



NAUFRP

National Association of University Forest Resources Programs

Creating Knowledge—Developing Leaders

Minutes

May 23-24, 2022

Washington, D.C

(Meeting participants listed at end.)

Janaki Alavalpati, NAUFRP President, welcomed and thanked the Executive Committee for participating in this meeting. Introductions were made.

A motion was made by Katy Kavanagh and seconded by Bob Wagner to approve the minutes from the March 14, 2022 (virtual) meeting. Discussion: Dale Greene noted that there appeared to be a section missing on page 2. Terri will correct that. David Newman provided minor edits by email to Terri to be incorporated. The minutes were approved unanimously with the understanding the edits discussed will be made.

Janaki noted that his institution, Auburn University, has recently added “Environment” to their name and celebrated their 75th Anniversary. He would like to solicit new participation in NAUFRP. He highlighted the newsletter and encouraged sharing it widely especially with faculty. Discussion: It would be good to build an email list of partners to share it with. NAUFRP Representatives could share with their university government affairs and Congressional staff. Consider featuring a spotlight on McIntire-Stennis (McStennis) research from the one-pager McIntire-Stennis projects developed for the website. Please provide further feedback. Janaki noted the sporadic participation of the 1890 institutions and asked for thoughts on how to engage them. In April, a NAUFRP Town Hall meeting was held with USDA Under Secretary Robert Bonnie. It is hoped this is the first of an ongoing series; it is low-cost with a big impact. Ideas for future ones are welcome, ones that faculty would be interested in as well.

Randy Nuckolls, Washington Counsel: The majority of federal agencies are still working virtually; it is not going to go back to the way it was pre-pandemic. On the Hill, the aftermath of January 6th is still being felt. Congressional staff are more likely to prefer using Zoom to meet. Right now Congress is focused on Ukraine; they are stymied on climate change. The appropriations process is ongoing. The President’s budget recommends a \$7 million increase for McStennis around climate change. APLU’s FY 23 budget priorities include this and support for an AFRI increase. Younger staff do not know about capacity programs and wonder why these funds are not in competitive funding. It is expected to be a tough budget year for any increases. Elections this fall will be tight; the House is anticipated to flip. Dale Greene discussed the congressional staff tours UGA hosts. Dale likes this venue because they get undivided attention from Congressional staff. He is supposed to email Randy material regarding UGA Congressional tours.

Dennis Becker, Policy Chair: He is representing NAUFRP on the Forests In the Farm Bill (FIFB) and Forest Carbon Working Group (FCWG) coalitions. Our presence is rather passive and limited to signing letters of support. He asked what more we can or should be doing; he is looking for feedback. Randy said Dennis’ voice and presence reminds these groups that research is at the table. Without it, research can be dropped as a priority. McStennis does not need reauthorization in the Farm Bill but RREA (Renewable Resources Extension Act) does. Dennis said the Infrastructure bill didn’t identify very well where research fits. USFS doesn’t know. Katy indicated NAUFRP does not seem to have a process to decide when to sign on to letters. It would help Dennis; NAUFRP represents a lot of interests. New initiatives from NAUFRP?. What would be needed to authorize? Katy asked if the indirect cost issue needs authorizing language. Perhaps a Town Hall meeting would help identify research issues for the Farm Bill. Janaki mentioned the Forest Health Initiative that John Hayes led on. It was to be adopted by APLU but there have been some leadership changes there. Jeff

is happy to help Dennis on RREA. The program is a mechanism to deliver science; it increases research impacts. Dennis will be attending the APLU Climate Workshop in Kansas City later this summer.

Andrew Storer, Education Chair: (Written Report provided) Andrew continues to serve on SAF's Education Policy Review Committee. The 2022 BCUENR meeting was hosted by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln School of Natural Resources and College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources on March 23-24, 2022 with the theme '*Inclusive Natural Resources Education*'. The 2024 15th BCUENR will be hosted at Oregon State University, and the 2026 16th BCUENR will be hosted at Michigan Tech. The 2026 conference will include a parallel meeting for undergraduate students in natural resources to help amplify their voice. Andrew and Diversity Chair Yeon-Su Kim have met. The white paper developed by Dr. Tara Bal (Michigan Tech) and Dr. Marcella Windmuller-Campione (University of Minnesota) was discussed, along with the interest in developing tools for culturally responsive teaching in forestry. It was recognized that to achieve the goal of integrating data that reflect the input from instructors, admin and others into these tools will take investment. The committee chairs agreed to work with the investigators to a) identify ways to integrate the work with other ongoing efforts, b) identify expertise in the social sciences to participate in the work, and c) identify sources of funding for the proposed work, including from NAUFRP and participating institutions. In early Fall, the education committee plans to send a short survey to find early indications of enrollment numbers in forestry and forest resource programs. This will provide an early indication of trends within NAUFRP and will be shared with participating programs. Many program leaders are asked questions in the Fall about their enrollments relative to trends at other institutions, and this informal survey is aimed to assist with responding to these questions. The survey will be brief, and suggestions for content can be shared with the Education Committee chair. Andrew plans to continue recruiting committee members. He asked Executive Committee members to encourage their faculty to participate.

Jeff Stringer, Extension Chair: The Extension Committee successfully awarded two Family Forest Education Awards in 2021, a comprehensive and an individual program award, the former to University of Maryland Extension and the latter to the University of Kentucky, Forestry and Natural Resource Extension. Reports of these awards were shared with co-host, the National Woodland Owners Association, and they included an article on the awards in a 2022 edition of their magazine. The awards were publicized on the NAUFRP website. Other institutions who submitted nominations were informed of the final decision with information on the strengths of the winning programs. Advertisement of the 2022 awards was sent out in April through the NAUFRP distribution list as well as being circulated by NIFA and the southern, northern, and north central forestry extension groups. Nominations will be accepted through August 1 and NAUFRP members will be asked to help evaluate submissions. Awards will be made during the fall NAUFRP General Session. Jeff Stringer, also advised the Executive Committee of the newly formed congressional White Oak Caucus. This was established through the corporate steering committee members of the White Oak Initiative (www.whiteoakinitiative.org) and includes bipartisan membership of over 10 members, with several co-chairs including Congressman Andy Barr from Kentucky. The caucus and the impetus for its formation was established from the concern over white oak (*Quercus alba*) sustainability and availability. See link for more information on the caucus: <https://barr.house.gov/press-releases?ID=F8DB1A8E-6E77-498C-A195-9B94D50E67C2>.

Bob Wagner, Research Chair: (Written Report provided) The Research Committee is focused on three projects: (1) A draft manuscript of the results of the 2020-2021 U.S. Forest and Forest Products R&D Capacity Summit is currently being reviewed for publication in the *SAF Journal of Forestry*. The citation can be found in the written report. (2) The summit organizing committee has continued following up on the results and recommendations from the 2020-21 R&D Summit. This effort includes two parallel efforts: a) Although the 2020-21 R&D Capacity Summit was able to demonstrate that there is strong agreement among national forest and forest products leaders about the top national priorities for U.S. forest and forest products R&D, there also was a strong recommendation to make sure that regional priorities are identified. As part of building on this recommendation, we are working now to develop a proposal to conduct a comprehensive national and regional survey of those managing forestlands and developing new forest products on what they believe are the highest priority forest and forest products challenges that need to be solved. b) Based on what we learned from the 2020-21 R&D Summit, *how do we develop better national mechanisms and approaches for cooperatively identifying, communicating, coordinating, and advocating for U.S. forest and forest products R&D priorities, capacities, and funding?* A rough draft of a proposal for solutions and next steps was developed and distributed to the NAUFRP Executive Committee in March. (Citation included in written report.) We are in the process of working

with our original steering committee and identifying new members that may be interested in taking on this challenge. In the coming weeks, Bob will be presenting the results of our efforts with the forest industry at the annual meeting of the Center for Advanced Forestry Systems. More information to come as this effort matures. As always, we are seeking advice, feedback, and new participants in this effort. If you are interested in being part of this effort, please contact Bob Wagner at rgwagner@purdue.edu or 207-949-4067.

Joel Snodgrass (Virginia Tech), President, National Association of University Fisheries and Wildlife Programs (NAUFWP): NAUFWP has developed MOUs with The Wildlife Society (TWS) and the Fisheries Society with focus on how to promote both groups. NAUFWP's diversity survey results have been presented to both groups. NAUFWP's legislative focus is funding for coop units and support for Restoring America's Wildlife Act. They are interested in the return of Congressional earmarks. Virginia Tech received two last year; one included teaming up with a fish processing plant. They have a similar committee structure to NAUFRP and are working to get to know NIFA folks. Joel asked NAUFRP to encourage their faculty to become involved with NAUFWP. Andrew asked about next steps after NAUFWP's diversity report. Joel said the next step is to connect it to other groups like TWS.

Yeonsu Kim, Diversity Chair: (Provided a written report) NAU is organizing a Tribal Student Conference; she will share more on this later. She reviewed her report including an update on the survey she has conducted; there have been few additional responses received despite further outreach. Focus of the committee has been on 'Best Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Practices' and she listed several in the report. Discussion: Incentives are needed. What is missing is how to share best practices but also failures. Dale encouraged caution about what we are calling 'best practices' till we vet and see how they work --- we need to be asking what's working and what is growing diversity. Katy says OSU has a social scientist and rubrics on which they score faculty and staff. It has changed their culture. She was asked if she could share it. Andrew feels it is important to look at what has not worked and also what is the measure of success. How do we capture what is not working. Jeff suggested a closed meeting to discuss. Janaki asked about a NIFA program (Women and Minorities in STEM Fields and who is leading this? Eric said he would find out and provide information.

Terry Baker, CEO, Society of American Foresters: Terry introduced Jocelyn Harris, Associate Director for Accreditation. He reviewed the findings of a recent SAF Membership Survey. Sixty percent of SAF members said SAF should lead on DEI. They have a new platform for working groups called Trade Winds and want to expand it to student faculty advisers. SAF has added 8-9 staff in the last months. Net increase in members is small but they had been on trajectory of losing members (200/year). The survey found many members didn't know about the certification program. Funding for the Mollie Beatty Scholarship program has increased. Workforce and SAF's role was an increasing topic of interest. They are working with a DEI consultant on practices and policies – how does SAF become more inclusive? The urban forestry credential is coming along. SAF hopes to re-apply to CHEA next year.

Red Baker, Communications Chair: Red discussed the NAUFRP newsletter. It would be good to feature McStennis one-pagers and also students. He is thinking about communications and other webinars/Town Hall meetings like the recent one with Robert Bonnie. Feedback on this is solicited; ideas/input, audiences? Janaki suggested a zoom session with college communications specialists. Red's later notes: Highlight regional McStennis projects (put a face on it). Highlight individual students supported by McStennis (perhaps also regionally). Possible webinars periodically: Washington Update (Randy) at key times; selected committee chair updates (Extension, Research,...). Webinars from selected agency partners: NIFA re: upcoming grant programs/changes; NSF overview; NAUFRP facilitation of faculty serving on grant panels (with NIFA personnel); State Forester overview from President of NASF.

Hans Williams, Southern Region Chair: Southern NAUFRP's Comparative Survey is out. They will have a meeting June 6-9 in Greenville, SC; this is in conjunction with the Southern Group of State Foresters.

Charles Goebel, Western Regional Chair: The Western group's meeting will be virtual this summer. There appear to be a number of retirements: John Hayes, Katy Elliott, Eric Hansen to name a few. UID is recruiting positions for wood products and wood science. UID has also been approved to offer three associate degrees. Charles is co-chair of the Society of Range Management. He asked if NAUFRP has ever met with them. They are trying to build capacity. Janaki asked if they are getting pushback from community colleges about the associate degrees?

Bill Hubbard, Northeast Regional Chair: Nancy Mathews has been chair but is moving to a new institution in Michigan so Bill agreed to take over. David noted that not many schools in the northeast have departments, still there has been good leadership engaged with NAUFRP.

Post Covid Discussion: There was general agreement that things are close to being back to normal at NAUFRP institutions. There will be more discussion on faculty teaching remotely. Revenue was lost because of housing. Regular students are back. Janaki said parents pushed on out-of-state tuition during virtual learning. Katy said university/higher ed infrastructure needs to be maintained. Jeff said on-line tuition is higher. Bob said students want the on-line option; that's a real question for them post pandemic. Katy said they had record enrollment on-line. Dennis says as a result they plan to expand on-line.

Fall Meeting Plans: Janaki asked if the FS Chief or NIFA Director should be invited. Eric is not sure NIFA will have a director in place by then. Workshop options: post covid experiences, regional 'Best Practices'. DEI. We need to recharge the meeting: have a catchy title, make members feel they are needed, ensure good outreach. Maximize the social aspect of the meeting. Look intentionally forward vs backwards. Lot of lessons from pandemic to share and build upon. Better to prepare students to be nimble. Take advantage of proximity to DC. Invite students to the President's reception. NIFA Travel: can program managers come to the Baltimore meetings? Perhaps have a panel. It is important to build relationships; it is not a good look for feds to not be available to meet in person. Who needs to hear from us about this? Dionne Toombs is the Acting NIFA Director. The Acting Associate Director is Parag Chitnis who is leaving soon for Univ of WY. Kevin Kephart is the Deputy Director for the Institute of Bioenergy, Climate and Environment. Discussion about (feds) return to work. Everybody can be remote; its largely a remote work force. USDA monitors CDC county Covid numbers to determine workplace safety. NIFA has regular virtual all hands meetings. Their workforce number is 278. All review panels are remote. Are all the program leaders in Kansas City? NIFA determined every position potentially remote except senior political appointees. The agency move to Kansas City was not consistent with an evidence-based policy approach. Damning report by GAO.

American Forest Foundation, Rita Hite, President and CEO, Valerie Craig, SVP Conservation, Michael Reed, VP Policy and Advocacy: Rita introduced Valerie who is leading on conservation, carbon, biodiversity and climate. Michael (formerly on Congressman Sanford Bishop's appropriations staff) is the lead on policy and ethics. Myron is on the AFF Board now. AFF is a conservation organization and wants to have a meaningful impact on empowering family landowners. Priorities are climate change (#1), carbon capture, fire. They have established the Family Forest Carbon Program to provide financing/income to forest landowners to increase carbon storage. Need to identify buyers for carbon credits and improve forest management practices leading to additional benefits. Looking at relevant science-based practices on a regional level. In the last two Farm Bills, AFF has coordinated with industry leaders through the Forest in the Farm Bill Coalition (FIFB); 85 organizations have been involved. (NAUFRP has been part of this) FIFB has begun developing an agenda. The Family Carbon program needs funding; maybe a guaranteed loan program. It is operational in MD, PA, WV. A real challenge is USDA's (lack of) capacity; need to build that (USFS, NRCS). Rita says better science and data are needed. They rely on FIA for the fundamentals. Katy asked about below ground soil carbon. Valerie said there is an extreme lack of data; it is very patchy but will be important in the future. AFF does not have a sustainable financial model; carbon may lead to that. Yeonsu asked about options for tribal internships, webinars and workshops. Tribal lands have a different scenario when talking about carbon. Rita is to send list of state expansions. Happy to do web/workshops. The FCWG has identified science gaps and is trying to corral and become advocates to address them. Dave Cleeves is the point person on gaps. Examples of carbon market buyers include REI, Netflix. Partnerships with The Nature Conservancy.

Daniel Cassidy, NIFA: Daniel pulled a number of McStennis projects from the one-pagers for his supervisor Peter Thompson who was very impressed. Drawdowns are going well. He looks forward to visiting institutions again. Only rejected one proposal. The McStennis staffing is Danial and Monica Lear and she is on the financial side. NIFA held an ATR meeting about a month ago; there may be another later this summer. Randy asked what would be the priority areas if the \$7 million increase proposed in the President's happens. Daniel said that proposals on climate change would meet McStennis' 6-7 priority areas. David asked how closely the state match is looked at. Eric is to send Janaki a list of Agricultural Experiment Station contacts to review and also identify climate change contacts.

Reviewer Data Base: A number from the Executive Committee had taken first step in signing up for the Reviewer Data Base and were awaiting a second email saying they had been activated/approved. It turned out a number of those emails went to junk/spam mail. Need to advise folks to check spam mail for this. Myron would like to see the US Census wording used for Race/Ethnicity; he will send to Terri/Hannah. Wording for Carbon and Climate Change headings discussed; what is most useful? Eric will help on that. Eric suggested not calling it the 'NIFA' Reviewer Data Base. Jeff suggested not using 'Forest Resource Management'. Need two sentences ... (David)

Dave Tenny, President and CEO, National Alliance of Forest Owners: NAFO continues to promote healthy forests equate to healthy markets. They have been working on wildlife conservation since 2015 with the FWS. Now they are at a new level having signed an MOU with FWS on the Conservation Without Conflict program. The key to Climate Change is keeping forests in wood production, if we can't do that we lose mitigation benefits and connections to the built environment. NAFO is starting to prepare for the next Farm Bill. Three of the four Congressional committee chairs want to focus on data analysis (FIA). NAFO has a project proposal in for \$70 million data analysis under USDA's Climate Smart Partnership. FIA Strategic Plan prioritization is on technology. Katy, related to market transformation, producers are not getting a premium (like organic ag). There is a role for USDA per certification. Bob asked what can we do to engage on improving the next generation of FIA; USFS seems reluctant to move away from on the ground measurements. NAFO has taken FIA and EPA Greenhouse ?? to a new level. See www.forestcarbon.biz.org It tells the story for forest carbon in US. This summer NAFO will have a new environmental benefits report by state by addressing impacts, jobs, ...

Doug Steel, Vice President, Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources, Association of Public Land-Grant Universities: APLU has a Farm Bill committee underway; it is looking at the conservation title and opportunities related to climate. A Summit with NIFA is planned for early Fall in Kansas City. They have a \$365 million agriculture research infrastructure proposal. As it is not glamorous it is hard to attract support. Not hearing much about FY 23 and believe 'that ship has sailed'. FY24 is an opportunity for placeholders. Doug wants to build an out-year strategy for McStennis top line and justification.

Hannah Chauvin and Elizabeth Dent, Democratic and Republican Professional Staff who handle the NIFA budget for the Senate Ag Appropriations Subcommittee: Hearings on USDA appropriations have been held. No increases for McStennis or Hatch. They are waiting for their budget line. Deadline for Members' request is/was May 6 (or June) There is, and has been, bipartisan support for our programs. This could be very tight budget year. Strange year with retirements of the Ranking Member and Chair and with upcoming elections. Randy noted the McStennis one-pagers and their value for staff. They describe McStennis work and how funds are spent. Myron asked if they get forest technical questions. They said no. Infrastructure bill for \$365 million is very uncertain.

Adjourned

Executive Committee Participants: Janaki Alavalapati (President, Auburn University), David Newman (Immediate Past President, SUNY), Katy Kavanagh (President-Elect, Oregon State University), Andrew Storer (Education Chair, Michigan Tech University), Dennis Becker (Policy Chair, University of Idaho), Dale Greene (At-Large, University of Georgia), Jeff Stringer (Extension Chair, University of Kentucky), Bob Wagner (Research Chair, Purdue University), Hans Williams (Southern Chair, Stephen F. Austin State University), Myron Floyd (At-Large, North Carolina State University), Bill Hubbard (Northeast Chair, University of Maryland), Yeon-Su Kim (Diversity Chair, Northern Arizona University), Jingxin Wang (representing Robert Burns, West Virginia University), Randy Nuckolls (General Counsel), Terri Bates (Executive Liaison)

Written Reports Available: Diversity, Education, Extension, Policy

*Minutes Approved
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