

WICCI Science Council Meeting

Monday, October 6, 2008
DNR Science Operations Center
12:00 PM

ATTENDANCE

Science Council Members

- Dick Lathrop (Co-Chair)
- John Magnuson (Co-Chair)
- Chris Kucharik [left at 1:45]
- John Kutzbach [arrived at 1:00]
- Philip Moy
- Sarah Shapiro-Hurley
- Dan Vimont [left at 1:45]
- Bill Walker
- Darrell Zastrow [left at 1:45]

Nonmembers

- Lewis Gilbert
- Jack Sullivan
- David Webb
- Pete Nowak
- Kevin Gibbons

ABSENT MEMBERS

- Sharon Dunwoody
- Bud Harris
- George Kraft
- Sandra McLellan
- Jonathan Patz
- Ken Potter

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

- Pete, Dick, and John will draft a letter to the working groups to request that they each produce draft charters.
- Pete Nowak will bring an updated outline and template for the annual report and present it at the November meeting for Science Council approval.
- Jack Sullivan will send draft charters of the Terrestrial and Cold Water Fisheries Working Groups to the Science Council before the November meeting.
- Jack Sullivan will contact the point people in the Terrestrial Habitat and Cold Water Fisheries group and ask them if they can present at the November Science Council meeting.
- Jack Sullivan will catalyze a meeting of the various climate, hydrologic, and fisheries scientists to discuss how their working groups overlap and which models are appropriate.

- Pete Nowak will present a plan for an annual WICCI workshop at the November 3 meeting.
- Ken Potter will present the progress of hydrology-related impact activities at the November 3 meeting.
- Kevin Gibbons will look over David Webb's working group grid and integrate the information from there into a new draft to send out to the Science Council.
- John, Dick, and Pete will meet with Jonathan Patz to discuss the input of health into the climate and WICCI.

MEETING PROPER

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of July 1, 2008 approved unanimously.

Minutes of September 8, 2008 put up for approval.

Pete Nowak noted that the issue of replacing Scott Craven has been put on hold. John Magnuson said that the process has at least brought to the forefront that the makeup of the Science Council is a dynamic one.

Minutes with some corrections approved unanimously.

Review of Action Items

Northern Highlands

Dick Lathrop discussed the progress of the Northern Highlands Working Group (NHWG) with the two DNR scientists (Mike Meyer and Karl Martin) who had originally proposed the idea and written the draft formation document last winter. Due to their expanded workloads since the draft document was written, other champions will be needed to organize the NHWG. However, Mike and Karl both felt that it might be beneficial to wait until progress is made from other working groups (e.g., forestry, fisheries, wildlife) that have relevance to the Northern Highland area as information from these working groups would be needed by the NHWG. John Magnuson suggested that people in the UW-Madison limnology department working on the North Temperate Lakes Long Term Ecological Research (LTER), like Tim Kratz stationed at the UW Trout Lake station, would be logical people to contact about joining the NHWG. Dick also pointed out some of the other presenters at last April's Earth Day conference session on impacts in Wisconsin's north woods would be important to include in the working group.

Members expressed interest in the Northern Highlands group and noted that it is an important issue, but they said that its formation may have to wait until there is more support and outside interest.

Outreach and the Advisory Committee

Pete Nowak addressed the action items related to the Advisory Committee. He noted that these tasks have been put on hold because the Advisory Committee nominee sheet has been forward to the Governor's office for review and input. So until the Outreach Committee receives their recommendations, they feel that they cannot act on the list and nomination process.

Jack Sullivan, Lewis Gilbert, and others noted that the engagement from the Governor's office is a very good thing, even though it delays the first meeting of the Advisory Committee. Members noted that the involvement of the Governor's office will make the committee stronger.

Jack Sullivan reported that during his WICCI briefing meeting (along with Dick Lathrop and David Webb) with the Secretary of DNR, he realized that the Secretary had not realized that WICCI was not in competition with the Governor's Task Force and is relieved that he now understands the different and complementary goals of the two groups.

Climate Group Update

Dan Vimont discussed the Focus on Energy grant. He noted that the main goals are to downscale the IPCC models to be more useful for people working within the state.

He said that using daily data will not work for the models, so the group has been using probability distributions for precipitation and other data, rather than using time scales. The data set that they are using is from 1988-1997. This method of modeling and analysis is innovative and makes combining the models and various data sets more feasible, and it makes the acquired data smoother, rather than weighted towards different weather stations. This method also allows them to analyze extreme events as case studies and look at conditions that led to the events and find appropriate responses to them.

Dan Vimont fielded various questions from Science Council members on how the models are formed and analyzed.

Dan Vimont noted that the Climate Group can look for data related to thresholds, such as nineteen degrees Celsius for cold water fisheries. He said that their group requires a staff scientist to coordinate requests from working groups and report them to Dave Lorenz, the scientist doing the modeling and calculations.

Lewis Gilbert noted that this new innovative method for using data is a great example of outcome-driven research and developing new methods to effectively use these data sets.

Pete Nowak asked if Dave Lorenz could visit the Science Council during the meeting on January 12 to make a presentation on what information would be available to working groups. John Magnuson and other members asked him to consider if we have early examples, such as the cold water streams, then the group should present those to the Science Council and other interested parties.

Chris Kucharik noted that he and Steve Vavrus have been undertaking outreach to talk to different resource managers around the state about how climate may affect the environmental issues that they are concerned with. He met with George Kraft, and the two of them agreed that WICCI was drawing positive attention from people in the state, and they have noted that having a white paper on climate to summarize these issues would benefit the outreach side of this research. Jack Sullivan noted that bringing this information to the local and community level will be well received in these towns. Chris has enjoyed giving these talks and has found them very effective, and he thinks that a white paper could be even more effective.

Chris Kucharik said that his work in compiling the historical data sets is pretty much over, and they are just waiting for their article to be approved by the journal that they have submitted it to before releasing the data to the Science Council and the public.

WICCI Annual Report

Pete Nowak drew people's attention to two handouts that gave rough outlines and expectation of the annual report and white papers. He opened the discussion by noting that the products being released in the Science Council are not as useful to the general public, so the Outreach Committee has been trying to come up with ways to bring in publicity and better inform people throughout the state.

Their ideas have been for the annual report, which has been designed to be easy to read over the web and possibly through a few printed copies. He sees the audiences as being legislators, agency staff, media, businesses, funding organizations, locally elected officials, concerned citizens, and groups within the UW System. He also highlighted how the role of narratives will be important to the report because these stories have a greater effectiveness in communication.

Pete Nowak then talked about white papers and noted that he would like to see 3-5 papers released per year to discuss the issues being raised in the Science Council. These white papers would serve as the foundation for the annual reports that could inform the public.

He also noted that he would like to release the annual report and white papers in January and to release them based on the calendar year.

Members praised Pete Nowak's work and noted that an annual report is a good idea and great next step for WICCI.

John Magnuson and Pete Nowak noted that the Climate, Green Bay, Milwaukee, and Hydrology groups would be good candidates to produce white papers.

Action Item: Pete, Dick, and John will draft a letter to the working groups to request that they each produce draft charters.

Darrell Zastrow said that the white papers are important for content but said that he thinks that the annual report should only reflect abstracts of those papers, because anything lengthier would not be useful to policy makers. Links to the full white papers could be established on the website for those who are concerned with reading more deeply into the details. He also said that January would be a good time to release these reports so that they could inform DNR budgets which are being formulated around that time of the year.

Many members agreed with Darrell Zastrow's proposal to make the document brief and provide more in-depth information on the web.

Pete noted again that he envisioned the report to look at two major points:

- To explain what climate adaptation is and why it is important.

- To explain how people can adapt.

David Webb noted that having a publication with useful quotes makes his job easier for informing higher officials within the DNR. Bill Walker noted that there should be plenty of information within the document to help it serve as a reference document for state employees and other people who need a report to find information pertinent to different topics. These two points were highly appreciated by members.

John Kutzbach said that figures and explanatory captions are crucial to the effective communication of information within the report.

John Magnuson noted that 6-to-8-page white papers should serve as a source of information, and authors with more skill in communication to the public should take the information and synthesize it into a more condensed report.

Lewis Gilbert noted that he has drafted these reports and agrees with using the white papers as information to be summarized, and he also noted that by using a web format and conducting the activity annually, WICCI would have the chance to gather all the information and report on progress.

Members debated what the function of the annual report and white papers would be. There was question as to whether the white papers should be useful to the general public or more dense and specific. The discussion of audience was a long one.

Members discussed involving accounting information and explaining what outcomes have come through after an amount of dollars spent and such.

At the end of the discussion, the group leaned towards a written report that describes WICCI to a general audience and then summarizes white papers.

The length of the report, the template for the white papers, nor the deadlines for the working group papers were defined.

Action Item: Pete Nowak will bring an updated outline and template for the annual report and present it at the November meeting for Science Council approval.

[10-minute break at 1:45]

Terrestrial Habitats and Cold Water Fisheries Working Group Update

Jack Sullivan said that two charters have been identified for the working groups and charters have been drafted that they can send around. He said that he has also secured long-term funding for each group (\$150K annually for Terrestrial Habitats and \$100K annually for Cold Water Fisheries).

Action Item: Jack Sullivan will send draft charters of the Terrestrial and Cold Water Fisheries Working Groups to the Science Council before the November meeting.

Jack Sullivan hopes to identify key people outside of the working group to become involved in the research.

Dick Lathrop noted that various groups have been using the SWAT framework to model watersheds. SWAT uses layers of GIS, and SWAT has the ability to take into account meteorologic inputs in producing hydrological outputs, which makes it very useful to WICCI.

Jack Sullivan said that the current allotment, especially in Cold Water Fisheries, will not be enough to attract the full attention of scientists with related interests and expertise, such as Sara Hotchkiss and David Mladenoff, but it is a good start, and he will continue to work to acquire more money.

Action Item: Jack Sullivan will contact the point people in the Terrestrial Habitat and Cold Water Fisheries group and ask them if they can present at the November Science Council meeting.

John Kutzbach noted that if these groups are going to be using the SWAT model, they should be sure that SWAT can take into account the type of datasets that are being produced by the Climate Working Group.

There was extensive discussion of the possible overlap of the groups and how they should interact with one another, what kind of data are being acquired, and what kind of models are being used.

Action Item: Jack Sullivan will catalyze a meeting of the various climate, hydrologic, and fisheries scientists to discuss how their working groups overlap and which models are appropriate.

Other Working Group Updates

Collaboration

Pete Nowak noted that it may be a good idea to call for a WICCI workshop to bring scientists working on climate change adaptation to bring people together.

Action Item: Pete Nowak will present a plan for an annual WICCI workshop at the November 3 meeting.

Hydrology

Members discussed the Hydrology Working Group and noted that they did not understand where they group stands and what issues it will be pursuing. Dick Lathrop mentioned that a water-related brainstorming group met in the summer and felt a hydrology-oriented working group made sense, but the formal formation of this working group has not yet been organized.

Action Item: Ken Potter will present the progress of hydrology-oriented impact activities at the November 3 meeting.

Coastal Hazards

Philip Moy said that he has submitted a draft charter to different potential members and leaders of a Coastal Hazards Working Group and is waiting to hear back from them.

Forestry

Dick Lathrop noted that the Forestry Working Group, while not formed completely, has been working to call a meeting together in which interested parties could attend and participate. He is optimistic about their progress.

Working Group Grid

Pete Nowak and Kevin Gibbons noted that they had sent out a draft of the grid but have not received feedback yet.

Dick Lathrop noted that David Webb has formed a grid that would be useful in updating the grid being prepared by the Nelson Institute. Dick also noted that the grid could be something that is posted on the web that can be constantly updated and can contain links to working group charters and other pertinent information.

Action Item: Kevin Gibbons will look over David Webb's working group grid and integrate the information from there into a new draft to send out to the Science Council.

Support from the Governor's Task Force

Members discussed the Governor's Task Force and the possibility of WICCI being included in their budget. Jack Sullivan and David Webb have been working on a budget request to be included, and Lewis Gilbert and others discussed using political connections to encourage the Task Force's interest in WICCI.

Advisory Committee

Pete Nowak brought up the Advisory Committee nominee list, and members agreed to give the Outreach Committee the power to pursue nominating members before the November 3 meeting – taking into account that they would like to see someone from the education sector represented.

Changing of Science Council Member Composition

Members discussed the makeup and diversity of the Science Council members and how it should be maintained or addressed. In general, members noted that the group will be a more dynamic one.

Action item: John, Dick, and Pete will meet with Jonathan Patz to discuss the input of health into the climate and WICCI.

Release of Agenda

John Magnuson noted that the agenda has been sent out less than a week before the Science Council meeting and asked whether or not this is too late.

Members noted that a week ahead of time is okay, as long as the date of the meeting is noted ahead of time.

Video Conferencing

David Webb said that videoconferencing equipment is going to be purchased for use in the DNR, and participation in the meetings will only involve having a webcam and a headset.

Lewis Gilbert noted that if there is a problem with members not being able to participate because they do not have the equipment, then the Nelson Institute can provide the necessary hardware.

Future Agenda Items

- What goes in the white papers?
- WICCI Collaboration Workshop
- Presentation of Terrestrial Habitat's and Cold Water Fisheries' draft charters
- Update on the Status of the Hydrology Working Group
- Working Group Grid
- Advisory Committee Update

[Meeting adjourned at 2:50 PM]

UPCOMING MEETING DATES

- 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 July 1, 2008 and September 8, 2008 Meetings |
| 12:20 | 4 – Progress on Action Items from Previous Meeting |
| 12:40 | 5 – Climate Working Group Update on Focus on Energy Grant Progress (Dan Vimont, Chris Kucharik, and John Kutzbach) |
| 1:10 | 6 – Preparing a WICCI Annual Report - How do we design and establish an annual report of climate change adaptation progress of the state of Wisconsin? (Pete Nowak) |
| 1:45 | 7 – Presentation on the Status of the Terrestrial and Cold Water Fishery Working Group (Jack Sullivan) |
| 2:10 | 8 – Updates from Other Working Groups |
| 2:30 | 9 – Discussion on Working Group Grid Summary |
| 2:50 | 10 – Agenda Items for November 3 Science Council Meeting |
| 3:00 | 11 – Adjourn |