

DRAFT

NAUFRP Executive Committee  
March 5-6, 2018  
Washington, D.C.

NAUFRP Executive Committee Attendees: Keith Belli, President (University of Tennessee); Jim Allen, Past President (Northern Arizona University); David Newman, President-Elect (SUNY-ESF); Katy Kavanagh, Texas A&M University (Secretary-Treasurer); John Hayes, BAC Representative (Colorado State University); Mike Messina, Northeast Regional Chair (Pennsylvania State University); Janaki Alavalapati, Policy Chair (Auburn University); Terry Sharik, Education Chair (Michigan Tech University); Red Baker, Research Chair (University of Florida); Andrew Ezell, Extension Chair (Mississippi State University); Linda Nagel, Western Regional Chair (Colorado State University); Mark Rickenbach, North Central Regional Chair (University of Wisconsin-Madison); Bob Wagner, At-Large Member (Purdue University); Kamran Abdollahi, Diversity Chair (Southern University); Stephen Shaler, International Chair (University of Maine); Mary Watzin, At-Large Member and Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Communications (North Carolina State University); Phil Tappe, At-Large (University of Arkansas) Randy Nuckolls, NAUFRP General Counsel; Terri Bates, NAUFRP Executive Liaison

NAUFRP Members Attending: Scott Merkle (University of Georgia), Anthony Davis (Oregon State University), Jeff Stringer (University of Kentucky), Jingxin Wang (West Virginia University)

Guests: Chad Bishop (University of Montana), National Association of University Fisheries and Wildlife Programs; Buck Vandersteen (Louisiana Forestry Association), CARET Liaison,

Keith Belli reviewed the agenda. Introductions will be made when U.S. Forest Service Chief Tony Tooke arrives.

The Executive Committee minutes from November 14, 2017 in Albuquerque, NM were approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report, Katy Kavanagh: The end of year 2017 financial report (handout) was reviewed. The 2018 budget was approved at the November meeting. The \$5,000 difference between actual and calculated balances as of December 31, 2017 is attributed to the check written to Purdue University for the 'benchmark study'. It was written in 2016 but not cashed until 2017. Expenses related to the annual meeting continue to climb. Fees for credit card dues payments are high and it was agreed to evaluate these costs at the end of the year.

Policy Chair Report, Janaki Alavalapati: Janaki reported on the status of the 2018 Farm Bill. NAUFRP participates in the Forests in the Farm Bill Coalition (FIFB). The House and Senate Agriculture Committees are currently working on draft bills. The House may be ready to 'mark-up' their bill by late March. The Senate is further behind. There are also two Senate bills of interest to forestry: "Empowering State Forestry to Improve Forest Health" (HR 4976 and S. 962) and the "Forest Incentives Program Act of 2018" (S. 2350). Janaki noted that Pat Layton (Clemson) has been working to build support for recommendations by the International Code Council for changes that support the design and construction of Tall Mass Timber Buildings. Materials have been circulated to the listserve. The value of Congressional field tours was discussed. We have talked about hosting a breakfast on the Hill with a focus on the Working Forest Caucus. Perhaps this can be done at an Executive or Policy Committee meeting in the summer. Randy said public universities can invite and pay for Congressional staff tours (private universities cannot). He is pleased with the position statement from the FIFB Coalition. The key issue for the Farm Bill is the cost of the commodity programs. Research provisions are not controversial.

Tony Tooke, Chief, US Forest Service and Carlos Rodriguez-Franco, Deputy Chief USFS Research & Development (R&D): Chief Tooke noted that approximately \$40 million has gone to the universities through R&D in recent years. Funding for R&D has declined with other programs due to the costs of catastrophic fires the agency has been responsible for. He appreciates the university partnership and knows about half of those in the room today. He reviewed the priorities

the agency has been working on since he became chief. Research and data are fundamental to the work of the Forest Service. Their priorities are challenged by the big fires that have to be addressed. Chief Tooke wants to put more fire in the landscape. John Hayes noted that USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue wants to increase the volume of low quality material coming off of national forests and the universities welcome engaging on this. NAUFRP, with APLU, are working jointly on a Forest Health Initiative which he hopes the FS will be receptive to. Carlos discussed the Society of American Foresters' (SAF) study that looked at R&D's research strengths, gaps and weaknesses; it has been completed and recommendations presented. Randy referenced the Research Summit held in 2006 which included FS, NIFA and SAF. Maybe it is time to do something like this again. Carlos said he is willing to fund something like this and will talk to Chief Tooke. Mary said the big issue is not so much identifying priorities but how to communicate in 21<sup>st</sup> century language – we need to reframe the issues in language that society understands. **Action Item:** Designate a NAUFRP Team to work with Carlos/FS on this.

**Education Chair Report, Terry Sharik:** Pete Ziegler, FAEIS, joined by teleconference to discuss how to increase NAUFRP member institution participation in their data collection. Janaki noted that Southern NAUFRP institutions participate in their own regional survey. Red said he determined that the FAEIS data is generated at the University of Florida at a level he has no power over. (UFL was identified as not responding but Red confirmed they had). There seem to be communication issues. David agreed this is the case at SUNY too. Terry reviewed his written report covering the following: potential IFSA membership, student survey at the 2014 IUFRO World Congress, results of his survey of NAUFRP institution websites and the proportion of women and minorities in the student body, work with SAF on diversity and inclusion issues, education clearing house on the re-designed NAUFRP webpage, Advisory Committee for the Global Outlook on Forestry Education Project, IUFRO 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Congress and USFS special report on 'Drivers of Change in the US Forests and the Forest Sector. The Undergraduate Education Report from 2011 was discussed. Keith asked if it would be of value to review the recommendations and assess what has been accomplished. Terry agrees and will work on this for the fall.

**Extension Chair Report, Andy Ezell:** Andy reviewed a written report. He met with the Northeast Forest Resources Extension Council in Millford, PA in December, 2017. They discussed the importance of supporting the McIntire-Stennis (McStennis) and Renewable Resources Extension Act (RREA) and ways to increase their profile at the state level. In March, a survey was distributed by the Southern Regional Extension Forestry office to assist in developing a mentoring program for new Extension Forestry/Natural Resource professionals. Andy will work with Terri Bates to get an announcement out for the 2018 Family Forests Education Award. This is Andy's last meeting as Extension Chair.

**Research Chair Report, Red Baker:** Red expressed condolences to NAUFRP's NIFA colleagues on the death of Catalino Blanche. Tomorrow he is taking a team for meetings at NIFA. He welcomes ideas on future agency visits. He showed a three minute video on Sweet Gum research as an example of showcasing ongoing university research. Something like this might be a model for the webpage; perhaps a McStennis project. John Hayes wonders who would be the target audience. A video on forest health could be targeted to different regions of the country. Anthony said OSU has done 10 of these (You Tube) centered on graduate students. He is happy to share their thought process and feedback.

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/OSUCollegeofForestry/videos/>

Keith requested that the NAUFRP regional chairs seek feedback from members on regional and national research priorities at their summer meetings and bring these back to the fall meeting in Portland, OR. It would be good to see how these mesh. This does not need to be too formal. He thinks there will be a lot of overlap but would like something concrete vs. anecdotal. John suggested Keith give some specific scope to the regional chairs for consistency sake. Keith is looking for 3-5 priorities and a brief summary/description of regional and national priorities. He wants these to look beyond funding issues.

**Ali Mohamad, Eric Norland, Daniel Cassidy, Latasha Lyte, National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA):** Ali noted with the loss of Catalino, Daniel, Eric and Latasha are now a formal team working on McStennis and other forestry and natural resource issues. There is an RFP out on Big Data – FACT (Food Agriculture Cyber Tools – how to manage big data). Ali would like to see something from forestry submitted. NIFA and the US Forest Products Lab have finalized an MOU. Eric discussed the issue of carryover funds that expire Sept. 31 and are pulled back to USDA. For FY17, \$10.7 million has not been spent. Just 17 institutions have spent all their money; as of Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>, five institutions have drawn no

funds. NIFA is unable to take the money back and redistribute to other programs but the funds can be subcontracted. In the current fiscal year, if an institution says it cannot spend their funds, they can reallocate them. In FY16, \$4 million was in jeopardy of going back. Randy said it is no coincidence that this is the amount that the appropriations request has been reduced by. He asked if a school doesn't utilize funds by a set date, could the ATR reprogram them? Ali said the government cannot, but the state governor or their designee could possibly reallocate within the state.. Randy asked if there are serial offenders? Eric said they are just now getting a system in place that can answer this question in the future. Eric said they have reviewed the ATR directory and find only a few have forestry directly under them. NIFA is going to make more demands from the ATRs with a focus on improving communications. Mary says there is a disconnect between the ATR and billing loop at her institution. It would help if there was a requirement that the ATR be in the loop. The ATR is appointed by the university president's discretion; there are no (forestry) requirements. That could be changed; a recommendation from NAUFRP would be needed. Eric said they are looking at having an ATR meeting this fall and would like to identify a planning committee with NAUFRP representatives. Keith would like this group to develop a meeting agenda and identify issues in advance. Eric proposed developing a master ATR listserve. Daniel said they are looking for good McStennis stories with focus on scope and impact.

McIntire-Stennis Branding Framework, Mary Watzin: (Handouts from Albuquerque meeting) Mary said the feedback on the workshop in Albuquerque was good. Some people did not care for certain words but were okay on the general concept. No one appears to have great angst with the Brand Framework. Terry Sharik felt it lays out what we aspire to. Keith thinks we need to change the attitude about graduate students not using actual McStennis dollars – they indirectly benefit from McStennis as 'future innovators'. If we agree, this is will be our internal document and we don't need to spend a lot more time on it. Mary said some comments converged. "Innovation" is the buzz word of today and we need to use it. The McStennis name needs something that says what it is – a tag line we would all use to build an identity around. The question is how do we move forward. The North American Forest Partnership (NAFP) has helped thus far. They could make a proposal to develop an identity package that would couple together a McStennis logo and tag line to be used by NIFA and with individual universities with their own logo. Products might include a McStennis website, brief videos that present stories of who and what McStennis is that could be used by all. At the end of the day all or any of this will cost something. NAFP is willing to help and/or suggest others who could as well. This would likely run \$40,000 to \$50,000. Mary believes we need communication expertise and an idea might be to bring everyone's (university) communicators together. John Hayes is still not sure who the audience is. The agriculture colleges don't all know what Hatch is but they do all know what agricultural research is. John thinks we need to identify who we want to reach. Mary is thinking there are 2-3 audiences: appropriators, forestry/forest products and conservation communities. They are different audiences but there will get the same core message. Randy noted the APLU/Cornerstone effort to simplify the message – basically we need to say that forestry capacity/research is underfunded. Mary asked for those interested in helping or who have communicators that can help to let her know. Can we spend a little more on this as a special project? Eric reminded that there may be an option of a McStennis administration project. *(This discussion was resumed later in the meeting.)*

Professional Ethics Study and Survey, Lloyd Irland (by video conference) and Terry Sharik: Terry introduced Lloyd Irland who discussed his proposal (hardcopy) for a survey of SAF accredited programs to see what is happening (or not) on professional ethics. This would be for a projected Special Ethics Section for the Journal of Forestry. He would like NAUFRP's backing. The scope would be undergraduate programs.

Rita Hite, Executive Vice President, American Forest Foundation (AFF): AFF's work with family forest owners includes policies that support them. AFF does lobby and works with coalitions/networks on certain advocacy issues. The Forestry in the Farm Bill Coalition (FIFB) was founded in 2002. Since the 2014 Farm Bill its membership has tripled to 105-106 endorsing organizations. The Coalition has signed off on a set of principles for the 2018 Farm Bill which includes research. The current Farm Bill expires this September and Rita expects an extension. The House plans to begin marking up their bill in March; the Senate is actively drafting a bill. Funding is a big issue. The good news is the new budget deal does not cut agriculture spending – but neither does it increase it. The FIFB Coalition has two funding priorities: Healthy Forests and the Community Wood Energy Programs. AFF has produced a progress report on Forests in the Farm Bill for the years 2014-16. The Forest Carbon Working Group (FCWG) was founded in 2007 when it looked like major legislation was going through Congress to make sure the forestry community had a voice and carbon biomass was recognized as a contribution. This coalition morphed in the Obama era but after the 2016 election it has hit a reboot. It is

starting over with principles and an action plan. It is a network of information sharing (always looking for latest science). Topics are invited for learning sessions. The FIFB Coalition is very supportive of Tall Wood Buildings.

John Barnwell, Director, Policy and Carol Redelsheimer, Director, Science and Education, Society of American Foresters: John reviewed SAF's officers (President Dave Lewis and Vice-President John McNulty) and five areas of emphasis for 2018. Fred Cabbage, Immediate Past President, discussed increasing the accreditation fees with NAUFRP last November. The program is not paying for itself. At that time NAUFRP indicated support for the increase. The cost of the site visit was discussed: it will be distributed over 10 years. This will be the first fee increase since 2001 and, going forward, will incorporate inflation. SAF will come back to NAUFRP in 5 years to assess this. The fee increase will be implemented beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>. SAF has founded a Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Workgroup. The newest SAF student chapter has been formed at Southern University. SAF has a new seven-year contract with Oxford Press. Keith Blatner will be the new editor in chief of the *Journal*. John intends to see how SAF can support agriculture appropriations that carry McStennis and other NIFA forestry/natural resource research and education programs. The SAF report on FS R&D has been completed; they are now working on next steps. Keith said in November we talked about adding a NAUFRP representative to the SAF Policy Committee, maybe as an ex officio member, to establish better communications because there seems to be a problem engaging on mutual policy interests. John said that is a challenge because of past history with ex-officio members; they are reluctant to do that. Another option would be by appointment. The September issue of *The Forestry Source* advertises for open committee positions; these are three-year terms. John thinks currently there are representatives from Humboldt and Oregon State Universities. The Policy Committee meets once a month by phone and twice a year in person, usually March/April and Convention. It will be April 10<sup>th</sup> this year. Randy suggested they invite NAUFRP to make a presentation. John was asked if there was a university/NAUFRP representative on the CEO Search Committee; he didn't think so. Jim Thinnes is leading it. John and Louise Murgia are the co-acting CEOs.

Wendy Fink, Association of Public Land Grant Universities (APLU): Wendy recognized John Hayes' work on behalf of NAUFRP. Citing a recent call of Agriculture deans, she stressed how important it is for someone representing NAUFRP's interests to be involved. Dr. Ian Maw, APLU President, is retiring; there are few candidates at this point. The 2018 Employment Survey will close May 15<sup>th</sup>. She has gotten 4,000 responses and expects more than 10,000 altogether. The purpose of the survey is to help with curriculum on soft employability skills. APLU is submitting a proposal for a 2019 grant to the National Science Foundation on rural populations and STEM.

Diversity Chair Report, Kamran Abdollahi: (Written report provided) Kamran discussed the SAF/USFS/NAUFRP diversity and inclusion report 2016/2017. Kamran has worked with SAF on a national Diversity and Inclusion Policy, formation of a Diversity and Inclusion Working Group, establishment of a Diversity Leadership Award and program material for the 2017 and 2018 national conventions. He noted that the Minority in Agriculture and Natural Resources (MANNRs) 2018 Conference will be April 4-7 in Greensboro, NC.

International Chair Report, Steve Shaler: (Written report provided) The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of IUFRO is in 2019 with the 25<sup>th</sup> World Congress to be held Sept 29<sup>th</sup>-Oct 5<sup>th</sup> in Brazil. Steve plans to attend as the NAUFRP representative and would like to discuss messaging for this event. It is important to have graduate student attendance. He plans to send some things out to get a handle on this. Tom DeLuca, University of Montana, has agreed to join the International Committee. Terry noted the issue of how few US schools have IFSA student chapters. Katy said they are a member but get very little communication.

Budget and Advocacy Committee (BAC), John Hayes: NAUFRP is a member of BAC. Business is conducted by monthly conference calls usually with reports by the lobbying firm Cornerstone. There are six priority funding areas for FY19; McStennis is one of them. It is only 3 to 3.5 percent of the total ask.

Board of Natural Resources, John Hayes: (Written handout provided) John discussed the Forest Health Initiative he has been developing under the APLU process. It has produced a White Paper describing the problem across the country. Section leads and some authors have been identified. Page 2 of the handout provides guidance and framework for the authors and section leads. Sections are to be about 1,000 words. Wendy said that even though the legislation on the APLU water initiative was unsuccessful, there was success in steering dollars and gaining profile on the issue within the Administration; this resulted in a \$14 million increase in one year at USDA. John said we are gaining attention from the

higher ups within APLU regarding forests. APLU is a powerful organization and we should do more with them. John hopes to have the Initiative ready by the end of the year.

ATR Report, Jim Allen: Let Jim know if there are any specific topics/issues you would like covered if an ATR meeting is held later this year.

Southern Regional Report, Scott Merkle: Dale Green plans a regional meeting June 27-29 in conjunction with the Forest Landowners Association at Lake Oconee, GA.

Northeast Regional Report, Mike Messina: Five schools met in Albuquerque, NM. A meeting is planned this summer in Portland, ME in conjunction with the National Council of Forestry Association Executives, July 17-20.

Western NAUFRP, Linda Nagel: The western region met in Albuquerque last fall. Eight schools were represented. They are discussing a summer meeting at Northern Arizona University around June 18-20 and plan to focus on diversity issues. They will plan to add regional and national research priorities to their agenda. They have also talked about how to better engage with the Western Forestry Leadership Council. Colorado State Forester Mike Lester has extended an invitation. Linda is intrigued to learn about Southern NAUFRP's data survey and would like to see a copy. Dale Green can provide. They have a policy to only provide access to the data to those who respond to the survey.

North Central Regional Report, Mark Rickenbach: Mark is also intrigued by the Southern NAUFRP's data survey. The North Central also met in Albuquerque with eight institutions represented and discussed what they can do together and how they can dialogue with State Foresters. He noted the FS Northern Region Research office is moving to the Forest Products Lab in Madison, WI. He has reached out to them but so far has only had a lukewarm response which may be due to the transition. A future topic for discussion is shared teaching across institutions. They may hold a spring meeting if there is enough interest.

Chad Bishop (University of Montana), President, National Association of University Fisheries and Wildlife Programs (NAUFWP): NAUFWP appreciates NAUFRP support for the Cooperative Research Units (CRUs). Four universities want new units but it is difficult because so many positions/units are under-funded or unfunded. Chad is on the National Cooperators Coalition. CRUs are key to bridging research/science and management. NAUFWP will meet at the North American Wildlife Conference March 26<sup>th</sup> in Norfolk, VA. Terry Sharik asked about the long relationship the two organizations have had – what are the advantages and disadvantages of merging. Randy said he used to think there was benefit of merging but since he has come to also represent NAUFWP, he believes it is better to have more voices. John Hayes has strong feelings on this; he doesn't see NAUFRP wanting to get involved with marine fisheries and similar issues – it is more effective to have the two groups working together. Keith agrees there is value of separate entities and there are opportunities for cross-messaging. John says the coop units have an annual meeting to bring in partners to discuss state and federal issues. Several years ago, NAUFRP pitched the coop model to the FS R&D. This might be a topic for a Summit. Jeff said there might be an idea for a joint committee noticing that half of those at the table represent wildlife.

Keith handed out a list of Partner meeting dates. It would be good to have representation at all of these; it could be an opportunity to talk about McStennis. He had the opportunity to do this with the National Council of Forestry Association Executives last year. Let him or Terri know if there are other groups to add to this list. Keith also asked for feedback on the listserv – is appropriate material (quality and quantity) going out on it? There were no complaints. Terri and Randy will work with Eric Norland on developing a McStennis only listserv.

Washington Report, Randy Nuckolls: Congress passed a two-year budget cap increase. FY18 is funded at FY17 levels which means program funds cannot be moved around. USDA did get an increase but it is unlikely they will reach research programs. The Continuing Resolution is in effect till March 23<sup>rd</sup> as Congress tries to finish the Omnibus bill. The House passed all 12 bills. The President's FY19 budget provided a lot of cuts across the board. Forestry is not favored by the Administration. Randy believes the President's budget is DOA and Congress will provide cap relief. Congressional members not on the Appropriations committees make 'Member Requests'. The House deadline for Agriculture and Interior Member Requests is March 16<sup>th</sup>. The Senate deadline is later. Randy urged NAUFRP members to talk directly to their campus government affairs officers. With APLU, we are seeking a \$200 million increase in the NIFA budget which

includes an increase to McStennis taking it to \$40 million. The RREA budget would not change. The Omnibus bill needs 60 votes to pass the Senate. **Action:** Randy will send a message to the full membership.

Continued discussion of McStennis Re-Branding Next Steps: A possible strategy is to 1- form a communications group; 2- fund the development of an identity package that is co-branded for McStennis and our institutions; 3- establish a McStennis webpage. Altogether this would likely cost \$50,000. Mary doesn't want to wait until Fall on this. Terry asked how this relates to NAUFRP. Mary said that Will Novy-Hildesley (NAFP) was even confused about the McStennis and NAUFRP relationship. People need to be able to google McStennis and land somewhere with a tagline. A lot of material was developed for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary that can provide content for a webpage. Success and impact stories would be needed. It would be good to tie the NAUFRP and McStennis logos together. John agrees some re-branding of NAUFRP would help. Keith agrees it would probably be a good idea to have a higher/clearer profile for NAUFRP but the key focus is McStennis. The bottom-line is, if McStennis went away there would be a house of cards effect. The problem is McStennis is not recognized for what it does. It was agreed that next steps would be to gather communicators. A template describing a McStennis success story from each university would be useful; formats to consider might be a one-pager or short video. Randy asked if this might be a concept for NIFA funding – to hire a professional. Eric said it depends on how you frame it. Requests above \$10,000 go to another level for discretionary dollars which are not available under the CR. Bob said there are issues the public understands and he advocates we connect to them (wildfire, EAB,...). Mary says we need to find an issue industry can get excited about; we need them as stakeholders. Randy says we need a top 10 list of McStennis accomplishments. Keith, we can start with gathering stories; the harder piece is the money to buy professional help. Mary said the advantage of a contractor is they will contact all to capture what is going on at a national level. **Action Item:** Executive Committee members are to provide success stories from their schools with photos. State examples due June 1; Regional examples after their summer meetings.

Carlton Owen, President and CEO, U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities: Carlton gave an overview of the Endowment then discussed the Blue Ribbon Commission on Forests and Forest Products report. The report was primarily targeted at the federal sector. Keith says it is generally good and overdue for what it is says; we agree on a lot of it. Carlton said the intent was to point out problems for the future. For example, the FS R&D conversation is not about planning for the future, but individual fiefdoms. You cannot get industry to support with that. Keith said the universities, federal agencies and industry need to be together to focus on national priorities. Jim Allen asks about getting any industry traction. R&D in industry is gone; there is no innovation. Carlton says the Endowment must remain focused on a few big picture items for the US and Canada. They are not a trade organization. The benefit they bring is leverage. He has looked at why agriculture is successful. They have two check-offs that generate \$40 million in promotional research. The paper sector has no research. Water is the most important forest product. Industry would say differently. We have a broken system. Carlton asked what do we see as priorities for the Endowment in the next 5 to 10 years that are long term and impactful? The responses were: communities and work force development, connecting to human health (Carlton says they are working with CDC on quality of air and water), loss of forest expertise and the ability to produce the next generation of scientists. Carlton believes the future means fewer schools. He says there are more than 400 organizations related to some aspect of forestry. Canada has a model for a bio-economy. Eric asked if there is another sector that has gone thru these changes. Carlton says agriculture. Mary says Canada has a large innovation fund; we need something like that. Katy notes that the rate of disruption is going to increase; need to have tools to make changes. Randy says the Chief and Carlos are talking about convening NIFA, DOE, NSF, universities and industry. Carlton says they have identified 6-7 industry leaders who get it. Carlton says we need to talk differently and collectively; those tools are not hard. Keith said we have talked about health, water, air, products but not eco-tourism which is a reason why people visit their community forests. Carlton invites all to shoot him their thoughts.

Sonny Ramaswamy, Director, USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture: Sonny will be leaving his appointment in May. He discussed USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue's Report on Rural Prosperity that was released in January. A Strategic Plan by the Secretary will be out soon and drive everything they do. The Rural Task Force Report has five pillars: E-connectivity, quality of life, tech innovation, workforce development, economic well-being. Four of these relate to forestry. Sonny urges framing our issues around these. NIFA is being revamped; it won't be very different but will incorporate a rural focus on science. We have important opportunity to speak to the value of our programs thru stakeholders. More than \$300 billion was added to overall budget; Sonny hopes some of it will come to USDA. The President's budget for USDA was going to be "really, really, really bad" but that was turned around working with the Secretary's office. There is no Under Secretary for Science and Education (the position formerly occupied by Catherine

Wotaki). Sonny says they are putting together a list by the end of the week. If you have names get them to his office. John thanks Sonny for his years of engaging with us and reminding us to bring stakeholders to the table. He thinks this should be an agenda item for NAUFRP. Keith said we are working on a communications strategy with success stories. Jim Allen said the budget is very disappointing for McStennis and asked why that is. Sonny said it is the President's budget. The OMB head says 'not a government role'. Sonny says again it was going to be devastating. The Assistant OMB Director Jim Herz has Hill experience and was apparently helpful. Wendy asked for advice for building a defense for capacity programs. Sonny says to focus on the value of the program and why it is critically important. He asked who has gone to ask Congress to increase the budget cap for agriculture. Keith noted AFRI and movement towards Sustainable Agriculture and asked how we can increase foundational grants? Sonny said it is important to emphasize connectivity -- a continuum -- think along these lines and the return on investment.

Meeting Adjourned.