

SUFC Meeting with Forest Service, R & D
Friday, December 14, 2012
Rosslyn, VA

Forest Service attendees:

- Jim Reaves, Deputy Chief R&D
- Cindi West, Associate Deputy Chief R&D
- Carlos Rodriguez-Franco, Director, Forest Management Sciences R&D
- Greg Reams, Director, Resource Use Sciences R&D
- Beth Larry, National Coordinator Urban Research

SUFC attendees:

- Carrie Gallagher, Alliance for Community Trees
- Gerry Gray, American Forests
- Danielle Dills, National Association of Conservation Districts
- Jennifer Hinrichs, SUFC

Issues addressed and key walk-away messages:

- SUFC members provided comprehensive but brief background on the coalition and our interest in actively supporting urban forestry research – as well as our extensive/diverse collective reach with SUFC membership constituency.
- Jim Reaves recognized the value of such a diverse coalition and the unique ability of this network to effectively advocate for issues of interest to the group - and appreciates the coalition's support.
- FS is certainly focusing more time and attention to urban issues (Jim referenced FS Chief's regular talking point of management of 100 million acres of urban forests in the US and increasing interest in the rural to urban gradient; increased interest in urban water issues; and the urban environment being the "north star".)
- Lifting and providing increased/consistent funds for the overall budget allows FS to raise bar overall benefitting urban +. Urban issues cross so many boundaries and when the FS talks to wide-ranging groups about research, they address a wide range of information from the biophysical to entomology to urban waters to carbon sequestration – all opportunities for education. "Really, our message is about interaction between nature and people."
- FS volunteered to providing "crisp" summary re: hypothetical question: "What are the various outcomes of our current research spending/work and IF additional funding were available, how would this be prioritized and what would a successful outcome look like?"

- Re: the FS R&D research budget, Cindi West again stressed the importance of supporting the foundation R & D efforts and thus increasing the baseline to benefit overall human health and health benefits vs. singling out any one line item in the larger budget.
- FS stressed the importance and value of the FIA research work and a desire to do more.
- SUFC was invited to participate in a portion of the upcoming (Feb. 12-14) **FS Research Executive Team** meeting (research station leadership) to share our recent work; what we want to do; and our internal priorities and needs.
- Reinforce that the Interior Appropriations Committee is a key target for SUFC and issues relating to urban research.
- Strong commitment to remain informed our respective work and utilize relationship between Jennifer, Beth, Alice +.

Follow Up Actions:

- ✓ Jennifer to connect with Beth Larry @ Research Station leadership meeting (FS Research Executive Team) for Feb. participation in conference call.
- ✓ Research Committee to address question posed by FS: What specific areas of research would our members be interested in if there were increased funding available in the future?
- ✓ Beth Larry to provide additional information about the Tree Canopy Assessment (and potential brown bag or webinar presentation?)
- ✓ FS to provide “crisp” summary to SUFC re: hypothetical question: “What are the various outcomes of our current research spending/work and IF additional funding were available, how would this be prioritized and what would a successful outcome look like? (For example, would that be a focus on extreme weather events, invasive species/pests etc.)
- ✓ SUFC/research cmte to reflect upon social and environmental justice issues @ research and our interests.
- ✓ SUFC to consider hosting a seminar/briefing on the Hill re: our urban research priorities (being considered in Feb. but may be too soon/crowded with other SUFC events and NAS workshop – poss. after results available from NAS workshop?)
- ✓ Jennifer/SUFC to include article on research work being done in Baltimore/other.

Our original agenda/talking points for the meeting are below. We managed to touch on all points by the end of the meeting.

General Outline for SUFC Meeting/Messages to Relay to FS leadership:

1. Who and what is SUFC

- a. Membership represents board cross-section of organizations (NGO's, associations, private sector, foresters, academics +)
 - b. History of SUFC (v. brief to include collaborative projects, advocacy work (ref. Moran report language), outreach/education+)
 - c. Recent activities/on-going work
- 2. SUFC increased focus on urban ecosystem/urban forestry research**
- a. Strong need to be better advocates of UF research
 - b. Assessing internal interests and strengths @ research within SUFC membership
 - c. Coordinating and communicating closely with FS through Beth Larry/Liaison
 - d. SUFC unclear where research \$ are being spent
 - e. SUFC interested in transparency in re: to research funding decision - provides vital information for SUFC to effectively advocate for research dollars ("don't be shy about needs")
- 3. SUFC can be a resource to FS in the future and is looking to strengthen the relationship with the FS - esp. research arm**
- a. SUFC is also cultivating relationship with multiple federal agencies - research is often the bridge (i.e., EPA, DOE etc.)
 - b. SUFC can get more traction with common language and better understanding of scope and direction of FS research priorities
 - c. SUFC has wide and deep reach to multiple stakeholder communities - from the "boots-the-ground" audience to private sector
- 4. Wrap - Up**
- a. Supportive of Nat'l Academies of Science UF workshop - late Feb.
 - b. Request follow-up meeting in mid-February 2013
 - c. SUFC to hold Annual Meeting and Advocacy Day in late Feb. or mid-March - opportunity to mutual share information and better prepare SUFC for our work on the Hill (both education and advocacy)
 - d. Potential invitation to attend/address SUFC membership at Annual Mtg?