

SR-PLN ANR Committee Meeting

11-14-24

1pm Central / 2pm Eastern

<https://auburn.zoom.us/j/86833451513>

Members present:

Becky Barlow, John Anderson, Tom Barber, Leonard Githinji, Jason Warren, Rich Bonanno, Sanjun Gu, Adam Kantrovich, Trent Irby, Whitney Elmore, Niki Whitley, Angel Forde, Angela McKenzie-Jakes, Karnita Garner, Alejandro Bolques, Uma Karki, Saqib Mukhtar.

Becky opened the meeting with introductions and thanked the members for attending. She invited states impacted by Hurricane Helene to share their experiences.

Saqib observed that Florida had three hurricanes within a 1.5 month period. Helene caused much devastation from tornadoes in the SW and SE parts of Florida. Florida is in the middle of finalizing their ag damage assessment numbers and expects the number to be upwards of 1.5 to 2.0 billion dollars. Saqib complimented the hard work of UF/IFAS Extension agents.

Dr. Bonanno observed that most of the NC damage has been in the western mountains. The landscape has changed a lot and determining what to do with some of the land will take many years. The nursery industry was heavily impacted. NC continues to have needs for fencing and feed. Extension has been wonderful in working with everyone.

Adam observed that SC had alternating episodes of drought and hurricanes. Hurricane Helene was devastating to SC. There was a lot of infrastructure damage, power outages, and secondary effects. SC Extension staff headed into the field on Sunday and assisted farmers with cutting trees, mending fence, and humanitarian assistance, then moved into damage assessment efforts. SC had significant financial losses in terms of future income losses in addition to direct losses. Pecans, for example, ranged from 30 to 60% loss and their largest grower loss 80% of his trees. SC is at \$300 to \$400M in losses, excluding timber.

Dan shared that 23 localities in southwest Virginia submitted damage assessment reports. Running from south to north, the New River funneled floodwaters into Grayson County that were the second highest in recorded history. Grayson was the most heavily impacted with an estimated \$61.3M in direct losses, followed by Smyth County with \$22.8M. Total direct losses exceeded \$164M, including timber, and figures were recently updated to include future income and ripple effect losses, bringing the total estimate from all sources to \$416 to \$630 million. The agents have been working around the clock to support their communities. Thanks to GA and NC took for sharing their approach to indirect, induced, and future income loss calculations.

Becky opened the door for open discussion. Dan asked for contacts regarding Ag Extension engineers to assist with advising farmers on farm access, road, stream crossing, and structural related matters. Saqib suggested Brian Boman might be someone to reach out to – he was doing some consulting work. Becky will also send input.

John discussed the Southern Region Extension pesticide manuals. ASRED is interested in a Southern region survey related to pesticide recommendation manuals, with a view toward gauging interest in multi-state collaboration on such publications (and/or online versions). Here is a link to the brief survey: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1B4vlzXhzmek58cUNzg0WSJ-e3ng9zrz7OAYNsbRE2v0/edit?usp=sharing> . Becky will disseminate the link to the SR-PLN ANR Committee listserv. Several committee members reflected on their experience with pesticide manuals.

Becky invited the group to provide input on future meeting topics. (Agrivoltaics is one area that had previously been mentioned as an area of interest). No topics were suggested.

Updates from Advisors

ASRED. John deferred to Dr. Bonanno for an update from ASRED. There is an effort going on with the Directors and APLU to look at funding strategies and capacity and competitive funding from NIFA. The goal is to get this going for FY 26 or 27. The Research Facilities Act is an emphasis in the Farm Bill. It pertains to renovation and infrastructure needs at all land-grants across the country. This is the first real effort that Dr. Bonanno has seen related to how all of the states work together around funding strategies. There has been an uptick in Paraquat lawsuits. ASRED prepared a document for university legal counsels to support consistency in handling responses.

AEA. No advisor present.

PLC Updates

Jason shared that the PLC met on November 5 and they are looking at locations in New Orleans and Nashville. Some possible themes included a discussion on AI or Extension's role in disasters and response. Saqib suggested including stress management as a topic if moving forward with the latter.

Committee Updates

Roger Merkel and Craig Wood provided updates on the Small Ruminant Quality Assurance programs to Becky in absentia.

Small ruminant webinar (Roger Merkel) - The planning for the small ruminant webinar is going slower than anticipated. Please send Roger any ideas on topics for one or two sessions.

Small ruminant quality assurance program (Craig Wood) - The Subcommittee has not formally met as of yet. I will convene a meeting of the subcommittee in the next couple of months. Jason de Koff shared information about the Sheep Safety and Quality Assurance program offered through the American Sheep Industry Association that Saqib Mukhtar forwarded to him. The Kentucky Sheep and Goat Association has partnered with Dr. Andrew Weaver from North Carolina State University in developing the Kentucky Small Ruminant Quality Assurance Program (SRQA). The program has been offered online to producers. Plans are being developed to offer a train-the-trainer model with a hands-on component for agents. Essentially, the agents will become certified to teach the program to producers across Kentucky. Plans include the creation of SRQA kits that can be used by agents to provide the hands-on activities.

Urban ag (Mark Blevins) – no report.

Joint NC and SR meeting – Adam has identified the program lead for NC and is reaching out to begin communications soon.

Carbon credit publication – Jason met with OK State’s soil scientist and thinks it is possible for them to develop a draft and then work with others across the region to make it robust.

Agroforestry consortium (Joshua) – no report.

Fact sheet on pesticide strategies. Tom noted that, since we discussed this over the summer, the EPA has done a pretty good job of coming up with their own website where they have summarized everything pretty well. The biggest need is to have something that drills down to the basics. EPA has been open to suggestions from weed scientists and other groups. There are bits and pieces that Tom and his team are hoping to organize into the fact sheet.

Climate Smart webinar series (Uma) – Uma presented a brief update on the webinar series, potentially targeting June for release.

Becky offered the group an opportunity for additions to the conversation.

Sanjun noticed some updates that need to be made to the leadership directory.

Saqib noted that IFAS has a new Associate Program Leader for Agriculture, Dr. Marcelo Wallau. He is also the Extension forage management specialist. Email: mwallau@ufl.edu

Becky again proposed agrivoltaics as the topic for the next meeting and several members spoke in support of that theme. Becky proposed a panel approach. Saqib and Jason have potential speakers to recommend.

There being no further discussion, Becky thanked everyone for their time and contributions and wished everyone well.

The next meeting is 1pm Central, 2pm Eastern on February 12.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Goerlich

Secretary, SR-PLN ANR Committee