation.

	NC2040	Metabolic Relationships in Supply of Nutrients for Lactating Cows	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18450	Good activity noted in NIMSS, but previous reports are mainly lists of station reports. AA asked to ensure future reporting is collaborative and multistate in focus, not a copy/paste from REEport. AA review was fair and he's in communication with the committee regarding reporting improvements to include collaborations. NCAC2 and NCAC6 reviews were similar. Recommend continuation.
	NC1207	Collaborative for Research on Food, Energy, and Water Education	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18454	Only one meeting and report in NIMSS, so Chris reached out to AA to check on activity on 10/28. Meeting canceled due to C19, but annual report was submitted to NIMSS. Good AA and excellent NCAC24 reviews. Recommend continuation.
	NCCC308	Nutrition and Management of Feedlot Cattle to Optimize Performance, Carcass Value and Environmental Compatibility	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18449	Excellent AA review. Only one meeting and report in NIMSS, so Chris reached out to AA to check on activity on 10/28. They were sidetracked by C19 and will meet virtually May 2021. NCAC2 review concurs with Chris' in that they need to show more linkages/collaborations and better reporting. NCAC6 review was excellent. Reevaluate at renewal time. Recommend continuation.

	NCCC307	Biochemistry and Genetics of Plant-Fungal Interactions	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18459	Excellent AA review, activity, and reporting in NIMSS. Good NCAC14 review. Really pleased with this committee's direction. Recommend continuation.
	NCERA210	Improving the management and effectiveness of cooperatively owned business organizations	https://www.nimss.org/projects/18458	Good activity and reporting present in NIMSS. Good NCAC12 review. Recommend continuation.

NCERA137 Multistate Research Award Nomination – Cover Sheet

Nominating Region: NC

Nominator: Martin Draper **E-mail:** maddr@ksu.edu

Co-Nominator: Greg Cuomo **E-mail:** cuomogi@umn.edu

Project or Committee Number and Title: NCERA-137

Technical Committee Chair: Darcy Telenko **E-mail:** dtelenko@purdue.edu

Administrative Advisor: Martin Draper **E-mail:** maddr@ksu.edu

Project Summary (noting the following):

Issue, problem or situation addressed (5%) – Soybeans were grown on 75-90 M acres annually over the last five years in the US. NCERA137 Soybean Disease Committee data indicated that losses can reach \$60/A (2017 data). Collaboratively, committee participants monitor soybean disease development, identify anomalies, and coordinate/prioritize research; directing science-based information to soybean breeders, the U.S. agriculture industry and government agencies. Rapid information exchange on current and emerging pathogens mitigates losses and improves producer and industry profitability. The committee coordinates multistate research and extension, with improved germplasm/varieties and integrated pest management (IPM) programs in mind to enhance the soybean profitability while protecting the environment. In recent years, this committee also improved coordination by absorbing two other soybean disease committees (NCERA 200 and NCERA 208), improving integration.

- **Objectives (5%)** - NCERA 137 is a highly responsive committee that drives Extension and research outcomes on issues identified by key stakeholders that actively engage with the committee. United Soybean Board (USB) and the North Central Soybean Research Program (NCSRP - <https://www.ncsrp.com/>) research coordinators regularly attend and support the meeting. The committee's objectives are: **1)** Foster collaborative research and information exchange on new and emerging soybean diseases among soybean pathology scientists and soybean breeders and entomologists; **2)** Coordinate soybean yield loss estimates caused by diseases across the soybean producing region; **3)** Compare ecology, epidemiology and management data on soybean diseases; **4)** Improve knowledge transfer about soybean diseases and their management to researchers, Extension personnel, farmers and agribusinesses, and; **5)** Continue to monitor and share information for new or reemerging pathogens of soybean in the North Central Region and develop appropriate responses to their emergence.

The committee directly coordinates **soybean industry identified needs** through USB and the North Central Soybean Research Project (NCSRP). This relationship has developed over the years to the point where USB and NCSRP often provide funding mechanisms for the expanded collaborative work that is envisioned by the NCERA 137 committee. This relationship keeps the individual committee members in a close relationship with their individual state check-off qualified state soybean boards (QSSBs). That collaboration has resulted in a major effort on soybean cyst nematode, **SCN** – “Beat the Pest. Take the Test. Ver. II,” and further emphasizes the monitoring of new and emerging diseases. The SCN project reprised a novel program that initially ran from 1997-2001 and addresses the largest single cause of soybean yield loss nationally. Over time, the commodity check-off programs and the committee have also collaborated on seedling disease, sudden death syndrome (**SDS**), **Phytophthora** root and stem rot, **charcoal rot**, and **white mold projects**, which represent the vast majority of the disease losses in the crop.

- **Accomplishments (40%) - Outputs** – The team has had several successful collaborative products including: Yield loss documentation, Frogeye leafspot/Cercospora leafspot monitoring; Cercospora fungicide resistance monitoring, and; ongoing soybean rust monitoring.

Yield loss documentation. Soybean farmers lose \$1.5 billion annually to fungal pathogens that cause foliar diseases. Farmers increasingly implemented fungicides to control foliar diseases. As a result, many pathogens have developed fungicide resistance. Expanding on the fungicide resistance example noted above, committee members have worked together to identify and develop diagnostic tools that can be used to determine fungicide resistance in pathogen populations, addressing Frogeye leaf spot resistance to fungicides based on sampling from 300 counties across 19 states; Septoria brown spot resistance to fungicide across four states, and; Target Spot resistance to fungicide from two states where it is problematic. Through collaborative outreach efforts, researchers increased awareness of fungicide resistance. Knowing which diseases have developed resistance to fungicide has led to

improved **integrated pest management (IPM)** practices, which include using resistant varieties, cultural practices, and smarter fungicide selection. These IPM practices have improved foliar disease management in soybean production and save the farmer and industry millions of dollars. Soybean rust continues to be the most damaging disease of soybeans in several Gulf South states. While the *Cercospora* diseases were traditionally limited to southern soybean production areas, they have moved steadily northward as a result of climate change and resistance to commonly used fungicides, especially as fungicides have become more widely accepted in the soybean production system.

One product from collaborative work with the committee is the epidemiological decision support product **White Mold ‘Sporecaster’**. This weather-based model-driven tool assesses the risk of *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum* spore production in soybean fields. It was screened and validated in NCERA-137 multi-state trials. ‘Sporecaster’ is available to the public as a free download for iOS or Android since May 2018. A companion app is now also available, **Sporebuster**, which calculates economic return on investment on deploying a white mold fungicide. The American Society of Agronomy (ASA) granted the Extension Education Community Educational Award for digital decision aids to ‘Sporecaster’ in 2018 and ‘Sporebuster’ in 2019.

Outcomes – Knowledge transfer. Yield losses due to soybean diseases cost millions of dollars to the industry each year and knowing which diseases are impacting soybean yields is a challenge. NCERA-137 members are major contributors to the soybean content on the **Crop Protection Network (CPN)** (<https://cropprotectionnetwork.org/crops/soybeans>). CPN hosts content from multi-state and international specialists. The team collaborated to develop an interactive tool to assist soybean farmers to determine the potential yield losses from disease in their fields. This information can be used to identify changes and assess disease risks over time. For example, the average loss from frogeye leaf spot in Midwestern states has increased 3,000 percent: 1996-2000: losses were ~460,000 bushels/year (\$0.04/ac); 2014-2018: losses were ~15.7 million bushels/year (\$2.06/ac). This tool will help farmers, scientists, breeders, government, and educators prioritize disease management, research, policy, and educational efforts regarding soybean economically important soybean disease. For more information, visit <https://loss.cropprotectionnetwork.org/>.

Behavioral change. Monitoring data and loss estimates are widely used by Extension specialists across the region. This information helps drive new research objectives and grower education. As of last spring, **Sporecaster** had been downloaded over 3,000 times from the app stores. The app averaged 600-800 users per day during the peak season for the disease in 2020.

A **new root and stem disease**, identified by members of this committee is **taproot decline**, caused by (*Xylaria* sp.). Currently it is focused in the southern United States, but where it occurs it has led to losses as great as 30% in some research trials. Committee members are evaluating different soybean varieties, seed treatments and fungicides to find management tactics. So far, no commercially available soybean varieties seem to be resistant to the pathogen and seed treatments do not appear to provide control or benefit yield. There does seem to be some promise with in-furrow fungicide treatments and the committee continues to research methods for comprehensive and effective integrated management practices.

Impacts (actual or anticipated) – **Information exchange** seems like an average impact, but a close community in this committee leads to year-round communication. Frogeye leafspot appeared to be expanding its range and with diminished fungicides control. The committee responded with a nationwide study of disease incidence and fungicide resistance. Likewise, the committee constantly compares data from ecology, epidemiology and management of soybean disease studies to improve knowledge transfer about soybean disease biology and management for research, Extension, farmers and agribusinesses. That drives collaborative research efforts.

Yield loss estimates have been a long term project that was once coordinated by one individual in Missouri. That project existed largely outside the committee, but relied on data from committee members. When that individual retired, NCERA-137 picked up the survey and continued the publication. These estimates guide research directions and are viewed favorably by check-off boards that fund local and collaborative research (<https://doi.org/10.1094/PHP-RS-16-0066>). NCERA137 reported 36 publications in the last two years of the previous iteration of the committee and 61 research publication in the first year of the new iteration of the committee.

In 2020 the committee hosted the **MRF Impacts** writer to conduct an impacts assessment workshop. That report is posted at: <https://www.mrfimpacts.org/single-post/managing-soybean-diseases-ncera-137-2014-2019>. They note the following accomplishments, focusing on the performance period ending in 2019: 1) **Increased soybean yields** and enhanced sustainability of soybean production; 2) Provided *unbiased, science-based* information and tools to the agricultural community, **raised awareness** of issues and **increased use** of effective solutions. - A fungicide efficacy table created by group members reached over 98,000 clients in 18 states in 2014; 3) New knowledge and tools helped *detect and monitor diseases* and **prevented serious losses**; 4) *Cost-effective* control options **reduced losses for growers** and **kept costs flow for consumers**. - Their fungicide efficacy table reached over 98,000 clients in 18 states in 2014; 5) Research findings and new alternative products led to more *judicious* use of chemical pesticides and **decreased human an environmental health risks**.

- **Added-value and synergistic activities across mission areas (30%)**

As follows: *Multi-disciplinary activities* – committee activities have coordinated with soybean breeding programs and assisted in identifying effective disease resistance genes. *Multi-functional integrated activities* – ERA committees are defined by integration of research and Extension. The committee is skilled at maintaining that association. Members often have split appointments. Feedback drives Extension and research activities, and collaborative projects that connect to stakeholder groups to improve their relevance. *Additional partnerships, associations or collaborations* - USB and NCSRP regularly participate and industry has also partnered.

- **Evidence of multi-institutional and leveraged funding with examples of sources (15%)**

The committee has an exceptional relationship with the soybean check-off programs. Over the years the committee has the following collaborations: The Mid-South Soybean Board partnered with USB to fund Cercospora disease tracking and resistance; The NCSRP funds several projects annually through the NC states pooling a portion of their checkoff funds to build collaborations across the region. Currently, six of 14 projects funded by NCSRP address diseases that are largely linked to the issues identified by NCERA-137. Consequently, NCSRP funds reach beyond the NC states; The USB traditionally funded basic collaborative research in genetics and molecular biology, but now funds production research, including disease concerns; The NCSRP and USB have offset annual meeting costs, eliminating the need for meeting registrations by the participants, and public breeding and disease studies to discover mechanisms/genes that confer resistance to nematodes, diseases and plant pests, particularly soil-borne root infecting diseases.

Participating institutions and units (5%)

The committee is represented by participants from 18 states - AR, DE, IL (3), IN, IA, KS, KY (2), LA, MI, MN (2), MS, MO, ND, OH, SD, TN, VA, WI; in three regions – NC, NE, S. The participants address multi-state, multi-institutional and multifunctional representation.

Participants:

Arkansas -	Arkansas Cooperative Extension	Travis Faske
Delaware -	University of Delaware	Allison Koehler
Illinois -	University of Illinois	Youfu Xhao, Santiago Mideros
	Illinois Cooperative Extension	Nathan Kleczewski
Indiana -	Purdue University	Darcy Telenko
Iowa -	Iowa Cooperative Extension	Daren Mueller
Kansas -	Kansas State University	Chris Little
Kentucky -	University of Kentucky	Aadra Kachroo, Carl Bradley
Louisiana -	Louisiana State University	Trey Price
Michigan -	Michigan State University	Marty Chilvers
Minnesota -	University of Minnesota	Dean Malvick and Jim Kurle
Mississippi -	Mississippi State University	Tom Allen
Missouri -	University of Missouri	Kaitlyn Bissonnette
North Dakota -	North Dakota State University	Sam Markell
Ohio -	Ohio State University	Anne Dorrance, Feng Qu
South Dakota -	South Dakota State University	Febina Mathew
Tennessee -	University of Tennessee	Heather Young
Virginia -	VPI & SU (Virginia Tech)	Hillary Mehl
Wisconsin -	University of Wisconsin	Damon Smith

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Item 8.0: Emerging Issues Multistate Grant Program Discussion

Presenters: George Smith, Hector Santiago

Action Requested: For Discussion

NCRA OPTIONS TO ENHANCE THE MULTISTATE RESEARCH PORTOLIO

(FOR DISCUSSION)

Option A -- North Central Director Multistate Research Award (example of RFA)

The 12-state North Central Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors (NCRA) manages a portfolio of multistate research (Extension and teaching) projects with diverse priority areas that stimulate collaborative, value-added, coordinated, synergistic research-led projects. Once operational, these 5-year projects methodically and incrementally advance science and education across NC and participating states. Faculty lead projects with other institutions, state and federal agencies, countries, and the private sector. Most projects submit multiple project renewals over many cycles.

To further increase national impact and stimulate a higher level of collaborative research across institutions, NCRA directors have agreed, as a pilot, to have one-two focused, high quality, and action-oriented research projects that will have immediate impact in up to two years. In addition, projects must have *true collaborations* that *synergize activities across participating states* rather than singular independent efforts that are merely compiled. The existing 500-series of multistate projects would be efficient and appropriate for this application given the use of Hatch Multistate Funds. The thematic focus for this current round is on **climate change**. Proposals will be funded up to \$60,000 per year with a maximum of two years for a single project **or** could be up to \$30,000 per year for two years for two projects provided from NC Hatch Multistate funds. At the end of the project, a formal project presentation will be given to NC directors. Examples of action-oriented results may include: successful team competitive grant submissions, development of new technologies/methodologies, surveys or other compilations leading to databases supporting grant submissions, seed grants, SBIR projects, and so on. Project requirements will include:

- 1) Two-page pre-proposal **or** four-page proposal.
- 2) Direct involvement of at least four North Central region states and others.
- 3) Proposal format
 - a. Title
 - b. Amount Requested and Duration
 - c. Contact(s) and Involved NC states (not counted in the two/four pages)
 - d. Challenges to be Addressed and Project Justification
 - e. Collaborative Approaches
 - f. Action-oriented Results and Impacts

NOTE: Budget expenditures would align with federal Hatch Multistate practices. After expending NCRA reserves for the first two years, NCRA would need to decide what the future of this program and what the assessment mechanism would be. NCRA members would be equal partners in this endeavor at \$10,000 per year (total of \$120,000), with the number of projects

determined by the 'up to' amount and duration. Ideally, this program would create staggered projects with 3-4 active per year at any one time. Funds would initially be from the NCRA account at MSU, given the reserves, then if continued would be part of the regional off-the-top calculation. Overall management will be from the ED office at MSU.

Options B, C and D would expend existing NCRA reserves at MSU with the duration tbd, yet would be multiple years.

Option B – Multistate Enhancement Award

Annually, provide a \$5,000 (or \$tbd) award to the Regional Excellence in Multistate Research award winner to enhance committee priorities. Expenditures would align with federal Hatch Multistate practices. Given current reserves this recognition would enable awards to be made for many years. As a point of reference, the national award winner receives \$15,000.

Option C – Support to Accelerate Adoption and Behavior Change Impacts from NC Projects

Based upon recent discussions with the NCRA MRC, the use, application and impact from findings from our NC research portfolio projects could be stronger. Create a mechanism(s) to facilitate the engagement of social scientists with priority NC multistate projects to strategically enhance research results through improved understanding of stakeholders and their pro and con decisions toward adoption of new knowledge or improved practices. This concept needs to be flushed out more thoroughly!

Option D – Support for Joint Multistate Committee Meetings

The processes and procedures from multistate research committees are well-described in regional and national guidelines. Over time as the portfolio of multistate projects changes in terms of focus and overall scope, added value may be found if multiple committees would occasionally meet together to synergize and grow collaborations across other groups. This supplemental support to enable joint meetings would occur sporadically across the region, with an RFA process, for many years dependent upon the number and amount of awards.

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Item 10.0: NCRA Office 2020/2021 Summary of Activities and Accomplishments

Presenters: Jeff, Chris

Action Requested: For information/Discussion During Executive Session

Jeff Jacobsen, NCRA Executive Director

1. NCRA ACTIVITIES (many with Chris)

- Participate in monthly Executive Committee calls and biweekly COVID19 calls. Calls, Zoom meetings and emails with Chris. Monthly reports by the MSU financial staff enable the AD and ED to reconcile the budget across the NCRA accounts. Develop three NCRA meeting agendas and the NCRA FY2021 budget all vetted through the Executive Committee.
- Integrated elements of the NCRA Plan in regular meetings and future activities.
- Participated with the MRC, NCRA multistate research award and NCRA Leadership award processes. Provided NCRA feedback through the MRC Chair to successful regional nominations and created a NCRA Certificate Award for our top regional multistate project. Work with a state-level communications expert to refine the NC multistate research award nomination to be more competitive nationally.
- Multistate Committees -- NCAC1 Crop and Soil Research, NCERA222 Integrated Pest Management, NC1187 The Chemical and Physical Nature of Particulate Matter Affecting, Air Water and Soil Quality, National Executive Director and Administrative Committee member and NCRA MRC. NC AES position on the NC Regional Aquaculture Center (NCRAC).
- NRSP1 as NCRA representative and lead AA. Chris Hamilton is the NIMSS lead. Defacto Executive Committee (now) with Keith Owens, Jeff Jacobsen and Rick Rhodes for Sara Delheimer and Faith Peppers (NIFA liaison). Evolved the former title of Impact Writer to Program Coordinator given change in expertise and activities. In 2021, a renewal proposal will be developed in conjunction with the AAs, Chris Hamilton, Sara Delheimer and Clemson University.
- Worked on the NC Boot Camp Planning Committee and subgroups for 2020 training (pushed to 2021). This is a joint NCEA and NCRA program. NCRA participants: George Smith, Marty Draper, Tala Awada, Jeanette Thurston, Jeff Jacobsen and Chris Hamilton. In 2021 based upon past participant feedback, we will provide contract speakers on priority topics targeted to past Boot Camp Cohorts and prospective new participants utilizing residual funds from past Boot Camps.
- Successfully pitched the concept of LGU professionals from selected 1862, 1890 and 1994 NC Institutions engaging with NIFA in Kansas City, MO when unit staffing reaches a critical mass. These new NIFA employees likely have not engaged with LGUs, nor understand the implications of what they do at NIFA and how it impacts operations at LGUs. Most importantly, all (LGU and NIFA) need to restart relationship building in order to build quality programs on both sides and, if not more important with director offices, trust and identification of key leaders throughout the organization. Over the course of several days, across formal and informal sessions, NC professionals and the NC EDs (Robin and Jeff) will engage with NIFA. The first programmatic connector will be the Office of Grants and Financial Grant Management (OGFM). This has been coined **LGU2U** and is to be conducted with Robin Shepard. As capacity grows at NIFA, this effort will

likely lead to reciprocal visits (when travel is possible) by NIFA staff to NC LGUs as well as joint training efforts. Currently, virtual training is the approach.

- Co-initiated the recruitment, review and selection processes for the NC Regional Center for Rural Development (NCRCRD) with Robin Shepard, joint Executive Committees, NCRA and NCCEA directors, search committee, NIFA, and technical committee. Ultimately, led to the award of the NCRCRD to Purdue University.
- Per the request of Doug Steele, APLU VP FANR, we (Robin and Jeff) contacted NC AHS, ECOP and ESCOP Executive Committees for nominees for the NC AHS members to serve as the next Chair Elect, then Chair of the BAA PBD.
- Created a DRAFT version of a NCRA-funded multistate project proposal based upon NC Executive Committee discussions. To be considered at the NCRA 2021 spring meeting.

2. NATIONAL ACTIVITIES (many with Chris)

- New Beginning for Tribal Students, NIFA Panel Manager (*inaugural program*).
- Tribal Research Area of Expertise and NIFA Tribal Extension Special Emphasis, NIFA Panel Manager.
- National Research Support Program (NRSP) Review Committee and NRSP Guidelines rewrite and review (*major undertaking*). Invested significant amount of time understanding and navigating the National Plant Germplasm system network with a particular focus on NRSP6. New NRSP Guidelines were approved by SAES directors at the 2020 Annual Meeting.
- Worked with the ESS Finance Committee Task Force to create an ESS Financial Investment Policy for ESS. This would provide guidelines for investments via moderately conservative (lower risk) approaches in conjunction with APLU, TD Wealth Management and a permanent committee associated with the BLC to manage ESS financial resources (\$600,000). ESS approved national ratification vote before implementation. Read only access (for me) has been attained to the TD Wealth account and semi-annual meetings are to be scheduled with TD Wealth and the Finance Committee.
- Chris and Jeff assumed the roles of active participants and support to the ESCOP Budget and Legislative Committee (BLC). With this position, Jeff in turn, supports the ESCOP representative (Glenda Humiston) on the PBD Budget and Advocacy (BAC), the ESCOP representative to the Committee on Legislation and Policy (CLP) and episodic work with other committees (e.g. Strategic Realignment Implementation Committee).
- Allied with the above ESCOP BLC activities, there was a significant number of activities associated with the discussion, survey, creation and support for the \$300M COVID Supplemental funding request for ESS, numerous editing of APLU correspondence, reports, slide decks and communications with APLU BAA staff and elected officials, committees, members with budget as a component. Core member of the team that built and managed the Gordian Infrastructure report rollout and follow up activities. Assisted with the unofficial on-boarding of Caron Gala, APLU VP for Advocacy and International Agriculture Programs.
- ESCOP website monitoring and nudging to keep current across regional offices and committee assignments.
- Initiated the discussion with research EDs to capture ESS capacities, gaps and program priorities with climate research. This led to a national survey.
- Create and edit materials as needed. For example, ESCOP agenda briefs; feedback and monitoring on NIFA with the Time and Effort reporting; Advocacy efforts with the

Unified Ask; and the group ED edits on the one-pagers managed by Cornerstone Government Affairs and used by CARET/AHS during their Hill visits.

- Served as a member of the SAAESD Executive Director Search Committee with the retirement of Eric Young. Gary Thompson is the new Southern ED.
- Regularly work with the research and Extension EDs throughout the year.

3. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND HONORS

- TM 250 Tribal Food Sovereignty: Policy and Practice, One credit on-line course, University of Alaska Fairbanks.
- TM 250 Tribal Food Sovereignty: The Roots, One credit on-line course, University of Alaska Fairbanks.
- Agronomic Industry Award Committee, American Society of Agronomy
- Soil Science Industry and Professional Leadership Award Committee, Soil Science Society of America
- USDA Special Government Employee (SGE) Ethics Certificate.
- Information Security Awareness and Acknowledgement of Rules of Behavior Certificate.
- Conferences, readings and self-study activities as appropriate.

4. TRAVEL

- *UNKNOWN when travel will be allowed and appropriate*
- CARET/AHS Annual Meeting, March 1-3, Washington, DC [National, ESCOP]
- NCRAC and The OSU visits, February 28-31, Columbus, OH [NCRA]
- NCAC1, Jan 6-9, 2020 Ponce, Puerto Rico [NCRA]

Chris Hamilton, NCRA Assistant Director

1. NCRA ACTIVITIES (Jeff, too)

- Manage all aspects of the NCRA office (meetings, financials, website maintenance, etc.), working closely and effectively with UW's CALS business services and MSU (NCRA and ED budget).
- Worked with NCRA ED and Executive Committee on the FY2022 NCRA budget with new implementation options.
- Participate in monthly NCRA Executive Committee calls and quarterly calls with Deb Hamernik at NIFA.
- Plan and participate in bi-weekly NCRA COVID-19 discussion calls and capture individual institution best practices and data for sharing across NCRA .
- Partner with Robin Shepard of NCCEA to maintain strong communications between NCRA and NCCEA. I maintain NCCEA.org and the NCCEA Twitter account (@NCCEA) and can coordinate social media activities to maximize our joint regional research and Extension social media impact.
- Create reports and spreadsheets useful to the NC region, as needed and upon request (salary data, AES allocations, facilities inventories, etc.).
- Maintain NCRA and NCCEA Twitter accounts (@NCRegionalAssoc; @NCCEA).
- NC Admin Boot Camp planning committee with AES and EXT directors and our regional EDs. Planning for virtual 2021 session(s) is on-going and likely to be implemented first quarter 2021.
- Participate on the NC Mini Land Grant meeting planning team and arrange planning calls. (TBD on 2021 meeting).
- Solicit regional nominations and coordinate the selection of the NCRA Leadership and Multistate Research awards. Helped create the NCRA Certificate Award for our top multistate project.
- Provide project assignments and guidance to NCAC AAs for NCRA multistate project reviews. Updated and streamlined the NCAC review process and communications with NCAC AAs.
- Provide high-level technical services to the NCRA and other regions, upon request, and maintain friendly and close working relationships with NC AES staff on NIMSS and other multistate issues. They often contact me first with questions and I either have the answer or direct them to someone who does.
 - Maintain NCRA website (www.ncra-saes.org).
 - Zoom video conferencing and screen shares for conference calls, NIMSS help, and other training as needed.
 - Regular cloud back-ups of all NCRA office files at UW-Madison using local CALS servers and Box.com accounts.
 - File and data sharing through Google Drive and Box.com.
 - Online Qualtrics Survey creation.
 - Manage all NC email lists and NCRA Directories.
- Continued serving as a member of the UW College of Ag Committee on Academic Staff Issues (CALS CASI). We meet monthly to provide guidance and act on a variety of issues affecting CALS academic staff. I am the chair of the nominations and mentoring subcommittee and again in 2021, led the planning of the academic staff networking Zoom event, which included soliciting speakers, creating the agenda, managing

registration, and created and managed the post-event survey. I also seek out new members of CASI to take over when other leave or rotate off.

- New for 2021: Hosting virtual NIMSS Q&A workshops. Two scheduled so far, one in March, next in April.

North Central Region Multistate Research Portfolio

- **Regular Support:** Regularly provide support and technical assistance to users navigating NIMSS and interpretation of national and regional multistate guidelines.
- **FY2022 New/Renewing NC Projects:** Facilitated the renewal of 21 NC multistate projects expiring in 2021, 3 new project requests, and 10 midterm review evaluations, reminding and assisting AAs and committees with submitting on-time, quality, collaborative reports to NIMSS. Coordinated project assignments and review activities of the NC AAs, NC ACs, and the MRC. See the March 2021 MRC report for details.
- As time allows, I attended and provided NCRA updates to the virtual meetings of NC multistate projects.

2. **NATIONAL ACTIVITIES** (Jeff, too)

- Provide administrative leadership and assistance to NRSP1. Schedule calls, take minutes, coordinate committee activities, etc. Also, I serve as the NIMSS lead Regional System Administrator.
 - NIMSS is the Experiment Station's national workflow database for managing all multistate project activities.
 - I continue to communicate regularly through emails and monthly calls with the Clemson NIMSS development team to solve issues, improve efficiency, and enhance the user experience within the NIMSS database. These efforts enable us to solve NIMSS issues quickly and efficiently and avoid the need for tedious software versioning issues, since changes are made in real time.
 - This is our fourth year managing NIMSS and the system is running smoothly and effectively, with rapid response to any issues or suggested improvements.
- Provide administrative leadership and assistance to the ESCOP Budget and Legislative Committee (BLC) effective June 2019. Schedule calls, take meeting minutes, participated on calls, coordinate committee activities, such as the in-person joint ESCOP/ECOP BLC meeting in Nashville, TN.
- Participate as member with the ESCOP Diversity Catalyst Committee (DCC). We join quarterly calls, participate in trial training sessions, seek out speakers for calls, etc.
- Member of the ESS Finance Committee, schedule meetings, participate on calls.
- Assist Dave Leibovitz (NERA AD) with updates to the ESCOP website (www.escop.info) and ESCOP email list serves.
- Provide general NIMSS support to NRSP6 and NRSP3 AAs (Bill Barker and Doug Buhler, respectively) by authorizing annual meetings, uploading reports.
- Provide administrative assistance to the ESCOP NRSP-RC, of which Doug Buhler is the current chair. This year, I provided policy and technical support to NRSP8 for their midterm review. Helped coordinate NRSP-RC calls. Worked with our Clemson IT team to update the NRSP review forms in NIMSS to match the updated NRSP Guidelines.

- Creator and owner of the online NIMSS manual, a living document outlining all functions, tips, and tricks to make using NIMSS easy. The NIMSS manual is located at <https://www.ncra-saes.org/nimss-manual>, and I update it regularly.
- In the works, in lieu of the 2021 NERAOC NIMSS Q&A, David Leibovitz and I are planning to host an online NIMSS Q&A webinar for AES directors and NIMSS admins. More to come on this.
- Partner with the NIFA multistate research office to coordinate NIMSS project/participant approvals, occasionally serve as the NIMSS liaison for NIMSS/REeport issues, and other regional-USDA administrative tasks, as needed.
- Serve as a NIMSS representative on the NIFA Research Reporting Group team, which meets biweekly via Zoom to discuss updates to the new NIFA reporting tool. Coordinate communications between the NIFA development team and the NIMSS team at Clemson.
- Might volunteer to serve as a grant panelist for NIFA's Tribal Grants program. TBD.

3. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- In 2020 and early 2021, I attended the following conferences and workshops (all virtual):
 - 2020 UW Madison Diversity Forum.
 - 2020 UW-Madison Women & Leadership Symposium.
 - UW-Madison CALS Monthly Diversity and Inclusion Lunch & Learns.
 - Introduction to Research Administration at UW (self-paced online course completed)
 - UW Research Administrators Conference
 - Breaking the Bias Habit: An Introduction to Implicit Bias
 - Breaking the Bias Habit: Implicit Bias in Interactions/Microaggressions
 - EQ Skills & Strategies: Leading with Empathy
 - EQ Skills & Strategies: Noticing and Naming Emotions
 - Learning for Leaders: Leading Through Crisis and Uncertainty (hosted by ECOP)
- I have volunteered to serve for my fourth year in a row this April as a presentation session observer for the World Food Prize – WI Youth Institute at UW Madison. We review all the high school applicant papers and presentations and decide which will be nominated to go forward for the national prize. The 2020 session was held virtually.
- Attend all required UW Madison and monthly CALS financial staff trainings (travel, p-card, purchasing, etc.).
- Going forward in 2021, I have already or will attend the following professional development opportunities:
 - Focus will be on LEAD21 – Leadership for the 21st Century sessions and associated activities. Activities below are extra and as time allows.
 - UW-Madison CALS Monthly Diversity and Inclusion Lunch & Learns (on-going).
 - 2021 Diversity Forum.
 - 2021 UW-Madison's Leadership and Management Development Conference.
 - 2021 UW-Madison Women & Leadership Symposium.
 - NCR Admin Boot Camp.

4. TRAVEL (virtual meetings attended in 2020)

- NCRA Spring Meeting
- NC Mini LGU Virtual Meeting
- NC Regional Admin Officers Conference

- Fall ESS/AES/ARD Meeting and Workshop
- APLU Annual Meeting

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