NEEAC Meeting Summary - September 23, 2013

Attendees:

EPA

Javier Araujo
Julia Ortiz
Stephanie Owens
Christina Moody

NEEAC

Kelly Keena, chair
Kay Antunez de Mayolo
Ken Gembel
Richard Gonzales, vice-chair
Caroline Lewis
Mark Kraus
Kiki Corry
Scott Frazier

General Public

Dennis Hedke
Jackie Ostfeld
Diane Wood (NEEF)

Welcome, roll call and review of agenda – Kelly

EPA-HQ Updates (OEE) – Stephanie

Stephanie announced that Christina Moody will be the new Acting Deputy Director of the Office of Environmental Education. Christina will have responsibility for all OEE programs and activities and will be the liaison to the Senior Advisor on DA and Senior Advisor on Public Engagement. Stephanie reviewed Christina's bio. Christina thanked Stephanie for the introduction and stated that she was looking forward to working with everyone and excited about joining the team.

Subcommittee Discussion and Vote

Kelly reviewed the subcommittee hiring process and opened discussion about whether or not that process should be continued. Kelly asked Stephanie to remind the committee about the subcommittee's purpose.

Stephanie said that the purpose of the subcommittee was to provide advice to the federal task force through the NEEAC on ways the federal government could best leverage EE to support, build and

prepare the 21st century green workforce. The subcommittee would also support NEEAC in gathering necessary information for the preparation of the report in December. Their first charge was to try and advise the fed government, through the NEEAC, on pilot programs that could advance EE. She noted that the original discussions came out of the first White House summit on EE in order to facilitate stakeholder participation in the NEEAC process and the task force process. As part of that, they would write a report on pilot projects to advance EE and in the same report advise the federal government on how to best leverage EE as a discipline to support the workforce and link EE to STEM.

A brief discussion followed as to the distribution of the written parameters described by Stephanie and whether or not the members were familiar with the document. Further discussion occurred between the NEEAC and Stephanie about the political sensitivity of the report, the on boarding timeline, interaction between the NEEAC and the subcommittee, and the responsibility for the report.

Working Groups – Kelly Keena

Kelly reviewed the current working groups and began discussion of how the next stage of work could best be supported by the working groups. Five groups were proposed based on recurring ideas and themes.

The first proposed group would investigate EE as it's done within EPA – How do offices interact, how can EE be woven into the fabric of the agency so it isn't siloed, how to understand EPA and EE w/in EPA. Discussion followed as to how much of this information was already available, both within EPA and as part of the federal government.

The second group was related to the first group – this one would cover EE within the federal government, how the different agencies interact and whether or not there is any government wide standard or guidelines about EE and whether or not there's a role for OEE to fill.

The third group would focus on work done since the Act was written in 1990, specifically focusing on the implications and applications of the Act for EE in the 21st century. The group could analyze the EE reports that are coming out and the work that NEEF, NAAEE, EPA and others are doing (for example, the Next Generation Science Standards).

The fourth group would review models of successful EE - not programs, but the 30,000 foot view. The group would investigate models of how EE is done, as it is more that just providing information or environmental science. The office of Environmental Justice is a good example – they took their mission and goals and communicated them across all the different offices and agencies in a really effective way. The group could look into the strategies they used. Project Wet, Project Wild and Project Learning Tree might be helpful, not in terms of content but in terms of raising programs to the national program or network level. Others mentioned using this group to look at the regional programs and how the regions work together.

The last working group might not need to be a working group. In the work that has been done so far, NEEF has stood out as excellent in crossing boundaries. A study of their practices could be done by the EPA group. It's important for NEEAC to understand the role of NEEF, the structure of NEEF, and the similar foundations for support at other agencies.

There was discussion of the best way to understand the different roles of all the actors (EPA, OEE, NEEF, NEEAC, and the federal task force). The NEEAC members pared down the working groups to their three top options and unanimously decided to delegate the interagency work to the subcommittee.

Kelly asked everyone to e-mail their desired working groups to her and whether or not they'd like to work with the subcommittee.

Baltimore

The NEEAC reviewed the agenda to determine who would facilitate which portions of the meeting and what would be discussed. The group decided it would be best to let the summary of the listening sessions guide the next steps of the group and the final recommendation report. The group also decided to review the established table of contents in order to determine their next steps and timeline. After that they agreed to meet in working groups for at least half a day to review topics and questions. Finally, they planned to talk about preliminary recommendations and how to produce a work product, perhaps a summary of the listening session to put into the report as an appendix.

The group requested that Ginger Potter, the DFO of the last NEEAC, share her insights into last report in a presentation.

Richard requested that Diane provide an update on NEEF, perhaps through a staff person as she will be unavailable.

The group discussed what the best time would be to look at the last report and discuss the action items within it.

Public comment

There were no comments from the public.

Follow Up Steps - Kelly

Submitted by:

Dr. Kelly Keena, Chair, NEEAC 12-18-2013

Javier H. Araujo, NEEAC, EPA, DFO 12-18-2013