Canberra, Australia, Book Planning Workshop

Mike Hayes and I traveled to Canberra, Australia, to participate in a planning workshop for chapter authors for a new book, *Drought, Risk Management, and Policy: The Role of Science in Decision-Making*. The book is being edited by Linda Botterill, University of Canberra, and Geoff Cockfield, from the University of Southern Queensland. The goal of this workshop was to assemble the chapter authors to discuss and critique one another's chapters, with the outcome being a more comprehensive, better coordinated, and less duplicative presentation of the key elements of the book's theme—i.e., the linkages between science, policy and decision making.

We had a lively discussion during the workshop and my expectation is for a significantly improved final product. The book is being developed as part of a new book series that I am editing through CRC Press. In 2005, I edited *Drought and Water Crises* for CRC Press and I am now editing a book series by this same title at the request of the Press. This book is the second one being developed for the series. The first book, currently under development, is in the near-final stages of production. It is being edited by Brian Wardlow, National Drought Mitigation Center, Martha Anderson, USDA, and James Verdin, USGS, and is titled *Remote Sensing and Drought: New and Emerging Monitoring Approaches*. Both books are expected to be published in 2012.

Following our long trip to Australia, Mike and I stopped over in Sydney for a day to catch our breath. Sydney is a 15-hour trip from Los Angeles.
Meeting with Nguyen Anh Tuan, Rector, Can Tho University, Vietnam

Ed Harvey and I met with Rector Nguyen Anh Tuan and Director Nguyen Van Be, head of the coordination office of the Research Institute for Climate Change at Can Tho University in Can Tho City, Vietnam, to discuss SNR’s research and academic programs and our administrative structure. They were particularly interested in water programs at UNL. The discussions were quite fruitful and will hopefully lead to stronger interactions with this university through faculty exchanges and graduate student training.

If you recall from the May director’s report, I am also continuing to work on a short course for the Vietnamese Ministry of Agriculture on climate change, tentatively scheduled for May 2012 at UNL. There may be opportunities for faculty from Can Tho University to participate in this short course.

Visit from the Dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences, University of Zambia

Dr. Mick Mwala, dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences at the University of Zambia, met with SNR faculty following the Water for Food Conference to discuss opportunities for collaboration. Several potential areas of collaboration emerged from these discussions. The three areas of greatest interest were in the areas of drought mitigation and management, wildlife damage management, and water. Scott Hygnstrom is already pursuing opportunities in wildlife damage management. Thanks to those SNR faculty who attended our discussion session.

Geography Annual Awards Ceremony and Gamma Theta Upsilon Inductees

The Geography program recently held its annual awards ceremony and reception for students inducted into Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU), the International Honorary Society in Geography. Student initiates must have a GPA of at least 3.3 overall and in geography courses. The advisors for GTU are Dr. Brian Wardlow and Dr. Gene Guan. The student inductees this year were Mark T. Avery, Dominic Biondo, Austin Butterfield, Humphrey W. Kalbo, Jeehoon Kim, Troy H. Lee, Andrew J. Prokop, Christopher Schaffer, Maren Stewart, Brenton Willoughby, and Jason Windhorst.

Upcoming Travel

June 24-July 3, 2011
Catania and Rome, Italy
To present an invited paper at a session of the European Water Resources Association Annual Meeting on Water Engineering and Management in a Changing Environment and to meet with Food and Agricultural Organization officials in Rome, and with officials of the World Meteorological Organization in Geneva, Switzerland, to discuss the implementation of an Integrated Drought Management Program.

July 13-15, 2011
Washington, D.C.
To participate in a planning workshop at George Mason University for the implementation of a global initiative promoting national drought policies being launched by the World Meteorological Organization and the U.N. Convention to Combat Desertification.

July 28-August 3, 2011
Tottori, Japan
To give an invited seminar at the Arid Lands Research Center and participate in a drought workshop at Tottori University.

September 26-28, 2011
Geneva, Switzerland
To participate in the International Organizing Committee meeting for the National Drought Policy initiative organized by the World Meteorological Organization.
Congratulations also to Juan Paulo Ramirez and Gene Guan for being selected for funding in the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities’ research faculty fellow competition for 2011-12. An independent team of reviewers rated the proposals and Juan and Gene’s proposal to develop a **Cloud-based GIS historical geospatial and photographic library of Nebraska** was the highest ranked proposal.

**Prairie Pines Tour: A Nature Center in the Making**

A tour on May 12 was organized to view and promote the development of Prairie Pines, a 145-acre farm located at 112th and Adams in northeast Lincoln. This property was donated to the University of Nebraska in 1989 by Walt and Virginia Bagley. Walt is a professor emeritus in the former Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Wildlife at UNL. The long-term vision of Prairie Pines is for it to be developed as a nature center for northeast Lincoln. As the city of Lincoln continues to grow to the north and east, this property will eventually be surrounded by the city and will represent a huge asset for the residents of the community. Jim Brandle helped to organize the tour along with several staff from the University of Nebraska Foundation. More than 25 people participated, including Vice Chancellor Ronnie Green, Dean Steve Waller, and Dean Elbert Dickey.

Jim Brandle led a May 12 tour of Prairie Pines, and helped others envision a nature center on the property.

Jim and his colleagues, Chuck Francis, Agronomy and Horticulture, and Susan Williams, Southeast Research and Extension Center, developed a Hatch project through the Agricultural Research Division in 2009 with a focus on developing this property for future generations. The goals of this project are ambitious but considerable progress has been made, thanks to the leadership Jim and his team have provided. To continue to move this project forward will require a significant investment by donors and the university. I am looking forward to continued progress in the development of this facility. I would like to thank Walt and Virginia Bagley for providing this resource to Lincoln’s current and future residents. Their vision and foresight is much appreciated.

**SNR Spring Picnic**

On May 5 we held our annual spring picnic in Hardin Hall. There was a great turnout and everyone enjoyed the wide variety of food provided by our faculty, staff, and students. Special thanks to Mark Kuzila for providing the Sloppy Joes for all to enjoy. At this event, in addition to recognizing those with May birthdays, we also recognize new and departing faculty and staff members and those faculty who recently were promoted and/or tenured. In addition, I presented SNR Staff Recognition Awards to Pat DeStefano, purchasing specialist in the Natural Resources Business Center, and Mark Mesarch, SNR’s web/database specialist, for their excellent service to the unit. SNR is very fortunate to have such excellent staff.

Mark Burbach also presented the SNR Meritorious Graduate Student Awards to Brittany Potter, M.S. student, and Dustin Martin, Ph.D. student.
Congratulations to Pat DeStefano, purchasing specialist in the Natural Resources Business Center, and Mark Mesarch, SNR’s web/database specialist, for their excellent service to SNR.

Mark Burbach presented the SNR Meritorious Graduate Student Awards to Brittany Potter, SNR M.S. student, and Dustin Martin, SNR Ph.D. student.

Water for Food Institute: Executive Director Interviews Underway

As mentioned in last month’s Director’s Report, the candidates for the position of founding executive director of the Robert B. Daugherty Water for Food Institute have been announced and the interviews are underway. We have an excellent group of candidates for this position and I am looking forward to the outcome of this process.

The interview schedule and feedback forms for the four candidates are:

- Roberto Lenton: May 19-20
  [Link to Roberto Lenton interview]
- Nick van de Giesen: May 25-27
  [Link to Nick van de Giesen interview]
- Marty Matlock: June 2-3
  [Link to Marty Matlock interview]
- Mike Young: June 10-13
  [Link to Mike Young interview]

If you have been able to attend portions of the interviews for the first two candidates, please provide your evaluations of each candidate so that this feedback can be incorporated in the selection process.

Presentations for the last two candidates are as follows:

- Marty Matlock: June 2, 10 a.m., Nebraska Union, Lincoln
- Mike Young: June 13, 3 p.m., Nebraska Union, Lincoln

IANR/Water for Food Institute Faculty Cluster Hire

IANR is moving forward with a cluster hire of faculty in support of the Water for Food Institute. Five faculty positions will be filled as part of this cluster hire. I have been meeting with the unit heads from BSE, Agronomy and Horticulture, and Statistics as well as the IANR deans and Vice-Chancellor Ronnie Green to further define these positions. These positions have also been discussed at SNR faculty meetings and by the Faculty Advisory Committee. The positions are:

- Systems Agronomist
• Crop Simulation Modeler
• Irrigation Engineer
• Ground/Surface Water Modeler/Geospatial Hydrologist
• Hydrogeophysicist

A search committee has been formed composed of Dean Eisenhauer (chair), Ed Harvey, Kent Eskridge, Martha Mamo, Bill Kranz, and Dave Wedin. The committee will begin reviewing applications in mid-June. Copies of the position descriptions for each of these faculty positions have been provided to SNR faculty. With the exception of the Systems Agronomist position, these positions have been advertised widely and we are hoping for a large candidate pool for each position. If you know of potential candidates, please contact them to make them aware of these positions. The Systems Agronomist position is a targeted hire.

**Faculty Visit to ICTA, Autonomous University of Barcelona**

I have been continuing to work on date selection for the visit of SNR faculty to the Institut de Ciencia i Tegnologia Ambientals (ICTA) at the Autonomous University of Barcelona in the fall. We have finally settled on October 13-14 for meeting with faculty from this Institute to discuss opportunities for collaboration. As mentioned in a previous report, the primary areas for collaboration appear to be with SNR programs in applied ecology, water, and applied climate science. I expect to be announcing which faculty will be participating in this series of meetings in the next couple of weeks. Stay tuned for more information. The role of these faculty will be to represent both their discipline and primary faculty area, as well as other programs in IANR and across the UNL campus. The format for our meetings has yet to be determined but that will be the next step in my discussions with the ICTA director, Louis Lemkow.

**Planning in Progress for Fall Assembly: Save the Date – August 15**

The date for our fall faculty and staff assembly is August 15 from 8 to 11 a.m. Please hold this date on your calendars. The program is currently being developed with input from several committees.

**Kudos to Gengxin Ou**

Gengxin Ou, an SNR Ph.D. student, received the Viewer’s Choice Award at the poster session of the 2011 Water for Food Conference in early May. The title of the poster was “Modeling the stream-aquifer dynamics using streambed field data in the Lower Platte River.” Gengxin is advised by Xun Hong Chen.

**Grants Awarded and Proposals Submitted**

Congratulations to Cody Knutson, Martha Shulski, Karie Decker, Craig Allen, and Scott Hygnstrom for grants awarded during May. Total funding received during May was $459,336.

Proposals submitted during May 2011 requested funds totaling $293,801. SNR faculty and staff submitting proposals included Tapan Pathak, Tonya Bernadt, Natalie Umphlett, Drew Tyre, Kevin Pope, Mark Pegg, Cody Knutson, Tonya Haigh, Nicole Wall, Paul Hanson, Song Feng, and Anatoly Gitelson. The total funding requested for the period from July 2010 to May 2011 was $55,871,454.

The total funding received from July 1, 2010, to May 31, 2011, was $7,624,314. The funding sources are illustrated in the chart below. They are: 58 percent federal, 30 percent state, 5 percent NRDs, 7 percent subcontracts, and less than 1 percent from foundations, trusts, and private sources.