

April 28, 2011 Policy WG Call

Participating:

Don (ISA), Jennifer (KAB), Larry (NUCFAC), Kevin (ASLA), Hadley (ANLA), Jennifer JJH (SUFC), Danielle (NACD), Gary (AR), Gerry (AF), Phil (FS)

- Reminder for each **Advocacy Day** participant to follow-up with their respective Senate and House representative and staff.

Hand-written notes are ideal.

- NOTE from JJH: WG needs to discuss how to follow-up on offers/requests from Hill staffers to cultivate urban forestry/GI champions. Who and how does SUFC approach? *Flag for next call/action plan.*

- **Quantifying benefits of urban trees** "show me" approach planned for targeted Hill staffers. Via tailored iTree (iTree Eco etc.) presentation (highlighting final product vs. process/tool), SUFC representatives will meet with Peterson's (MN - Lisa Shelton) staff to illustrate the specific value of urban trees in their respective district (and even site specific) as a pilot of sorts. This is a direct result of the request to "show vs. tell".

- (iTree ad hoc committee pulling together materials - Scott Maco, Larry W., Jen JH, Greg Ina, Don)

Timeline: Peterson's office presentation prior to May 25th (if possible) – Incorporate feedback and fine-tune presentation by early June – mid/late June present to expanded targeted Hill offices (Rubio +).

- WG discussed opportunities to engage and work on the **Farm Bill** (major authorizing legislation for cooperative forestry that WILL pass). Presented as opportunity for SUFC to leverage resources for UF and establish pipeline/s to multiple agencies – this may be the only (or best) vehicle/framework to institutionalize these opportunities. Larry specifically stressed it is a time to think creatively and outside-the-box to empower some innovative thinking.
- Larry Wiseman (NUCFAC) and Jad Daley (TPL) have recently formed an urban forest advisory committee on the Forest and the Farm Bill Coalition (FFBC). At this time Rebecca Turner (AF) and Jake Donnay (NASF) are also involved with this Coalition and advisory committee. Other SUFC members expressed interest in participating in this advisory committee and SUFC having a seat at the 'table' if the SUFC moves forward with work on this issue.
- Along with having a 'seat' at this table comes a commitment to participate and commit resources (staff time of members, Convener time, and a certain level of expertise/lead which will involve additional financial resources). Participation would include at a min.:

- Attending FFBC meetings (nominal)
- Working on innovative ideas/approaches to pursue
- As process unfolds, spending time on the Hill promoting platform/position

- **The next immediate step for the Policy WG is to make a clear decision to move forward or opt out of process completely as a Coalition.** Kevin, Jennifer, Gary and Hadley all requested more information on the Farm Bill (being sent via this email) in order to better inform their decisions. **Policy WG should re-group in one week to make a definitive decision and recommendation to the Steering Committee and general membership.**

- It was also noted that many times current pending legislation is folded into the Farm Bill (marker legislation is sometimes swept into Farm Bill as last minute and pending legislation). The GI/Allyson Schwartz bill (Green Communities Act) is a prime candidate.

FARM BILL BACKGROUND:

1. UCF Program authorization from 1990 Farm Bill (p.19-24). Contains section of Findings and purposes, as well as general authorities.
<http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/library/SPF-CF%20handbook.pdf>
2. "What Is the Farm Bill (summary overview document). Attached.
3. Matrix of potential ideas re: Farm Bill re-authorization – for discussion generation purposes only. Attached.
4. Pending: Talking points from Gerry Gray (AF) on past Farm Bill process and opportunities.