



We're seeking your assistance. See action item 1...

"I believe in evidence. I believe in observation, measurement, and reasoning, confirmed by independent observers. I'll believe anything, no matter how wild and ridiculous, if there is evidence for it. The wilder and more ridiculous something is, however, the firmer and more solid the evidence will have to be."
— Isaac Asimov, 1983, *The Roving Mind*

Action items:

- **Jon Wraith** is currently engaged in developing a more rigorous process associated with workload assignments. He's asked: how many courses is a tenured faculty member expected to cover in a year and what's the criteria that supports the assignment? Jon appreciates that there's breadth in teaching assignments and is attempting to gauge the range of tenured faculty teaching workloads at our NE institutions. As a FYI, at UNH, Jon's college includes agriculture, life sciences, nutrition, and natural resources.

If you'd [forward to me your expected tenured-faculty teaching load \(annual basis\) and the criteria that supports your expectation](#), we'll collate the data, share with Jon, and post to the NERA website.

- *While this was a reminder in our last newsletter*, Gale Buchanan reached out to me to solicit you, as NERA directors, to consider signing letters to Congressional agriculture appropriators and authorizers asking they intervene to stop the restructuring of REE and the relocation of NIFA until there has been a comprehensive independent study and full consultation with the stakeholder community. The letters were initially sent to Congress on November 27 with 21 signers. There are now 51 signatories. (The letters were written to the last Congress and for now, the architects have decided not to update it to the current Congress titles. [The letters are posted on the NERA website](#). You'll note 8 NE institutions have signed the letters.) If you'd like to sign on, please share that with Steve Pierson (spierson@amstat.org) along with a file of your signature. Steve is continuing to seek additional signers because of the influence the letter is having.

- **Jason Hubbart** has announced that he has stepped back as the Associate Director at WVU. Jason will be directing the Institute of Water Security and Science as well as teaching and conducting research. (Sounds like: Almost heaven, West Virginia...) Wish him well in his next chapter.

- With over two decades of faithful service and meaningful contributions to the Western region, ESCOP, ESS, and the Land-grant system, our colleague **Mike Harrington** will be retiring as the WAAESD Executive Director in June. When you have the opportunity, thank Mike, wish him well, and buy him a drink: he deserves it!

- We are seeking new AES photos for the NERA website. [Please forward those to Dave](#).

Reminders/Updates:

- The Strategic Realignment webinars are scheduled for [Tuesday 2/26 at 4:00pm](#) and [Thursday 2/28 at 4:00pm](#). Click on each date link to register. [Supporting materials can be found on the NERA Website.](#)
- Hold the date and suggestions wanted: the quarterly **NERA teleconference** is scheduled for **March 28, 2019 at 11:00 AM**. If you have a burning topic that you'd like to see added to the agenda, [please forward those suggestions to Dave](#). One of the issues we'll be discussing is NERA's contributions and participation in the National Impact Database.
- The APLU is hosting a **New Deans', Directors', and Administrators' Orientation** on **December 10 – 12, 2019**. In preparation for the meeting, Wendy Fink is sending out a survey to gauge interest in specific topics. Be on the lookout for the survey and please consider providing your input. What do new administrators need?
- You saw in the last newsletter that the NERA Executive Committee gave me a greenlight to pursue the planning of a symposium dedicated to "Ecosystem agriculture (regenerative ag) and agricultural ecosystem services." This is a NEED-led initiative and one that NERA is serving as a collaborator. The Planning Committee is **seeking 1 more NERA director** to serve on the Planning Committee: any takers? Mark Hutton (Maine) was the first volunteer. [Please give Dave or Rick heads up.](#)
- The 2018 Farm Bill eliminated the match waiver on competitive grants programs for Land-grant Universities. [If this is causing problems at your institution, we'd like to know.](#) This has been a point of conversation and contention during discussion with the other regional Executive Directors.

Informational items:

- Washington State University's Department of Biological Systems Engineering (College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences) seeks a 12-month, 75%, permanent, full time tenure-track **Assistant Professor in food engineering**. Visit <http://www.nerasaes.org/employment> to view the job description.
- The University of Tennessee's Department of Agricultural & Resource Economics, is searching for an **Assistant Professor** with expertise in Nursery/Greenhouse/Specialty Crops. Visit <http://www.nerasaes.org/employment> to view the job description.
- The University of Maryland's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources is searching for a **Professor and Department Chair** in Plant Sciences and Landscape Architecture. Visit <http://www.nerasaes.org/employment> to view the job description.



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Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors (NERA)

www.nerasaes.org

14 East Farm Road

Aquaculture Center

University of Rhode Island

Kingston, RI 02881