Maine's Sustainability Solutions Initiative

SSI Team Meeting Draft Agenda
Monday, October 26, 2009, 10am-12noon
Room 107, Norman Smith Hall

Present: Mac Hunter, Nate Stormer, Laura Lindenfeld, Darren Ranco, Shannon McCoy, Susan Gardner, Kathleen Bell, Mark Anderson, Jessica Leahy, David Heibeler, John Peckenham, Eric Gallandt, Andy Reeves, Linda Silka, Chris Cronan, Shaleen Jain, Ruth Hallsworth, David Hart, Teresa Johnson, Gayle Zydlewski, Cathy Elliott, Jim Wilson, Steve Sader, Rob Lilieholm, Erin Spencer, Aram Calhoun.

10:00am – 10:10am David Hart- General Update

- Update on 21st National NSF EPSCoR Conference in Washington DC. The theme of the conference was "Sustainability, Innovation, and EPSCoR", and SSI was a central of the conference's first session. NSF clearly recognizes SSI's innovative approach and views it as an example of the Obama administration's emphasis on supporting "high-risk, high-payoff research".
- SSI update on funding for research teams
- Update on committee progress
- SSI research seminars planned for spring, preliminary presentations beginning today during the second half of this meeting
- Advertisement for the four SSI faculty positions will be posted soon
- Pre- and post-doctoral fellowship recruitment processes are moving forward
- SSI will be hiring a AAI soon to assist with paperwork
- There will be a number of social gatherings in the next few months including SSI mixer in November and a Holiday party. Please see the dossier and the SSI website for updated information.

10:10am – 10:50am Mac Hunter- Update from doctoral fellowship recruitment Committee

- Posting student recruitment information online tomorrow
    - There will be four online options for recruitment of interested students (please see the committee's documents for more detail)
        - Check current openings
        - Contact core faculty with research interests that match your own
        - Contact team leader if a specific project interests you
        - Contact the SSI Fellowship Coordinator (Mac Hunter)
- Discussion of procedures for doctoral student recruitment
    - A few exceptional students may be brought into the program without an advisor
    - There was a question about an initial filter for students as is done in SMS. While there is not, there are other ways in which the team can work to identify the strongest candidates.

- Faculty will evaluate the background of potential students to determine whether they are strong candidates (all fellowships are for the doctoral level rather than masters)
    - GPAs and GRE scores may be used to determine appropriate students.

    Evaluation of genuine student interest in Sustainability Science and faculty interest in serving as core advisor for student are key to this process.
- Following initial evaluation faculty will respond to students and cc SSIrecruit@maine.edu so that we can track the number of requests.
- If faculty wants to work with a particular student, they will write a letter of support. Please cc SSIrecruit@maine.edu.
- A select group of students will be invited to visit campus during a weekend in January.
- After the visiting weekend, the Selection committee will meet again and rank candidates.
- There was discussion about the limited number of doctoral positions funded in the round 1 proposals. Requests for graduate student positions for Yr 2 must go through the outlined process. We discussed the recruitment of students before notification of SSI funding. Susan Gardner suggested that faculty could advocate for students based on what they anticipate needing. Rob and Nate both spoke about the difficulties of recruiting without knowing if you'd be funded. Laura suggested evaluating research team needs and recruiting based on needs. Mac added that the advocacy process could be undertaken by one individual on behalf of the research team. Mac expressed concern about going live tomorrow with the recruitment information since the list of teams and projects is not complete and will change in a few weeks. It was suggested that the website could state in Bold that the list of projects will change weekly and students should check back. Nate Stormer suggested that we set up a system whereby students could leave an email and when new info was posted on that site, notification would be sent to that student. Ruth will post recruitment materials on line. If faculty have other suggestions, contact Ruth. Draft documents are available at http://www.umaine.edu/sustainabilitysolutions/faculty_resources/students.html.

- Discussion of timelines for doctoral student recruitment
    - The committee will plan an open house and identify an appropriate timeline for the application and acceptance process. Initial stages of recruitment will occur from Nov-Jan 2010. Invitations to finalists will occur on January 15th with an open house tentatively scheduled for Jan 29-31. Faculty should notify students of interest of this possible schedule ahead of time. Selections should be made by Feb 5th. Selected students will have two weeks to accept or decline.

- Discussion of advertising, for doctoral student recruitment
    - Most recruitment advertisements will go through SSI, but those interested in individual recruitment can post their own ad using the SSI template (available on the SSI website).

10:50am – 11:00am Break

11:00am – 11:15am SSI Research Project: Rob Lilieholm et al

Analysis of Alternative Futures in the Maine Landscape using Spatial Models of Coupled Social and Ecological Systems

R.J. Lilieholm, C.S. Cronan, R. Judd, J.S. Wilson, E.R. Gallandt, S.J. Hornsby

10 minute presentation followed by Q&A.

- The overarching goal of this project is to examine how land use and conservation practices enacted today are likely to impact future landscapes. The research builds on earlier work funded by the Mitchell Center that examined Maine's 3.6 million acres of conservation land. After identifying gaps in expertise, this expanded research team intends to address how agriculture and forestry interests can complement land protection efforts. The expanded team also includes two historians to provide expertise and insight that will help the entire SSI team better understand how that last few centuries of development and land use in Maine have created the landscapes and processes we see today. The team plans to identify land for conservation, working forests and agriculture, and development through partnerships and a more strategic approach to land conservation. SSI member Andy Reeve asked how these lands, once identified, would actually be protected. Lilieholm responded by saying that that was the difficult part, but that a wide range of approaches are available (e.g., fee simple acquisition, conservation easements, zoning, etc.). Regardless of the approach, broader stakeholder coalitions and improved information are important first-steps in realizing any landscape-level goal.

11:15am – 11:30pm SSI Research Project: Andy Reeve and Shaleen Jain et al

Decision tools to support water resources sustainability of managed lake systems

S. Jain, J. MacRae, F. Pavri, J. Peckenham, A. Reeve, M. Scott

10 minute presentation followed by Q&A.

- Andy Reeve spoke about the research project entitled "Decision tools to support water resources sustainability of managed lake systems". He began with a definition of sustainability and suggested that sustainability has a focus on humans. This research project is focused on water resources sustainability of the Sebago Lake Watershed. Sebago Lake and its surrounding watershed is used for many purposes including recreation, water supply, and forestry. In a recent research report, prepared by the University of Massachusetts and the U.S. Forest Service (Forest-to-Faucets partnership), the Sebago Lake Watershed was identified as one of the most vulnerable watershed in the Northeastern United States, stemming from the predominantly private land ownership and associated uncertainties regarding future land use. The goal of the project is to develop tools that help manage water resources and weighing competing demands. Goals of the

project include: (1) Enhanced stream monitoring, (2) analysis of hydrologic and geochemical variability and trends (using previously collected data, and (3) Creation and application of watershed models to evaluate lake and watershed processes. The PIs will work closely with the Portland Water District and other partners. Research findings will be presented through the Portland water district newsletter, a web interface that allows users to run simple watershed simulations and workshops with water managers and planners in the region. A long-term goal is to develop a comprehensive modeling system for water resources management, with explicit consideration to the coupled biophysical and human dimension related to land use, water supply, demand, and water-quality.

- Shaleen Jain spoke about the team's interest in the coupled quantitative model using short and long term weather and climate forecasts. This information will allow for an improved management of lake levels, hydropower generation and instream flows. This will be an iterative process where they will diagnose the usability of the model and its predictive capacities through multiple channels of agency and stakeholder feedback. They will incorporate on-going feedback into the model by identifying stakeholder needs and preferences using a questionnaire. They plan to actively coordinate with other projects and coupled modeling efforts.

11:30am – 11:45am Stewardship Council presentation Kathleen Bell, Laura Lindenfeld, and Shaleen Jain

SSI Governance - Presentation and discussion.

The team was presented a draft entitled "Outline of Boards, Committees and Working Groups" of current and future committees which identified committee missions and memberships. Some committees are already full (post-doc, pre-doctoral recruitment), while others could use more members (e.g., **Seminars, Workshops, and Annual Conference Committee**). A longer governance document is currently under development, and the team will be asked to provide input and help to shape the SSI's governance structure. This document will include, for example, a conflict management system, systems for reporting and other management details. SSI team members will receive an email requesting that they identify committees on which they would like to serve. All faculty involved in SSI are invited and encouraged to join committees, participate in team meetings, and inform the development of SSI's governance document.

- The dossier newsletter will come out bi-weekly. Please see the faculty web page for copies and for other information and forms. If team members have information for the newsletter notify Ruth or Erin (erin.spencer@umit.maine.edu).