



WICCI SCIENCE COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, September 25, 2007
DNR Science Operations Center
Convened at 12:12 PM

ATTENDANCE

- Jack Sullivan (JS)
- Lewis Gilbert (LG)
- Bud Harris (BH)
- John Magnuson (JM)
- George Kraft (GK)
- Richard Lathrop (RL)
- Ken Potter (KP)
- Chris Kucharik (CK)
- Dan Vimont (DV)
- John Kutzbach (JK)
- Sarah Shapiro-Hurley (SSH)
- Steve Pomplun (SP)
- Darrell Zastrow (DZ)
- Pete Nowak (PN)
- Sandra McLellan (SM)

MEETING PROPER

Introductions

Led by Jack Sullivan and Lewis Gilbert.

- Jack Sullivan notes that climate change is one of the “big three” priorities of DNR:
 1. Climate Change
 2. Green Energy
 3. Partnership
- Lewis Gilbert states that WICCI can serve three main purposes:
 1. Assess the possible changes that can happen in WI, based on our knowledge of ecosystems
 2. Choose the science questions that we need answered based on the needs and concerns of the policy makers of the state
 3. Serve as an advisory council

Vision, Mission, Goals Discussion

Pete Nowak comments that there is a strong distinction between "mitigation" and "adaptation." The governor's task force is charged with mitigation. WICCI's importance lies in its ability to anticipate and react to the changing climate.

The participants agreed. The governor's task force was set up specifically to address “human impacts on climate,” and WICCI should address “climate impacts on humans.”

WICCI and the Public

Everyone attending agreed that caution should be taken when involving WICCI with politics. It should be separate from politics and maintain its objectivity.

Richard Lathrop noted that social scientists and economists should be part of the Science Council to inform decisions, and Dave Vimont agreed: "Integration of stakeholders from the beginning is the way to make sure that the science is applied the right way." Stakeholders and decision makers should be involved in the individual working groups.

John Magnuson noted that WICCI is doing well to address the science first. IPCC reports have been changed between data analysis and publication because they were not firm on conclusions and were influenced by legislators. Time should be taken to build up the organization and build a support network.

Climate Modeling

Dan Vimont and others discussed the topic of climate modeling for a while. DV commented that models are large scale, and it is difficult to answer regional questions. Working groups should be assigned to fill in the gaps of models (i.e. ice, precipitation, temperature, etc.).

Discussion went on as to whether high and low scenarios should be analyzed so that at least some information would be available to the public.

Everyone agreed that the public's and the media's general lack of comprehension of error makes the use of these imperfect models a touchy issue. But we do need scenarios to inform people and attempt to address issues of extreme climatic events.

John Kutzbach: There are two issues: 1. proper distillation of IPCC data and what scenarios are applicable, 2. ensuring that we have the up-to-date data.

DV: I am skeptical of models. I am a modeler. [Laughs] What George Kraft proposes is to take up a working group to understand the data we have and including the IPCC analyses and how to combine these two information sets.

SSH: If we can't make some reasonable assumptions about what is going to happen, how can we come up with adaptive strategies? What kind of advice can we give? If we can't make some reasonable assumptions, then what are we doing?

LG: This question seems central to what the Science Council needs to answer. It's important for this body to work with uncertainty and hedge our bets, but we need to find a space in which we are giving recommendations and understanding without sacrificing the integrity of our data.

Outreach

Steve Pomplun: We will create a website. We will use the expertise that is in the Nelson Institute and the DNR to reach out to interests group and the media. Whatever publication we undertake, we will do media outreach. I think at least an annual conference.

RL: How do we communicate between the working groups and the Science Council? I like JM's model that the working group can do it themselves. Does the Outreach Committee serve as a link between all those things? How are we going to be sure we *know* what is being done in all these meetings?

LG: The short answer is that we do not have a well-defined management plan at the moment. We have a commitment on the part of you guys here. The objective on the part of WICCI as a whole should be met, and we will manage and adapt to certain situations.

Advisory Committee Suggestions

Organization	Type	Contact Person	Contact Info
Fire Department	Emergency Management		
Police Department	Emergency Management		
Nature Conservancy	Environmental NGO		
WI Wildlife Conservancy	Environmental NGO		
WI Association of Lakes	Environmental NGO		
SEA Grant	Environmental NGO		
Science and Outreach Organizations	Environmental NGO		
Sierra Club	Environmental NGO		
Wisconsin River Alliance	Environmental NGO		
Trout Unlimited	Environmental NGO		
International Crane Foundation	Environmental NGO		
Aldo Leopold Foundation	Environmental NGO		
Great Lakes United	Environmental NGO		
WI Public Radio	Media		
WI Public Television	Media		
WI Wastewater Operators Assoc	NGO		
WI Snowmobile Association	NGO		
Iceboaters Association	NGO		
Retirement Association	NGO		
Insurance Companies	Private Sector		
Agriculture Industry	Private Sector		
Road Builders	Private Sector		
Paper Pulp Industry	Private Sector		
Biofuel	Private Sector		
Farm Coops	Private Sector		
Utilities	Private Sector		
SC Johnson	Private Sector		
Governor's Council on Forestry	Public		
Tourism Authority	Public		
Conservation Congress	Public		
Chamber of Commerce	Public		
Department of Transportation	Public		
USGS	Public		
Chicago Department of Environment	Public		
Milwaukee	Public		
Datcap			
Kathleen Faulk			
WEA			

Working Group Topics

Topics were identified through suggestions and discussion amongst the participants. Everyone agreed that the “low-hanging fruit” should be focused on. In other words, the topics that are of great social importance and interest should be addressed because they carry with them political clout and momentum, as well as the possibility for funding since the recent floods have raised public interest.

Everyone agreed that the role of the Science Council is to provide oversight to the working groups. The Council will identify topics, and a member of the Council will be in contact with those undertaking the identified project. These sponsors will keep the Council up-to-date and maintain communication with her or her particular working group.

Working Group Topic	SC Point Person	Suggested Affiliates	Contact Info
Updating of Precipitation Data Curves	Ken Potter		
Future Climate Scenarios for WI	D. Vimont, J. Kutzbach		
Northern Forest Composition			
Wildlife Diseases and Human Health Effects			
Insect Populations			
Winter Tourism			
Cold and Warm Water Fish			
Water Contamination and Quality			
Carbon Sequestration			
Endangered Species and Habitats			
Ecosystem Services			
Uniform Organizaed Data Sets			
Streams vs. Lakes			
Wetland Development and Flooding			
Great Lakes Water Levels			
Opportunities for Wisconsin in a Changing Climate			
Human Health			
Terrestrial Native Species			
Aquatic Exotic Species			
Changing Temperatures and Effects on Energy Demand			
Roads and Infrastructure			

Future Meetings

The body decided that monthly meetings would be best for the time being so that WICCI can build momentum and start to function as an organization. Tuesday afternoons at the end of the month were decided on, since they appear to accommodate the majority of the members.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.