



United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Research, Education, and Economics (REE)

National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics (NAREEE) Advisory Board

Pollinator Subcommittee Meeting – Friday, July 12, 2024

Pollinator Subcommittee (PS) Members Present: Ms. Kelly Bills, Mr. Darren Cox, Ms. Danielle Downey, Dr. Christina Grozinger, Ms. Melanie Kirby, Dr. Margarita Lopez-Uribe, Dr. Ramesh Sagili, and Dr. Hollis Woodard - 8

Members Absent: - Dr. Daniel Schmehl - 1

Ex-Officio Present: Ms. Elizabeth Hill, USDA Honey Bee and Pollinator Research Coordinator, Office of the Chief Scientist (OCS), USDA – 1

Guest: Christopher Crawford, AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellow, (OCS)

NAREEE Board Staff Present: Ms. Kate Lewis, NAREEE Board Executive Director/Designated Federal Officer (DFO) and Ms. Michele Simmons, Program Support Specialist

I. Welcome, Roll Call, Quorum Check, and Minutes

DFO Lewis welcomed the group, took roll call, and noted that the quorum was met.

Ms. Simmons asked if there were any revisions to the May minutes. There were no comments or revisions. She asked for a motion and a second, which was received to approve the minutes. All were in favor and no one opposed. Ms. Simmons will have the web team post the May minutes and agenda on the PS website.

II. Report/Remarks from the USDA Ex-Officio member - Ms. Elizabeth “Izzy” Hill

Ms. Hill talked about the State of the Science meeting that’s scheduled for October 29 - 30, 2024. The meeting might be extended to October 31st. She said that all PS members are welcome to participate. There are normally 5 different subject matter areas spanning multiple facets of pollinator health. One day of the meeting is focused on a specific topic. This year the focus will be on monitoring. The Mastermind groups and federal partners will discuss who will be speaking on the major topics at the meeting. Ms. Hill stated it should be a nice overview of where folks are with monitoring and where the direction needs to go on different fronts in pollinator health. She asked if there were any questions.

DFO Lewis asked if the meeting is hybrid or virtual?

Ms. Hill stated that the meeting is fully virtual. She also discussed some of the topics that are up for discussion at the State of the Science meeting. They are pests and pathogens, updates from APHIS on tropilaelaps mites, viral RNA, long term resistance breeding programs, and occupancy models just to name a few. There will also be time on the agenda to highlight the new PS. Ms. Hill will send a “Save the Date” calendar invite for now. The invitations will be sent as soon as the meeting dates and speakers are confirmed. Ms. Hill

asked if there were any comment or questions.

Dr. Hollis Woodard asked if there would be discussions on the Yellow Legged Hornet?

Ms. Hill stated that Ann Lebron from APHIS will give report outs on where APHIS is regarding their invasive species work and potential threats, but most likely, there won't be a focus on the Yellow Legged Hornet.

Dr. Lopez-Uribe asked is the State of the Science meeting connected to priorities set for pollinator health?

Ms. Hill stated they have not connected priorities set for pollinator health yet. Once the 2024 Pollinator Priority Report is public, the PS can discuss what they think the priorities are and integrate them. The report might be issued every three years instead of having an annual report because sometimes science takes time to process in more than one year. She stated that there's still a need to communicate yearly changes or updates or priorities that might come up.

III. New Business

Overview of and discussion about PS Cheat Sheet

DFO Lewis shared the draft PS Cheat Sheet topics for discussion and review which consists of:

- Cheat Sheet Overview
- Subcommittee Structure
- Subcommittee Responsibilities
- Mandatory and Voluntary Activities
- Communications
- Subcommittee Meetings Order of Business
- Work Product Approval
- Document Management
- Subcommittee Term, Elections, and New Member Selection
- Overview of USDA Offices and Programs
- Appendix A Farm Bill Mandates (Honey Bee and Pollinator Research)

Ms. Hill stated that the Cheat Sheet will be a living document. She asked if there were any questions or comments.

Mr. Cox asked if there are any major change between what you perceive in the next Farm Bill versus the 2018 Farm Bill (FB)?

Ms. Hill stated that the Senate's version of the FB was announced a few days ago. There were mentions of pollinators, an emphasis on the genetics and breeding lab at Iris, and a mention of honey adulteration. There were other pollinator topics, but the FB isn't final. Ms. Hill believes there's was an estimated 3% increase across the board for most programs.

Dr. Grozinger asked is there an opportunity for the PS to help shape the FB?

Ms. Hill suggested that if a stakeholder has feedback for the FB, they can reach out to their legislators, or to groups that have connections to Congress.

Ms. Hill provided a website for the Congressional Research Service (CRS). The CRS, a federal legislative branch agency located within the Library of Congress, serves as shared staff exclusively to congressional committees and Members of Congress. CRS experts assist at every stage of the legislative process — from the early considerations that precede bill drafting, through committee hearings and floor debate, to the oversight of enacted laws and various agency activities. She stated there are some good reports that you can search on the link [here](#).

DFO Lewis asked if there were any more questions. There were none.

Background on PS Terms and Member Recruitment

DFO Lewis shared a presentation on the PS Member’s Term Overview, FY26 Recruitment, and the process and timeline for the Chair election outlined below.

Pollinator Subcommittee – Who We Are

9 members -- Subcommittee is fully staffed

Academic Representatives – 5 members

5 members; 0 vacancies

Public Sector Representatives – 2 members

2 members; 0 vacancies

Private Sector Representatives – 2 members

2 members; 0 vacancies

Ex-Officio Member (federal) – 1 member

1 USDA member; 0 vacancies

9 member terms end at the end of FY25 (Sept 2025)

PS terms will all be up for reappointment

We could re-appoint/extend all members terms, or recruit 3 new members in FY25 for new FY26 member appointments

DFO Lewis also explained changing the recruitment process for the NAREEE Board and the Committees and Subcommittees from once a year to every other year. The current PS members have appointments of 2 years. Members may serve, regardless of the length of their initial appointment, consecutively or non-consecutively, 6 years total (2, 4, or 6 years). The next recruitment cycle will start in Jan 2025 (FY25) for Oct 2025 (FY26) appointments.

Dr. Grozinger asked can member only serve six years in total?

DFO Lewis said that is correct. A member can serve a total of 6 years consecutively or non-consecutively. She asked if there were any other questions. There were none.

Electing Subcommittee Chair

DFO Lewis discussed the process and steps needed to elect a Chair for the PS. An email was sent to the entire PS to see who would like to be considered for the Chair role. One person (Dr. Christina Grozinger) was nominated to be Chair which she accepted. Dr. Grozinger provided a brief background of her career and what her vision would be as Chair for the PS. DFO Lewis asked if anyone wanted to be considered for Chair. No one else spoke up or was nominated. She asked for a motion, Dr. Sagili motioned first, and Ms. Kirby motioned second. All were in favor and no one opposed for Dr. Grozinger to become Chair for the PS. Members congratulated and thanked her for stepping into the role of Chair

until the end of FY25 (September 30, 2025).

DFO Lewis asked if anyone had questions for Dr. Grozinger.

Ms. Kirby asked do you foresee the need or opportunities for additional meetings?

Dr. Grozinger stated that she will create a poll for the PS to fill out to get an idea of whether the meetings should be once a month or every other month, and what date and time a reoccurring meeting might take place that will work for most of the group.

Setting the Stage for Subcommittee work - PS member priorities

DFO Lewis mentioned the discussion that took place at the last meeting in May to talk about setting the stage for the work of this subcommittee.

Ms. Hill stated to the PS to be ready to share major research priorities and areas which can be programs or policies for the PS to work on at the next meeting.

Dr. Grozinger suggested to share the Google doc that has the current set of recommendations for the PS to look at and add comments.

Ms. Hill will pull from the Cheat Sheet a summary of the main goals, both at the overarching level, area of focus, and what the research priorities are.

DFO Lewis asked if there were any questions or comments. There were none.

IV. Wrap-up/Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:34 p.m. EDT.

The next meeting is TBD.