

Steering Committee Meeting - August 25, 2021

Attendees: Paul Lachapelle, Wendy Hamilton, Sabrina Drill, Eric Norland, Aaron Weibe, David Kay, Chuck Ross, Jennison Kipp

1. NECI Membership Communications (Aaron Weibe, Extension Foundation)

- Ideas for increasing communication with membership
- Aaron recommendations: how are groups emailing large Extension membership networks? Listserv currently for 300+ NECI members. Listservs don't provide data or analytics to guide decisions for future communications and newsletters. Prefers Mailchimp or other mail accounts to streamline this process. We would qualify for a free mailchimp account because our member list is small (free for <500 or <1000?). Aaron recommends this for NECI and is happy to help us set this up.
- Paul: only drawback of Mailchimp and benefit of maintaining listserv is to enable 2-way communications. Folks aren't using the Extension Foundation Blog (subgroup within Connect Extension) whereas the listserv is being used. This is an ongoing challenge for us to think about.
- Aaron: nobody did anything anywhere this past summer - this was the summer that everything became a ghost town...
- Paul: a lot of people shared information via the listserv over the summer. How do we integrate these?
- Aaron: multiple methods of communication are always the best route to take.
- Sabrina: we need to have a communication committee to provide guidance and streamline various options/platforms for NECI communications.
- David: no reason to give up the listserv, just need to use more strategic communications strategies.
- **Agenda item for Sept: discuss communications committee leadership;** Sabrina is on NUEL Communications Committee and would prefer not to lead the NECI communications - she suggests perhaps Tracy would be interested in this as she took on the NECI FB page. SEE BELOW OM SEPT AGENDA ITEMS
- Whoever is on the Communications Subcommittee will need to communicate regularly with Aaron - he's willing to serve as an advisor to this subcommittee to make recommendations, answer questions, etc.
- Aaron: we currently have ~400 members in our Connect Extension NECI Subgroup - we should leverage that and continue to post to grow the network and communication.
- David: what is the aspirational number we should be reaching for in terms of communicating with Extension - regular involvement?
- Aaron: has been discussing this with Chris Geith - could be anywhere from 5,000 to 30,000. Recommends focusing on our audience rather than worrying about a target audience!
- **Agenda item for Sept: should be connection between communications plan and liaisons - how we link these processes.**
- Jennison: Virtual options discussions - Concerns for covid transmissions - where are each of us feeling about attending a meeting virtually or in person (National Sustainability Summit attendance in person or virtually). Sabrina - not going; Paul - teaching - can't go; would like to attend virtually; Eric - not allowed to travel; Virtual option is sustainable. Wendy need virtual attendance; David may travel to it but virtual should be included. Networking is missing from a virtual event,

however. Need a STRONG virtual option to as many sessions as possible - not just recording and sending out.

- Resource List - Sabrina - qts about who are resources for. Lots of maintenance is required for resource lists; What is the website for? Communication sub-committee might need to be formed and shared. Wendy - postponed discussion; Revisit at next meeting. Paul - resource list is great but we need to put more thought into communications/resources.

2. **Guest Speaker Updates for Monthly Membership Meetings (Melissa)**

- Confirmed - through end of 2021 scheduled!
- Sabrina: would like to invite director of Climate Exchange State Policy Network for next year - attended that meeting yesterday and can talk more about. She'll add her name to the speaker invite list. Wendy attends those meetings regularly and agrees they are a good group to invite. *Added to the speaker list*
- EDEN: Sabrina is a member of the CA EDEN network and would like to attend their annual meeting, \$200 registration fee - anyone have funding to support attendance at that? She contacted Abby Lillipop/Hofstetter (?) / EDEN coordinator asking if she is organizing the climate panel and who is on it. David is in touch with NY state EDEN director but has not been actively involved. Sabrina will take the spot representing NECI and will try to attend virtually.
- We talked about Sabrina being liaison to EDEN and NUEL - **add discussion of liaison roles to our next month SC meeting.** She's on SC for NUEL.
- **Also add discussion of partnership building to Sept SC meeting agenda**
- Keith Tidball is NY State EDEN coordinator; Angela Lindsey is on EDEN steering committee - perhaps we invite both of them to future SC meeting prior to monthly member meeting speaker.
- Jennison will proceed with inviting Angela & Kim from FL to speak at 2022 monthly member meeting.

3. **ECOP Climate Priority Updates (Ros)**

- Moving forward -
- Eric - attended two plg meetings; each has had a priority list of items; They're doing good work. David - Has Megan heard back from NOAA about the proposal? No info at this time.

Let's REALLY promote the Sept 2nd meeting. Aaron might be able to help us with promo.

Mtg ended - 10:32 Mtn time.

Chuck Ross joined in just as we were closing. Chuck - was sharing that the IT is desired for a full room discussion at the Penn State Summit - Owl IT is possible for a full room discussion. Chuck, please let Jennison and Ros know this is possible.

4. **Climate Session and Social at NEES+NSS (Jennison)**

- Virtual access - decision yet from planning committee? Jennison will be talking with the conference planning leaders (David Ripplinger and Dan) tomorrow, Thursday 26 Sept and wants to check in with NECI on how they're feeling about attending the event in person.
 - Paul hoping there will be virtual options

- Sabrina not planning to attend unless there is a virtual option
- Wendy needs virtual and would love virtual to be able to attend
- David may end up going because it's close and would like to be there; virtual makes sense for this event for several reasons even though there are advantages to being there in person. Keynote speakers always make sense to do it virtually; what's missing is the opportunity for networking and recruiting people to get involved. Bottom line: we've got to have a strong virtual option at this point for those who cannot participate.
- Eric/USDA cannot travel, wouldn't be able to attend in person.
- Session
- Social

5. Updates on action items from previous meeting:

- ACTION ITEM: **Jennison** to discuss virtual options for NEES+NSS with the planning committee
- ACTION ITEM: **Ros** will invite Rob Davies ideally for Sept (you can ask him about Oct, Nov too)
- ACTION ITEM: **Melissa** will reach out to North Central Climate Collaborative for October or November
- ACTION ITEM: **Sabrina** find out if Faith is free October or November
- ACTION ITEMS: **Deb** (Betsy will share these with Deb - email sent to Deb 8/11/2021)
 - Beef up the existing pages such as 'resources' first before starting new pages/content areas (like youth or from future subcommittees)
 - (not urgent) see communications committee below Link website and Extension Foundation Connect Extension climate blog posts auto post to the NECI website, and also link to social media accounts (Tracy Morgan is the lead for Facebook)
 - Reach out to EDEN about climate panel at their Sept, conference
 1. Sabrina emailed Abby
 2. Chuck to email Jason Henderson and CC Sabrina about strengthening NECI/EDEN relationship
 - Benita Litson's name is misspelled on the 'Events' page under Day Two (Deb has corrected this information)

6. Other items submitted by SC members -

- Future SC meetings focused on climate resources (Wendy) and DEIJ (Paul)

7. Topics for September SC Meeting (when Deb is available to join us)

- Discuss forming a Communications Subcommittee
 - Charge of the committee would be to create a communication plan that details how we want to use different elements of our communications sphere: website, webmap, listserv, Connect Extension, Facebook - and do we want to add MailChimp and Twitter?
- Ideally, BEFORE the September meeting - Draft a list of responsibilities outlining the items we would like Deb to coordinate, manage, and oversee that may include:
 - Set up calendar reminders for deadlines for setting speakers, having an agenda done, and to the specific people having those duties? (Tracy)

- Deb sends out the monthly membership meeting reminder with the agenda and guest speaker info at least 3 days in advance. (Paul)
- Website (Betsy)
- SC meeting minutes
- Other items she is already overseeing/managing
- Liaising with other groups
- We all discuss and agree on the monthly meeting agenda at previous SC meetings (at a minimum at the meeting the week before the monthly meeting). (Paul)
- MONTHLY MEETINGS: Whoever invites the guest speaker sends an announcement to the lists when the speaker is confirmed. This can/should be as far in advance as possible so we can market on our Facebook, lists, etc.(Paul)