

SUFC Policy Workgroup

AGENDA

3/14/14

1. Introductions

Brent, Faith, Julia, Genoa, Gary, Nick, Danielle, Mark, Cara, Alex, Brenna, Sarah, Rebecca, Becky, Gerry, Larry, Kevin

2. SUFC Research Priorities and their overlap with Policy Committee and appropriations platform

- FY15 administration's budget, SUFC typically advocates for strong research. What are the right numbers?
- Forest Service: budget down 6% overall, maintained inventory and monitoring at a consistent level.
- Where does urban forestry lie? Priority research areas such as urban natural resource stewardship reduce to 5.5 million, a 32% cut, what should SUFC do about this cut? Why was this cut made?
- Written testimony for interior due April 10th for the House and May 23rd for the Senate.

Action Item: Research call Monday to discuss strategies on how to advocate for research in testimony. Gerry to coordinate with Policy and Research Workgroups.

3. Review Brainstorming session from last meeting

- Establishing Priorities and Second Tiers. Opportunities for individual organization sign-on for second-tier topics, encouraging other coalitions to circulate letters through SUFC.
- Obama's new Climate Resilience Fund has potential for communities/urban forestry
 - Resiliency is a high priority for folks outside the beltway, while climate change is a hot topic. Resiliency can be a broader topic. How do you best appeal to local organizations?
 - Important to remind people that urban and community forestry is a major priority in the climate change discussion. May not be a priority now, but in the coming years, it will be a high priority and it would be best to keep it in mind.
 - Inventory data is necessary. It would be beneficial to advocate for it in testimony
 - Fund is unlikely to pass House approps.

Action Item: Key discussion topic at Annual meeting this year, Policy Workgroup should be prepared to help with potential strategic opportunities during that discussion

- EPA: Clean Water (\$1.5 billion), Drinking Water (\$907 million)
 - How do we show support to a program that doesn't have a large amount of support for forests? Not to discount the important of the EPA, just to make it clear that EPA hasn't shown huge backing for trees when it comes to green infrastructure. How do we reach out to them?

- Showing support for Green Reserve program would be the best first step. Outreach to water and air to connect their priorities to trees.

Action Items: Include statement of support for Urban Waters Program, as we have done in the past. If space, add Green Reserve with ask amount. Reach out to EPA offices to encourage tree use– water and air offices.

- NPS:

Action Items: Connect with National Parks Conservation Association to see what urban work they're doing, and ask them to join SUFC. If they are not already focusing on urban, encourage them to do so.

Action Items: Urban Parks and LWCF fund for urban grants to be added to testimony

- Regional Initiatives:
 - May not be best to put regional initiatives in the testimony, but funds and attention go to these initiatives so they may be good opportunities to keep in mind for the future.

- APHIS:

Action Items: House Ag approps testimony due 3/20. Faith to send around Pest Coalition sign-on. SUFC to consider Senate Ag approps testimony due later.

- NRCS:
 - NACD not present at meeting, tabling efforts until we have a better idea of overlap.
- HUD:
 - Community Development Block Grants – circulate letters from other coalitions
- DOT:

Action Items: Nick and Mark to circulate individual groups sign-on letters for overlapping interests in Complete Streets etc.

4. Prioritizing list and identifying:

- SUFC consensus-based priorities for platform: Senate appropriations, House letter will be circulated
 - Statement regarding full support for LWCF
- Other programs not in platform but individual organizations want to support

5. Appropriation Ask strategy options:

- Support President's FY15 Budget completely
- Support President's FY15 Budget, unless FY14 amounts are higher:
 - Would cover dips in urban forestry and other areas

Action Item: SUFC consensus for requests

- Maintaining FY12 budget for Forest Service program requests
- Looking to other leads for the asks for their parts (NPS/EPA)

6. Assign Appropriation Testimony drafters

Action Item: Testimony Assignments

- Faith for APHIS
- Kevin for NPS, support for LWCF
- Brent and Becky for FS
- Gary and Brenna for EPA

Action Item: Becky to send out other assignments, revised presentation with budget numbers on it, and to post on Google Docs last year's testimony for group edits. First pass will be those with assignments.

Deadlines: Written testimony is due for House Interior **4/10**. Draft ready for circulating to entire SUFC by **4/3**. SUFC have until **4/8** to sign-on. Because asks are the same as last year's, we can be sure to highlight any new additions (NPS and EPA programs for example) which will make it easier for folks to sign-on.