

SUFC Urban Research Call

Wednesday, October 7, 2015

1 p.m.

Participating: Paul D. Ries, Paul F. Ries, Kathy Wolf, Scott Maco, Jen Hinrichs, Sasha Tenenbaum, Faith Campbell, Beth Larry, Ian Leahy, Gordon Mann, Ann Gosline

Introduction Sasha Tenenbaum, new SUFC Director

Contact information:

stenenbaum@sufc.org

(917) 887-0146

Be sure to see Constant Contact mailing out in this week with Sasha's letter to the SUFC community.

Beth Larry, national program lead for research at the FS with SUFC:

1. NRS Staffing update:
 - The Northern Research Station (NRS) is bringing its urban field stations and urban natural resource stewardship (UNRS) programs together under one research unit, led by Keith Nislow. The reorganization or "refocusing effort" was effective October 1st, and impacts the staffs of the Baltimore, NYC, and Philadelphia urban field stations. Expected outcomes of the movement – stronger overall coordination and collaboration across the field stations (e.g. research directions, data platforms, science delivery, communications, etc.) of NRS, with benefits for us nationally.
 - Urban nat. resources work has always been cross-cutting across NRS program/research units and this helps to bring the urban work together cohesively. Keith is based in Amherst MA. Field stations are: Baltimore, NYC, and Philadelphia with future vision for Chicago and Lansing, MI.
 - Lynn Westphal will remain lead of NRS's social science unit; Dave Nowak has moved to the Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) unit (and now has the title/rank of super scientist), which will help strengthen connection between Urban FIA and i-Tree (NRS is lead for Urban FIA).
 - Sarah Hines (past Presidential Management Fellow, most recently at Rocky Mt Research Station) is now transitioning back to NRS and will focus on science delivery and strategic communications across the field stations and in Baltimore (Beth hoping to get Sarah to Partners Conf.)

- Updates to USFS urban research directory (reflecting changes) will be available soon, [here](#).

2. Forest Inventory & Analysis (FIA)

- Urban FIA webinar recording and presentation materials now online, [here](#), for those who missed. Serves as a good resource, together with Urban FIA [Frequently Asked Questions](#). Speakers from WI and TX talked about the value of urban FIA for their cities and broader state efforts.
- FAQ document includes links to a lot of resources (e.g. Urban FIA implementation map, urban tree lists, draft FIA strategic plan, technical resources). Austin report is now being developed and Beth is working with NRS FIA and communications on urban specific national design for urban FIA reports, other briefs.

3. Budget update

- R&D is funded until 12/11/15 at enacted FY 2015 level (\$296 million) with across-the-board 0.2108 % cut. Research stations have received direction to be conservative on spending over the next few months (i.e. no new agreements or contracts.)
 - Urban research funding for FY 2015, according to recent research station reporting, was \$7,393,000 – demonstrating commitment to continued urban research investments.

ACTION ITEMS:

- **Reach out to Keith Nislow in the near future to meet with SUFC members (December near SUFC Steering Cmte mtg 12/9/15 or FS Chief's holiday party?) - - Sasha**
- **Science delivery update AND National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council (NUCFAC) - saved for next R & D call (contact Walt Warriner for update presentation availability) - -Sasha**

Dr. Kathy Wolf, report out on the NUCFAC 10-Year Plan

- The 10-year plan is an “encyclopedia” of urban and community forestry information at this space and point in time. Very comprehensive.
- It also includes a dedicated research element that is also available as a stand along document.
- The full outreach action plan process was remarkable and including digital outreach, focus groups, 1-1 interviews, multiple sources and documents were synthesized that was comprehensive
- The plan contains a framework of broadly stated research goals that have more specific research suggestions/activities under “momentum research (e.g., iTree)” and “emerging research (e.g., socio-ecological research).

- There will be a formal roll-out of the Plan at the Partners meeting!
- How do we USE it?: As a team we struggled with phasing of the plan, recognizing it would not be possible to tackle or begin implementing and the NUCFAC itself will be looking at this issue. It can be used as a “toolkit” of sorts
- **Due out any day.**

ACTION ITEM:

- **Read it! Ask questions of Kathy, NUCFAC, SUFC and the consulting team behind the production and process. -- ALL**
- **Discuss the possibility of presenting the Plan/discussion group at the upcoming SUFC Annual Meeting in early 2016. Identify interest areas of the SUFC and how members can best utilize the information to advocate for U&CF interests. NOTE: Kathy is willing to participate in the Annual Meeting and present on the Plan. -- *Sasha***

Forestry Research Advisory Council (FRAC) – Paul F. Ries

FRAC influences funding for national forestry research (~\$30M each year) primarily leveraged through colleges and universities. Membership on FRAC covers a broad rep. that includes state and federal agencies; public interest groups; industry; and university/academic. Historically most funding has gone to traditional forestry projects.

- [Shannon Ramsey](#), Trees Forever, Iowa (currently serves on the cmte and is looking for ways to bridge work of FRAC and NUCFAC); SUFC can support Shannon’s efforts.
- FRAC looking for opport. for SUFC to come and present to the council so they get a better understanding of SUFC network.
- Steve Hart DFO for the Cmte. Paul has been in contact and FRAC knows we have active interest. We are now on their mailing list and will be looking for nominations in January 2016 to serve on the committee. Their goal is diversity – geographic, ethnic and across categories listed above. Struggle with ethnic diversity or disabilities.

Action Items (ALL):

- **Who among the SUFC community do we look at to nominate by January? Need to recommend individuals. All WG members, please send all suggestions to [Sasha](#).**
- **Plan presentation to FRAC. Leads – *Sasha and Paul F. Ries*.**

National Leadership Council (NLC) and Michael Rain, NE Research Station Director – Scott

Michael has been long-standing counsel and support of SUFC and is a member of the NLC. In August, several SUFC members met with Michael (via phone) to talk about:

1. Appropriations – everyone entity needs to be in line – in coordination about research (urban specifically)
2. How to get Urban Forestry viewed as a supported core FS program – one of seven priority programs in the FS but the budget of \$5.5M belies that core designation. Enter NLC (deputy chiefs, executive leadership team, and regional foresters make up NLC). Recommendation is to have SUFC present at a future NLC Partnership Meeting (calls led by Mary Wagner and FS Partnership Director). Beth Larry has requested we get on the agenda (endorsed by Michael Rains) and January 2016.
3. Policy working group – develop new and additional congressional advocates esp Interior and Env. Subcommittee.

Action Item:

- All Station Directors call. Beth and Alex will connect in coming weeks on how to best set up the call and how to plan for it. -- *Chairs and Sasha to support Beth as needed.*
- SUFC needs to decide what it is we want to say at key upcoming federal audiences. Looking at all the pending calls/meetings and presentations between FRAC, NCL, and Station Directors joint call.
– *Sasha to take the lead with the chairs over the next few weeks AND communications working group.*

NEXT STEPS:

- Sasha will circulate a meeting poll for November or December.
- On the next Urban Research call, we will include a NUCFAC, science delivery, and strategic planning updates. (NOTE: The strategic planning process is well underway and it will provide inclusive guidance to this working group. Likely outcomes include more regular calls and structure to build the working group's internal capacity.)