



Science & Policy Committee Tuesday, February 6, 2018

Call to Order at 3:00 CDT. Twelve committee members were able to be on the conference call.

- **Clare Lindahl, SWCS CEO** gave a brief introduction on the challenges facing conservation and how the S&PC can help that discussion and dissemination of information as a link between science and policy.
- **Rex Martin, SWCS Chair and At-Large Director** reiterated the importance of informing policy makers to the science of soil and water conservation.
- **Lindsey Yasarer** updated the committee on progress in developing the Symposium "*Lightning conversations on the science and policy of conservation.*" Several speakers have been identified a couple more are being sought to cover conservation in Native American Communities, which is felt particularly relevant given the annual conference will be in Albuquerque, NM.
- **Annie Binder** updated the committee on the videos being posted to the SWCS website at <https://vimeo.com/swcs>. There are seven videos posted to date and the remaining three are to follow. This has been a very successful effort to enhance outreach of science and will be repeated at the 2018 Albuquerque meetings. A call for suggested presented to be videoed will follow the release of the general symposium agenda.
- **Andy Manale** described the purpose, development and need for the document detailing "Conservation Principles." Andy initiated and wrote the principles which have been adapted into a full and abridged versions. Clare and others had a few comments, which will be incorporated into the latest versions of the full and abridged documents. The document would then be sent to the S&PC to approve a final version. **Bruce Knight** suggested an aggressive timeline was agreed to get a final document for **Clare** and others who will be visiting DC in April during Farm Bill deliberations. A timeline of March 1 was set to get the revised version to the S&PC.
- It was agreed that these principles were needed and would be important for **Clare** and others to further state the importance of SWCS as a leader in conservation matters and in building bridges with other groups and strengthening collaborations, which could encompass science-based, commodity, and environmental organizations. Further, the SWCS and Conservation Principles will be a resource to the *Congressional Research Service*.
- **David Speidel** briefly discussed the recent announcement of possible "restructuring" of the Department of Interior and what that might mean to NRCS and others we are closely tied to in the conservation world. This might be a topic of future discussion for the S&PC.
- There have been several letters, which SWCS has agreed to sign onto in the last few months. Some of these requests came through the S&PC. It was suggested that SWCS also initiate some letters of support and/or comments with others, such as but not limited to Crop Commodity Boards, Cattleman's Association, and Farm Bureau. With forethought and planning this could consolidate the SWCS as a leader of conservation matters in the U.S. and internationally.
- The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 CDT. The next S&PC call is scheduled for March 6 @ 3:00 pm CDT.