

SAMAB EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

November 15, 2011

Renaissance Hotel, Asheville, NC

Members Present: Judy Francis, Chair (NCDENR)); Rick Durbrow (EPA); Susan Fox (USFS); Mark Endries (US F W); Mark Pistrang (USFS); Pat Parr (ORNL); Jeff Troutman (NPS); Terry Seyden; Scott Gain (USGS); Mark Healy (Cherokee Nat'l Forest); Bob Shepherd (outgoing SAMAB Board Member); Crystal Reese (CFAIA)

Judy Francis called the meeting to order with introductions around the table.

Financial Review: Crystal stated that all financial information was handed out prior to the meeting and she hoped everyone had a chance to review the budget for the next fiscal year, Financial Statement through September 30, 2011, Conference Update and Quarterly Report of the Program of Work. She reported that she had a new format for the reports that showed the breakdown for Co-op vs. Foundation. She also reported that the Quarterly Report for the Program of Work was also new and would be included each quarter. The conference budget was briefly discussed and members thought that the co-op should look into changing the dates of the conference. She also reported that the Updated Cooperative Executive Committee Member list was in the packet.

Website Update: Judy Francis discussed the need for techniques for speaking about climate change. Grist had compiled a database on their website, which contained 100s of questions about climate change and responses. Susan Fox found money to fund a graduate student from UNCA to put on this info on the SAMAB website. Website has been re-designed. Crystal handed out the new Google Analytics Report. The web designer has said there is a problem with the website which has to do with yost-ga. The directories are not being found. Crystal will need to get with graduate student to get this fixed. The report was reviewed. This report will be given to the Co-op every quarter. Susan Fox will work with Crystal to see how often other similar sites are used.

Changeover of Chair: Terms turn over today. There was a discussion about new officers and not having them from the same agency and/or state. Scott Gain has expressed interest in becoming Vice Chair. Rick Durbrow made the motion to approve Scott Gain as the Vice Chair for the upcoming year. Pat Parr seconded the motion and there being no further discussion it was unanimously approved. There was discussion of who could be a member of the Co-Op. Susan S. said that members are ones who signed on the Cooperative Agreement. They added affiliates to the Co-op so that allows them to add anyone they like to participate. Susan will get with Crystal to come up with a few questions to prompt people to see if they are interested in joining the Co-op.

Workshop Update: Judy Francis reported that one of the items that came out of the spring strategic planning meeting was a focused workshop. She said they wanted to focus on one member agency and they thought that should be the Park Service since they had not been participating. They were trying to find an issue they were dealing with. One item that has come up several times was the acid deposition

in high elevation plant communities. This has been an issue for the Parkway as well as the Great Smokies. Judy has been corresponding with Steve Moore a biologist in the Smokies. He has given her two names for speakers. She has dates that they are available. Location was discussed. One speaker is already covered by a grant. There was discussion about getting another grant to cover the second speaker and travel stipend. Having the workshop in March or April was discussed. Judy said the only expense to SAMAB would be the cost of second speaker, travel and lunch. Terry Seyden is to check and see if TVA has a grant that might pay for lunches, etc. There was discussion about the workshop and it was decided that a working group would form to work on the Workshop. Scott Gain volunteered to head the working group.

Roundtable Discussion:

- Terry Seyden: SAMAB Foundation possibility some designations of the biosphere reserve going away. They are going to keep track back to this group.
- Rick Durbrow: EPA budgets are tight and expected to be reduced further in the future. Much of the reduction to last year's budget has been directed toward travel. Expect additional reductions over the coming year and it would be helpful to place more emphasis on web access to Executive Committee meetings in the future as well as to improve the phone line connections for those attending remotely. EPA is working collaboratively on two projects that are of interest to SAMAB. The National Ecological Framework is a hub and corridor network of critical ecosystems across the US. Should be finalized soon and it would be good if SAMAB member agencies could review the maps and protocol used to identify concurrence with the findings or provide input to making the draft better. The second project is the Landscape Conservation and Restoration Pilot Project being led through the Southeast Natural Resource Leaders Group. This effort is working out connecting Federal agency funding sources to the protection of critical ecosystems across the Southeast that provide an opportunity for building resilience into natural resource decisions addressing climate change.
- Scott Gain: USGS has no money; they are not allowed to have fans or heaters in the office. Figuring out how to work with other partners. Jerry McMann out of our office has been chosen as Director of the Climate Science Center in Raleigh. He suggested having an LCC rep here at SAMAB.
- Susan Fox: They released a report card on sustainability that will be discussed at conference. She has copies and wants input. They are initiating a sub regional southern Appalachian component to the southern forests futures project. Looking forward to serving as President.
- Judy Francis: NCDENR lost one-third of its total budget. Also lost the Soil & Water Conservation Division and the Division of Forest Resources. Took report card Susan mentioned and working with Mountain resource commission and expanding that to include western 27 counties to expand on forest to include cultural and place based economic development matrix for online support tool for officials. Goal to have online in January 2012. She has also been part of re-writing the American Planning Association's Policy on Climate Change for Planners.
- Jeff Troutman: NPS – directors have put in a Call to Action which is 36 focus areas across the service directed at keeping the parks and park service relevant in next century.

- Pat Parr: ORNL struggling to understand where will be financially. To be prepared they are trying to position 350 volunteer separations by the end of December. They have a Research and Development Lab for DOE. She has a small natural resources team for 34,000 acres.
- Mark Healy: Cherokee same budget problems, recently rolled out ecosystem restoration which is project on north end of forest. Also continuing aggressively non evasive species and growing hemlock woolly adelgid program.
- Mark Endries: USFW budget has dwindled and they have more travel restrictions. One special project ongoing is protecting the habitat mapping for approximately 230 aquatic species. Gary will be returning to the SAMAB position.
- Bob Shepherd who is retiring from SAMAB Foundation Board: Currently is in Group that meets by Skype who help protect plant species.

Next Meeting Date is Thursday, February 2nd in Knoxville, TN. Survey monkey will be sent out to schedule the rest of the meetings for 2012.

Action Items:

Website: Susan Fox to work with Crystal to find a way to report how other similar sites are used to compare to SAMAB site.

Affiliate Members: Susan will get with Crystal to come up with a few questions to prompt people to see if they are interested in joining the Co-op.

Workshop: Terry Seyden is to check and see if TVA has a grant that might pay for lunches, etc.

Survey monkey will be sent out to schedule the rest of the meetings for 2012.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Crystal Reese, CFAIA