

WICCI Science Council Meeting

Tuesday, July 1, 2008
UW Memorial Union
12:00 PM

ATTENDANCE

Science Council Members

- Dick Lathrop (Co-Chair)
- John Magnuson (Co-Chair)
- Sharon Dunwoody
- Chris Kucharik
- John Kutzbach
- Philip Moy
- Ken Potter
- Sarah Shapiro-Hurley
- Bill Walker
- Darrell Zastrow

Nonmembers

- Tom Dunbar (Center for Resilient Cities)
- Pete Nowak
- Steve Pomplun
- David Webb
- Richard Smith

ABSENT MEMBERS

- Scott Craven
- Bud Harris
- George Kraft
- Sandra McLellan
- Jonathan Patz
- Dan Vimont

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

- Pete Nowak, Steve Pomplun, and Kevin Gibbons will look into foundations and other funding opportunities for Advisory Committee activities.
- Outreach Committee will create a plan on how the WICCI website should be redesigned and present that plan at the next meeting.
- The Outreach Committee will bring an updated list of Advisory Committee nominees and be prepared to discuss the diversity of the group.
- Bud Harris will send members the draft of the report produced by the workshop.
- Ken Potter will provide a report on the progress of the water-related working group activities.

- Each working group will produce a problem statement and position paper for the issues that it is trying to address.
- A process for creating an annual report will be drafted by the Outreach Committee.
- The Outreach Committee will determine meeting dates and times for the upcoming months.

MEETING PROPER

Presentation of Agenda and Meeting Minutes

12:04 – Meeting called to order.

No new items added to agenda.

Meeting minutes from May 5, 2008 meeting presented and approved by members.

Funding Opportunities

David Webb discussed three items related to funding opportunities for:

- WICCI should continue to pursue outside funding for climate change related efforts, as budget constraints make state funding uncertain.
- Continue to push and advocate for allocation of federal fish and wildlife dollars.
- Dan Vimont and Chris Kucharik obtained the Focus on Energy grant. The Science Council members praised their efforts. A large sum has been granted to other Focus on Energy projects that are all directly or indirectly relevant to WICCI, renewable energies, and the Nelson Institute, including the following projects:
 - Forestry and biomass harvesting
 - Research of air quality, ozone and urbanization

Other members suggested investigating foundations that could support Advisory Committee activities:

Action Item: Pete Nowak, Steve Pomplun, and Kevin Gibbons will look into foundations and other funding opportunities for Advisory Committee activities.

WICCI Outreach Committee Activities

The Capital Times article on WICCI was discussed by members. Members were pleased with the content and layout of the article. It was suggested that WICCI work with the reporter more. It was also posed that photos should appear in future internet and printed media about WICCI.

Members noted that all sessions from the Earth Day Conference are available on the conference website.

Dolly Ledin (Paradise Lost) was suggested as a contact to help market WICCI activities, especially in the high schools.

Members noted that the WICCI website as an educational tool has not yet been fine tuned. The site could be modeled after that of the Union of Concerned Scientists and include more educational information, contacts, working groups, etc. The Outreach Committee will ask Science Council members on content.

Action Item: Outreach Committee will create a plan on how the WICCI website should be redesigned and present that plan at the next meeting.

John Magnuson and Pete Nowak updated the members on the meeting that they had with a staff member of the National Governors Association, in which they explained the mission and makeup of WICCI.

Resilient Cities and Urban Forestry

12:35 – Tom Dunbar made a presentation on behalf of Resilient Cities and Urban Forestry.

Some main talking points:

- Resilience is the ability to bounce back and adapt.
- Resilient Cities gauges the climatic and environmental literacy of local people so that we may understand what they know and what they do not and then uses this information for outreach.
- WICCI has the potential to provide useful information, such as what are the extremes and what do we expect to happen.
- Resilient Cities would like to go through this process, develop ideas and strategies, deliver that information to stakeholders, and return information back to the parties that participated so that they can prepare to respond.
- A climate preparedness plan should be developed that includes urban forestry.
- The concept of an urban forest includes urban tree gardens, backyards, parkways, and tree covers. It means redefining the word “forest” to include the entire plantation that provides opportunities for carbon dioxide sequestration.

After his presentation Mr. Dunbar fielded questions, comments and discussion from Science Council members.

Science Council members appreciated the presentation and considered it a good idea to include urban forestry in policy and development decisions. Mr. Dunbar stressed that these principles should be utilized to affect change, including in University of Wisconsin policies, on environmental services at the urban level.

Members discussed how urban forestry could be a part of WICCI, and maybe as a subgroup of the forestry working group.

Wisconsin Climate Working Group Grants

1:10 – Chris Kucharik and John Kutzbach, members of the Climate Working Group, described the three goals of their project:

- 1) To merge precipitation, temperature, and other climate datasets together. There has been some difficulty in finding high resolution historical data, so there is a great deal of work needed to investigate high variability.
- 2) To interact with people around this table, advisory groups, working groups to get the information to them, so that they may use this to carry out research.
- 3) To develop a website/interactive avenue so people can understand the data

The Climate Working Group was able to receive a grant of \$200,000 and would like \$100,000 for each year. They said that this amount will be able to accomplish a great deal of good work.

Many members lauded the group for their accomplishment and said that bringing the global models down to the state level will be a huge help in informing policy members and affecting change, which is the foundation of WICCI.

The project plan is to use the first year to acquire data, downscale the models, and provide data on the web in the summer 2009. The Climate Group noted that it aims to use regional climate models after the first two years of the project.

Members suggested meeting with other working groups and making sure that other groups coordinate closely with the Climate Group so that the working groups know what kind of information is useful and available and the Climate Group understands the needs of the other groups.

WICCI Advisory Committee

1:35 – Pete Nowak and Steve Pomplun updated the members on the status of the Advisory Committee. The list of potential members has been distilled, a small budget has been allocated by the Nelson Institute, and the Outreach Committee plans to contact them in the next few weeks.

Council members asked various questions regarding the inclusion of individuals and groups. Members agreed that members of the Advisory Committee should enter the committee and discussions as *individuals* who are leaders in their fields, rather than as representatives of their organizations or sectors.

The proposed schedule for the Committee has been three meetings to walk them through educational process regarding climate change and adaptation and then to go through a facilitated process of two more meetings for questions based on what they've heard and what concerns them. From these meetings the Advisory Committee will try to come up with a list of concerns and recommendations to present to the Science Council and working groups.

Concerns were raised on the bias and diversity of the group and its representatives. As an example, a gap in the makeup of the nominees is that there is only one female member. The Outreach Committee should try to increase the diversity of the group.

Action Item: The Outreach Committee will bring an updated list of Advisory Committee nominees and be prepared to discuss the diversity of the group.

Mr. Pomplun and Dr. Nowak estimated that the first meeting would occur in mid to late August.

Bill Walker suggested that this initial group be a foundation group with a finite timeline and that a parliamentary process should be put in place to establish the next replacements.

Green Bay Working Group Workshop Report

2:07 – A workshop funded by Sea Grant and consisting of 20 participants was conducted to assess the risk of threats to the Green Bay ecosystem. The group used fuzzy math approaches to undertake the process.

Some talking points:

- Fifteen years ago major threats to the Green Bay ecosystem were ranked, and participants of the workshop undertook that ranking again now to see if it has changed and how.
- Nutrients, suspended solids, runoff, and exotics came out on both lists.
- The principle concern before was “how do we get rid of carp?”, and today carp are minor actors. The reevaluation has shown that exotics have moved up as a priority.
- The workshop also ranked how different environmental parameters affected and were affected by different threats.

Action Item: Bud Harris will send members the draft of the report produced by the workshop.

Milwaukee Working Group Update

2:17 – Ken Potter updated the member on the status of the workshop the Milwaukee Working Group was to conduct the following week. There were to be forty participants, mainly professionals, scientists, and engineering consultants. The attendees would be tasked to identify the most important things that the city of Milwaukee should change in the next few years to adapt to changing climate conditions.

In the previous Milwaukee meeting, members discussed the Toronto Adaptation Plan and how applicable that model may be for Milwaukee. The members of the group are genuinely concerned with where the city is going to go, mainly in regards to water, heat and air quality issues, realizing that social decision making will be hard to tackle.

Members wanted the presentations from the workshop to be recorded.

Hydrology Working Group Update

2:29 – Ken Potter, John Magnuson, and Dick Lathrop attended a meeting to brainstorm the formation of a Hydrology Working Group and what issue it would address.

The group will focus on hydrology by focusing on regions and watersheds in the state and using separate stations to form their models. For example, was the recent flooding in Iowa due to anthropogenic issues or climate and how much of the problem is related to land use practices?

They planned to meet again in August to get the working group up and running.

Action Item: Ken Potter will provide a report on the progress of the water-related working group activities.

Communication of Problems and Solutions

Ken Potter noted that even before the models are created and verified (which will take a long time), the hydrology group should make strong, assertive statements to try to change policy, such as the negative impacts of tilling the soil. "When I talk to reporters I can't say 'we know...,' but we can say 'most people believe...'"

Some members proposed that each working group should produce a problem statement for their particular focus.

Action Item: Each working group will produce a problem statement and position paper for the issues that it is trying to address.

Members agreed that statements regarding the opinion of working group members should be made early to inform the public and policy makers, rather than waiting for models to come out. In other words: "Don't wait, say something." Position papers will be official publications of WICCI and the Nelson Institute. The Advisory Committee should help guide the Science Council on how they should go about these communications.

The members also agreed that WICCI should produce annual reports to describe its accomplishments and progress on the issues.

Action Item: A process for creating an annual report will be drafted by the Outreach Committee.

Regarding the Climate Working Group and trends, it was recommended that they could produce a report outlining the broad trends of the Wisconsin climate so that the public could understand the issue better.

Action Item: The Outreach Committee will determine meeting dates and times for the upcoming months.

[Meeting adjourned at 3:13.]

UPCOMING MEETING DATES

- Monday, September 8
- Monday, October 6

- Monday, November 3
- *(no December meeting)*
- Monday, January 12
- Monday, February 9
- Monday, March 9
- Monday, April 6
- Monday, May 4

APPENDIX

Meeting Agenda

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| 12:00 | 1 – Welcome and Call to Order |
| 12:05 | 2 – Introductions and Call for New Business |
| 12:15 | 3 – Approval of Minutes from May 5, 2008 meeting |
| 12:20 | 4 – WICCI outreach activities (Pomplun) |
| 12:30 | 5 – Urban Forestry initiatives and climate change – presentation and discussion (Heather Mann, Resilient Cities) |
| 1:00 | 6 – Wisconsin Climate Working Group – Focus on Energy grant update and plan of action (Vimont & Kucharik) |
| 1:30 | 7 – WICCI Advisory Committee formation update (Nowak & Pomplun) |
| 2:00 | 8 – Green Bay Working Group workshop report (Harris) |
| 2:15 | 9 – Milwaukee Working Group update (Potter) |
| 2:25 | 10 – Water Working Group – report on brainstorming meeting (Lathrop, Potter, Magnuson) |
| 2:35 | 11 – Discussion on formation of other Working Groups |
| 2:50 | 12 – Scheduling future meetings |
| 3:00 | 13 – Adjourn |