



Website Updates:

Check the Mid-year Meeting Summary on the Website

Follow-up of Annual Meeting:

What new or expanded opportunities are you considering for the opportunity grants?

By what criteria will you measure project success?

Highlights:

- Opportunity Grants - 1
- Advisory Observations -1, 2
- Partner Activities – 2, 3
- Thank You to SDSU – 3
- Ruth Receives Grant – 3

NRE Partners:

- FBCC
- NICC
- SBC
- SGU
- ISU
- NDSU
- SDSU
- UNL

Paula's Travel:

- SGU - April 30
- SBC - May 3, 4
- FBCC - May 5, 6
- NICC - May 13

USDA IFAFS GRANT 2001-2005

Apply for Opportunity Partnership Grants

The mid-year meeting at SDSU resulted in an optimistic outlook for enhancing project activities and exploring new opportunities. All eight partner institutions are eligible to propose partnership activities which will accelerate their programs to more nearly match the use of financial resources with the remaining term of the NRE grant. The objective is to wisely use all project funds for sustainable programs before the project ends (with the no-cost extension) in September, 2006.

The new Opportunity Partnership Grants follow the USDA grant requirements of being multi-institutional, school and/or community stakeholder driven, with integration of research, education and extension and collaborative with other personnel. Proposals should address one or more issues of IFAFS projects - environmental integrity, quality of life, economic viability, or strengthen institutions.

The NRE steering committee approved guidelines for the Opportunity Partnership Grants (OPG) at the mid-year meeting at South Dakota State University. These

include:

- A. Any NRE project institutions may submit proposals,
- B. Partnership arrangements are required, more than 2 institutions is encouraged,
- C. Proposals may request up to \$15,000 from NRE Central unencumbered funds with a 1 to 1 match required,
- D. The grants are competitive and are due the first day of each quarter, and
- F. Procedures for submission and review, similar to procedures used for earlier work plans, are posted on the project website.

The Opportunity Partnership Grants provide an incentive for each institution to make plans to leverage their remaining funds in order to carry out activities that will contribute to the sustainability of the NRE project once the grant is finished.

External Observations of the NRE Project

Dr. Alvin Young, member of the NRE Advisory Committee congratulated the NRE project group at the end of the mid-year meeting and in his written report. He observed that significant "bonding" has occurred between the participating 1862 and 1994 institutions, noticeable in the free flow of ideas and reports of more faculty and student involvement. Dr. Young observed the Tribal College reports described the cultural and spiritual relationship between the "Indian and the land." One way to gain support from the tribal communities is incorporating and (continued)



Al Young and Harold Crawford

Notice:
Quarterly Reports are due
on May 1.

**Mid-Year Meeting
Participants**
Beth Hammond and Linda
Hugelen



**Send your news for
the next newsletter to
Mary M. de Baca**

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NRE on the Web

[http://ifafsnrp.ag.iastate.
edu/](http://ifafsnrp.ag.iastate.edu/)

Submit project workbook
and photos for the web
to [Jason Decker](mailto:Jason_Decker@hotmail.com).

<[Jason_Decker@hotmail.
com](mailto:Jason_Decker@hotmail.com)>

External Observations Continued

enhancing tribal cultural values in the academic programs at the Tribal Colleges - which this project encourages.

Dr. Young was glad to see the topic of sustainability discussed at this "half-way" point in the project. He encouraged us to circulate our *Half-Way There* report among federal agencies in addition to the USDA and to expand our newsletter mail list. He would like to see the project attract Native American faculty to the Tribal Colleges. He ends his written report, which can be seen in its entirety on the project website, with "thank you for including me in this truly outstanding program." A meeting of the Advisory Committee is planned for this summer.

Partner Activities

Fort Berthold Community College

The collaboration with the tree project is a highlight of the NRE Community projects. NDSU, State Forest Service and FBCC students have participated in tree surveys and Ruth is teaching a tree class. FBCC is working on implementation of their capacity building plan and students have made recruitment visits to reservation schools. They are looking at possibilities of having a summer student exchange with SBC.

Sitting Bull College

Capacity Building and Water Quality plans seem to be working at SBC. Linda has been teaching Agri Business, doing outreach to tribal communities, working on bison research, and advising the Student Ecology club. Linda expressed needs and challenges for increasing student enrollment in new courses, workshops for non-students, upgrading their water quality testing kits, a more precise accounting system, informative resources specific to Natural Resources on Standing Rock, and research education to communities.

Sinte Gleska University

SGU reported new items underway or planned include the greenhouse initiative (see March newsletter), the Unci Maka Project with Todd County Middle School for planting and maintenance of trees, soil and land education, and an upcoming tree planting and maintenance workshop for trees on campus, at SGU Ranch, and existing shelter belts in June, the Medicine Wheel Garden Workshop in June and research plots for tobacco and herbs. Lisa, David, and Subodh reported needs including help with financial planning for the animal/meat complex, support for the June workshops, and help to reach compliance with the NRE project.

Iowa State University

ISU reported on several management changes made as a result of ongoing administrative responsibilities, outcomes of the decision making exercise at the 2003 annual meeting, and the internal audit of the NRE grant at ISU. Among these are efforts to bring all partners up to compliance, appointment of Jim Pease as wildlife panel chair, naming Paula Teig as Tribal Liaison, increasing regular communication through newsletters, expanding the advisory committee, and exploring options for accelerating program and using financial resources to match the term of the project.

Partner Activities Continued

Nebraska Indian Community College

NICC will offer a new course this summer "The Missouri River, the Land and its People" to interest students who may not have considered taking natural resources courses. They will support President Morris' strategies to create a larger student enrollment, promote ecotourism, and plant rice as an alternative agricultural crop. Shelly and Hank expressed need for help in assistance with GIS, with greenhouse management, and recruitment ideas at NICC.

North Dakota State University

Kevin Sedivec reported on the bison research project involving FBCC, SBC, and SGU. The project will determine correlations between selenium concentration in soil, vegetation, and bison plasma and hair and also determine locations of Tribal Lands with high selenium concentrations. In addition, NDSU has worked with FBCC on the Juneberry NRE Community project, recruited for FBCC interns to NDSU for the summer program, and with Joe Zeleznik is involved with the tree project at FBCC.

University of Nebraska – Lincoln

Beth Hammond, graduate assistant with Scott Josiah, reported on her interesting work with hazelnut research at UNL. Beth is looking at characteristics of several types of hazel nuts for features such as of size, cold hardiness, disease resistance, and yield in developing hazelnuts for the region. Hazelnuts are edible, highly nutritious and healthy foods while at the same time are an attractive woody floral that attracts wildlife. UNL has also provided GIS support through the Center for Advanced Land Management Information Technologies (CALMIT) to NICC. Students and staff of NICC attended UNL field days regarding riparian forest buffer demonstrations and Tree Care Workshops.

South Dakota State University

SDSU has three NRE instructors enrolled in graduate courses and hopes to work with them to develop research relevant to their NRE community projects and/or capacity building activities. SDSU remains open to other possibilities of engaging more actively with Tribal Colleges and 1862 partners on project activities.

Thank you to South Dakota State University and Mid-Year Meeting Committee



A special thank you to Tim Nichols for hosting the mid-year meeting at SDSU. Thank you to Dr. Fred Cholick, Dean of the college of Agriculture and Biological Sciences, for welcoming the NRE participants; Tim and Laurie for hosting a very enjoyable evening, and the SDSU GIS and Ethnobotany faculty and staff who eagerly shared their interest and expertise. Thank you to the committee members, Tim, Shelly, Lisa, and Mary for an excellent mid-year meeting.

Ruth Receives International Grant

Ruth Short Bull, NRE Instructor at FBCC, was recently selected to attend an 8 week Tropical Biology Research Experience in Costa Rica, funded through National Science Foundation (NSF). The project provides opportunity for faculty at minority-serving institutions to conduct research on global environmental issues at one of the Organization for Tropical Studies research stations. Participants will conduct their own research and upon their return will serve as a resource person to students and faculty.

Ruth's plan is to compare Costa Rican Bribris and Native American Plains Hidatsa cultures' indigenous knowledge of natural resources. Both tribes are open to outsiders and still maintain many of their indigenous knowledge and practices. Ruth expects that comparing the two cultures' view and practices based on their indigenous knowledge will identify common views and practices that have lead to sustainability in two diverse ecosystems.

"I'm really excited about the opportunity," Ruth stated, "so I hope we can work out arrangements for my family to go along."