

IUFA: PROGRESS SUMMIT

MEETING MINUTES: NOVEMBER 16, 2010

“SEPARATE, YET SO BOUND TOGETHER...”

In Attendance: Dale Blahna, Weston Brinkley, Lisa Ciecko, Jack, Meghan Halabisky, Lee Cerveney, Diane Styers, Lauren Urgenson, Chuck Harris, Alicia Robbins, Melissa Poe, Jean Daniels, Ara Erickson, Jesse Saunders, David Kimmett, Michele Romolini, Kathy Wolf, John Mills.

OPENING COMMENTS

It's amazing how far we've come....in only 8 months!

OVERVIEW

In late 2008 the Pacific NW Research Station of the US Forest Service started an initiative for urban-based natural resources research. The Green Cities Research Alliance (GCRA) was launched. The intent of GCRA is to do interdisciplinary research across the urban-wildland gradient that includes collaboration with agencies, academic institutions, and NGOs. The goal is to develop a permanent research unit focused on studies of urban environments and sustainability.

An early task of GCRA was to prepare a proposal for a national ULTRA-EX grant to help launch a long term research program. Though not awarded by NSF the ULTRA proposal was converted to a successful proposal for funding by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

The ARRA now supports a suite of studies and assessments. The core funding is dedicated to the Integrated Urban Forest Assessments which includes these studies (more detail follows): Forest Ecosystem Values (FEV), Forest Landscape Assessment Tool (FLAT), a Stewardship Engagement study, Urban Resources and Public Health, and Geospatial Analysis support across the projects. Other supplemental studies include: Residential Location Choices, Urban Gathering, Restoration Economics, Green Cities: Good Health, and Stewardship Mapping.

ARRA funding will expire in early 2012 for most of these projects. All of the study teams are considering how to secure funding and resources to continue support of our work. Both program (e.g. USFS and WA DNR Community Forestry grants) and research funding (e.g. EPA, National Science Foundation) are being explored. There is interest in learning more about foundation funding.

At this time the GCRA is an informal Forest Service program. It seeks to combine scientific and management approaches to create tools for more sustainable, livable urban areas. Project partners are starting with existing approaches or studies, then developing them further to reflect unique conditions of the Pacific Northwest.

The ARRA sponsored work was started in early 2010. A Launch Summit was held in March 2010 and was the first meeting of all principal investigators and managers across the projects. This second meeting was intended to

update all principals about first season data collection, provide project status updates, explore synergies across projects, and introduce potential new collaborators.

MEDIA DISCUSSION

How do we manage as a group? Should we have a key spokesperson? Are there obligations to the Forest Service?

- It would be good to have a system for whom to talk to when data is available.
- PNW Station has a communication branch – Yasmeen Sands is our contact and can help with messaging.
- Forest Service would like mention of supporting/leading/financing the research.
- It's important not to make proclamations about research findings before the research is complete and vetted.
- First point of contact with Forest Service is Kathy and Dale.
- Suggested forming a subcommittee on a guidance document, which would lay out expectations of Forest Service, distinction between Forest Service staff vs. partners, JVA obligations, and ARRA obligations. Yasmeen can also provide pointers. Lee, Ara, and Lisa offered to help with this.
- Also suggested producing/updating 1-pagers that are available to everyone to use, bring along to meetings/conferences, share, etc.
- Mention of an OSU (or was it UO?) IGERT program that is interested in having their graduate students work on public communications and social media about ARRA-funded projects. May be contacting project leads.

PROJECT UPDATES

Complete minutes not provided at this time – just action items, next steps, and questions – apologies for omissions

Forest Ecosystem Values (FEV)

- Finish Seattle data collection in spring 2011
- Meeting with King County to develop plan for 2011
- Work on calibration concerns – document desired goals, processes, and products
- Continue to work with FLAT overlap

Forest Landscape Assessment Tool (FLAT)

- Finish data collection and clean up 2010 data
- Train King County staff on data collection and use

Stewardship Engagement

- Why just in Seattle, not in Tacoma this year?
- Review data and methodology after field season
- How to accomplish a broader assessment of volunteers?

Public Health

- Green Cities :: Good Health is literature review
- exploring both land cover and public health data sets

- Difficulties in reconciling scale for analysis (veg is fine scale, health is at county/state/nation)

UW Geospatial

- Continue to find best method to work with/assist projects
- Urban Foraging

Urban Gathering

- Extensive field work, using ethnographic approaches
- National Geographic coverage
- Have completed a literature review

Residential Location Choices

- Survey held up in OMB process – will send draft of survey to anyone interested to see if more questions could be added.
- Can we capture stewardship activities along same gradient?

Restoration Economics

- Estimate costs/benefits to show tangible value to policy makers
- Decision choice about invasive species removal

FIA

- 190 plots will be in Washington. RFP in development.

NEXT STEPS

Develop work plans w/in groups

Continue the good work

PRODUCTS

Both “management” and “science”

- GTR or Research Notes
 - Compendium of pieces that fit together
 - Edited volume
 - Workshop proceedings
 - Urban Natural Resource Stewardship Research, with set of topics from group
 - Best Practices Guide

Think about topics and how they are tied together. Should we do a themed approach?

Can we have a common visual platform? Need to develop an identity.

Do we have a journal connection? Maybe a special issue in Urban Ecology or Landscape and Urban Planning?

We will have a showcase summit in late spring 2011

Need to develop common language about program goals to use in publications and to share visual identity.

FUNDING

ULTRA? Bullitt Foundation? Can we apply for grants together? Need to apply for overarching, base funding to keep us all working together.

PARTNERS

People want to know what's happening with our projects. How do we keep them involved and/or informed? Should we have an advisory council where we could pose questions?

Possible "Friends of the Green Cities Research Alliance" group via some sort of social media site. Staffing this is a concern.

Other partners to include are Department of Natural Resources and Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

WORK SESSIONS

Notes taken within groups

ACTION ITEMS

Stewardship Engagement

- Adjustments to survey and analysis won't be done until first season of the field data collection is complete – expect adjustments in early 2011. .
- Survey portion will not be highly spatial right now, but there are other items that might be able to be
- Possible collaboration on "swatches" survey; will work with Lee
- Jean would like to take survey to Portland and perhaps replicate there
- Stewardship Mapping of Seattle area organizations is being done simultaneously by Michele Romolini, U of VT doctoral student. Will crossover efforts when possible.

Visual Identity

- Kathy will start talking with communications people at the Forest Service for ideas, first steps

Public Health

- Try a workshop format with remote sensing and social sciences coming together. A kind of "mash-up" to see if possible research questions arise.
- Looking for additional funding in the public health arena

FEV/FLAT

- David will follow-up with King County divisions to assess ecosystem value needs/desires

- Lisa will work with David on identifying sampling/geographic scope for FEV in 2011
- Is i-Tree Eco the appropriate tool for more forested, rural parklands? Maybe other valuation tools are better suited?
- John and Lisa will connect about FIA protocols and existing data/methodologies overlap with FEV.
- Look at tree-iage and i-tree eco overlap/analysis
- King Coutny Resource Managers will collect FLAT data in 2011
- INFO will clean up 2010 data and stay on as QA/QC and trainers in 2011
- David will connect with Richard Gleb on carbon sequestration and valuation desires.

ADJOURNED AT 4PM