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## From the Director's Desk

Earlier this month several members of the WRRI Advisory Board met in Jackson to discuss issues, great and small, that will guide the Institute during the immediate future. Page 2 of this document contains a summary of the retreat. Page 3 contains specific issues identified during Day 1 discussions. Page 4 formalizes specific five year and one year goals.

We decided our Mission Statement is still relevant: *To provide a statewide center of expertise in water and associated land use and to serve as a repository and outlet of knowledge for use*

*in education, research, planning and community services.*

I see three major components to this statement - (1) Center of Expertise, (2) Repository of Knowledge, and (3) Knowledge Outlet. In order to transition to a recognized Center of Expertise we need to assess our current and future service areas. A reassessment of the Advisory Board composition can help make a difference. This will be the topic of the next meeting.

A Repository of Knowledge includes human capital as well as digital. My primary self-imposed management



task for this year will be to identify water related researchers at our IHL supported institutions. From a survey we will create a database that will be accessible by the research community as well as our general stakeholders.

Enhancing our Outlet mission is probably the easiest to accomplish, if resources are available. Creating an E-journal is an excellent idea, but will require a long term commitment in time. And we should always be striving to expand our stakeholder universe.

As we all know, making plans is the easy part. In July 2014 we will assess how committed we really were to change.



## Mississippi Water Resources Research Institute

### Executive Summary

WRRRI staff and Advisory Board members met in Jackson, MS August 7-8 for a Retreat to review the Institute's current Mission Statement and Advisory Board composition and discuss a potential name change. Ten Advisory Board members attended the meeting. Darryl Williams from EPA Region 4 and Jimmy Palmer, Butler and Snow PLLC, were also in attendance. The meeting took place at MDEQ headquarters. The Facilitative Leadership Training Institute, located in New Orleans, LA was hired to guide the retreat.

Day 1 was dedicated to reviewing the WRRRI Mission Statement. Several exercises were conducted to identify WRRRI practices and activities that could be categorized as Outdated and Dying, Established, Emerging, or New Ideas. Examples of Outdated and Dying included current conference format, the process of selecting proposals, and the WRRRI current WEB site. Examples of Established Practices included funding research as "seed money", funding students, and networking at the WRRRI Conference. Examples of Emerging Activities included diversify stakeholders, hydrologic fracturing, expanding water research in social sciences, and implementing Conjunctive Water Management (CWM) strategies. Examples of New Ideas included development of a permanent source of state funding, a Science Advisory Board, an in-state peer reviewed e-journal, and expansion of water management planning. During the afternoon of Day 1 Jimmy Palmer presented an excellent summary of Emerging Water Resources Issues completed with a concise explanation of the development of Mississippi's current water law and policy.

Day 2 began with a review of the previous day's activities and continued with discussions on how to translate the Emerging and New Ideas into action items. Spirited discussions ensued. The refined Mission Statement became "Our Mission is to provide a statewide center of expertise in water and associated land use and to serve as a repository and outlet of knowledge for use in education, research, planning and community services." The three key terms in this statement are Statewide Center of Expertise, Repository of Knowledge, and Outlet of Knowledge. Preliminary activities required to accomplish these goals were:

Center of Expertise: Restructure Board, Prioritize Water Resource Issues.

Repository of Knowledge: Identify Expertise Statewide, Increase Funding to Support Research.

Knowledge Outlet: Initiate E-Journal, Explore New Tools, Engage New Populations.

The group agreed to meet again in November to discuss Advisory Board membership and also to develop an action plan to accomplish one activity under each goal before July 2014. Pros and cons of a possible name change would also be discussed.

## Practices and Activities Within Water Resources Research

### Outdated & dying activities & behaviors that are no longer effective

- Current annual conference format
- Solicitation of conference sponsors & exhibitors
- Types of publications
- Under-utilization of Board
- Narrow participation in annual meeting
- Poor prioritization for RFPs
- Perception that purpose is to fund projects
- Board membership / participation
- Matching funds stifle ideas
- Process for selecting funding recipients
- Users ranking proposals
- Asking researchers to do tech transfer
- Assist State Agencies with plans
- WRRRI web site needs updating
- Short-term priority setting to direct long-term research

### Established activities or practices that we know work

- Communicating project outcomes
- Liaison for funding
- Innovative research
- Funding as research “seed” money
- Annual conference (but revise format)
- Funding graduate & under-grad students
- Research grants (but revise)
- Networking at Conference meetings, etc.
- Input driven process to selecting projects
- Provide forum for discussing different view points
- Newsletter format & distribution
- Understanding potential H<sub>2</sub>O savings & conservation projects
- RFP review process

### Emerging activities or practices wanting to emerge

- Diversify stakeholders
- Increased coordination among academic institutions
- Research related to water availability and use
- Conjunctive Water Management
- Hydrologic fracturing research
- How to leverage water for economic impact
- Understanding potential impacts of alternative surface water supplies
- One day specialty workshops
- Mentoring for capacity-building
- Help with policy & management
- Mobile apps for crowd sourcing
- Social networks/ organizations/ technology
- Systems-scale technology integration
- Expand water research in social sciences

### New Ideas that have not been tried

- Job Fair
- Develop permanent source of state funding
- Consolidated clearing house for water issues
- Integrated research with other states' Institutes
- Expanded supplemental funding
- Expand stakeholders to include K - Gray
- Science Advisory Board
- Student Conference
- Look for national non-traditional (foundation) funding to be directed at MS issues
- Engagement of environmental justice community
- Research on crops that foster water savings w/o decreasing yields
- In-state peer-reviewed journal
- Research co-ops
- Expansion of water management planning

## ***WRRRI Shared Mission and Vision***

### **WRRRI MISSION:**

**To provide a statewide center of expertise in water and associated land use *and* to serve as a repository and outlet of knowledge for use in education, research, planning and community services.**

## ***WRRRI Five Year Goals***

### **Goal 1. Become the Well-Known and Relevant Provider of Choice for Water Resource information in Mississippi**

- Expand outreach to include a publication
- Create a well recognized MWRRRI “brand”
- Utilize various media outlets for outreach
- Articulate communication with state & federal partners
- Communicate success stories that address key water problems
- Develop effective expanded outreach program (incorporating various social media)
- Initiate a MS water resources journal

### **Goal 2. Create Strong and Active Partnerships with State and Federal Research Programs**

- Identify collaboration opportunities to create more specialty events
- Formalize cooperation w/ “upstream” states Institutes
- Establish structure & processes to promote collaborative activities & leveraging of resources
- Become involved in water planning activities of state & local agencies
- Promote more intra & inter university coordination
- Partner w/ environmental orgs (NGO, State, fed)
- Partner w/ economic development orgs (MDA...)

### **Goal 3. Identify Consistent Funding Streams**

- Identify 2 new funding sources
- Develop a sustainable pool of funding \$1 Million/ year

### **Goal 4. Review Approaches of Transferring Research Products to Users**

- Keep abreast of innovations in technology
- Integrate WRRRI mission with Extension resources

**Goal 5. Secure Active Participation & Commitment from Appropriate Agencies / Organizations on Advisory Board.**

## ***WRRRI One Year Activities***

### **Center of Expertise**

Restructure Advisory Board and Prioritize Water Resource Issues.

### **Repository of Knowledge**

Identify Expertise Statewide and Increase Funding.

### **Outlet of Knowledge**

Initiate an E-Journal, Explore New Tools, and Engage New Populations.