

**Environmental Caucus Meeting**  
**ARD Large Pod**  
**November 2, 2009**

**Present:** Patrick Pynes, Peter Friederici, Blase Scarnati, Ron Hubert, Paul Trotta, Tamara Ramirez, Janina Burton, Ann Huffman, Paloma Ibañez, David Bousquet, Patty West, David Schlosberg, Rod Parnell, Laurie Carl, Rom Coles, Megan Stalheim, Tim Clark, Kathee Rose, Kristen Bullard, Heather Farley, Erik Nielson, Kathy Maloney, Mark Aasmundstad, Robert Chavez, Laura Huenneke, Karen Pugliesi, Lindsay Wagner, Agnes Drogi, Tom Rogers, Alden Carr, Bobby Benedetto, Deja Walker, Shelley Silbert

**I. Introductions and Announcements:**

Upcoming events are now posted on the Green NAU website:  
<http://green.nau.edu/events.html>.

If you have any events to add, please use the form located at  
<http://green.nau.edu/ideas.html>

Call for Proposals: Intellectual Intersections: A multidisciplinary Graduate Student Conference. Please see the "For Students" section of the Green NAU website:  
<http://green.nau.edu/students.html>

**II. Environmental Caucus Business:**

*A. Action Team Updates*

1. *Ponderosa Group* – Rom Coles. Presented a President's Innovation Fund Grant Application draft document entitled "Transforming NAU: Sustainability, Retention, Civic Engagement: Focus on Freshman Year Experience". 12 new First Year Seminar courses. Communities of Practice to be established by the initial instructors and GAs for spring 2010, and a speaker series to begin fall 2010. A bus will be converted into a "Sustainable Café" to promote civic engagement and many other intersections on campus. Funding targets include Presidents Innovation Fund and a long-term funding outline. Feedback requested to Rom.
2. *ACUP Climate Commitment/Climate Action Plan* – Lindsay Wagner - The draft of the Climate Action Plan is going well, just waiting for some curriculum information. The draft will be shared within the next few weeks through the Environmental Caucus listserv.
3. *Environmental Identity* – Shelley Silbert - Green NAU website is now live, though construction of some section is still taking place:
  - a. "Upcoming Events" section of the site is live. Paloma Ibañez, the EC's new website intern, is adding the events.

- b. Please use the form to add an event, publications, courses, and research highlights. Go to <http://green.nau.edu/ideas.html>. The Action Team is working with University Marketing to plan and implement publicity for the site, once it has been reviewed by the Caucus.
  - c. All EC participants will be invited to check the site content. An email will be sent to the listserv when Paloma is ready to receive those comments.
4. *Student Environmental Caucus* – Updating a composting program on South Campus, a collaboration between SLUG and the Student EC. They will share an outline about the plans and welcome input. Additionally, a New Student Orientation video is under discussion.
5. *Water Action Team* – Tamara Ramirez – Encouraging NAU to transition away from selling bottled water. The Union and DuBois no longer sell it. Kudos to Campus Dining for removing bottled water despite the resulting loss in revenue. Students are researching costs of installing more refill stations. Also trying to raise “grass-roots” support through a table in the Union, Green Weekend events and other efforts. Asking people to sign a “Take Back the Tap” pledge, petition. Working with Food and Water Watch (a national org) as well. Interested in any contacts, info about the costs involved regarding the refill stations.

Comments were made asking about the difference between tap water, filtered water. Many think the Flagstaff tap water is just fine. A main reason for refill stations is to allow faster, more convenient filling of water bottles. Regarding the locations of water refill stations, questions were posed about logistics where water might be removed from a vending machine and there is no plumbing/water access.

A question was posed about the High Country Conference Center’s bottled water use. Catering still uses bottled water.

#### *B. Greenbuild Conference Update - Heather Farley - November 10-13, 2009*

Located in Phoenix this year, approximately 25,000 attend this conference. The Marketing department is working on creating/gathering materials about the NAU sustainability efforts. Heather has invitations for the President’s reception on Nov. 12, 4:30-7:30 pm at the Hyatt Regency; contact her if you need one. Please invite NAU alumni/friends in Phoenix.

*Green Weekend* – A Greenbuild conference affiliated tour of NAU and Northern Arizona is scheduled for Saturday morning, for paid participants only. 34 are currently registered for the tour. There will be a campus open house.

See the Upcoming Events on the Green NAU website (<http://green.nau.edu/events.html>) for more information about Green Weekend events. It will include concerts, campus green buildings will be open, etc... Everyone is encouraged to participate to raise the awareness about Flagstaff and NAU's involvement.

NAU will have a table at the Conference's Thursday hospitality event. Campus centers, degree programs, and institutes are invited to contribute flyers, signage, displays.

Tom Rogers offered to share the ride to the Thursday Presidents event and also offered a ride down on Wed. Take a look at the Facebook page "Countdown to Greenbuild" for ride sharing and other connections.

There is a possibility that the keynote speakers may be webcast - more info to come. There will be an Inside NAU piece on Thursday.

### *C. President's Innovation Fund – Opportunities for Collaboration*

See draft sent to the Environmental Caucus listserv on 10/30/09.

Laura Huenneke spoke about the process. The program is being facilitated by the President's Strategic Planning and Budget Committee with the group reviewing proposals and making recommendations to the President. Beyond the requirements articulated in the request for proposals, the president is looking for innovative, transformational changes to how the university does business, both academic and operational. They are looking for ideas which address both the most effective use of one-time funds (stimulus funds) and include thoughts/strategies about where the long-term, sustainable funds will come from.

Karen Pugliesi expanded on the challenges of stimulus money and encourages capitalizing on ways to leverage short term moneys for long-term advantage. Proposal evaluation will look at the potential for initiative sustainability. Think about these as a platform for long-term change and innovation.

David Bousquet commented that the state has a \$2 billion budget problem and encouraged using this as an opportunity to think critically about how we do business (academic & operational) and changes that will generate significant savings. The budget problem will continue at the state level, how can we distance ourselves from that and create a more sustainable organization.

Karen Pugliesi stated that the strategy lies in what you don't do, highlighting a recent quote as an example of what we need to think about as we explore proposal ideas.

Shelley Silbert noted that sustainability is highlighted in the proposal invitation and suggested that we have a separate meeting to discuss/explore ideas where the

Caucus can facilitate collaboration. There is no limit to the number of proposals that can be submitted from any group. Laura Huenneke indicated that there is strength in submitting proposals through EC. As a cross-campus group we are breaking down the silos.

Erik Nielson mentioned George Koch's NSF grant proposal includes a practicum where graduate students are encouraged to work on campus with professionals. This could be incorporated into a proposal in some way.

January 1 is the deadline, but December 1 is when the proposals will first be reviewed. Having proposals ready by December 1 is the objective.

Paul Trotta suggested that the group include an international component - learning about sustainability internationally.

Money should be spent or encumbered by July 1, 2010. Focus on using this money to prepare us to be an institution that we are proud of, cognizant that we will likely need to weather more budget cuts.

Karen Pugliesi mentioned that the President will also be directing the campus to conduct a policy audit. How can the campus policies be changed or improved to increase efficiency? How can the Caucus be involved?

#### *D. Prioritization of Environmental Caucus Goal for 2009-2010 - Shelley Silbert*

Shelley guided the group through a discussion of the March 27, 2009 Strategic Plan Goals document. We noted EC accomplishments and completed projects as well as goals that are either still in the works or are no longer priorities. A more detailed discussion on setting priorities will be held at the next meeting. Everyone is encouraged to contact EC Steering Committee members with feedback (names are listed on Caucus website, [www.nau.edu/envcaucus](http://www.nau.edu/envcaucus) under "Contact Us". For a copy of the Goals document, e-mail [Shelley.Silbert@nau.edu](mailto:Shelley.Silbert@nau.edu)).

### **III. Report from the Association of Environmental Science and Studies Meeting in Madison, WI - David Schlosberg**

This is a new association serving faculty, students and staff of more than 1000 interdisciplinary "environmental" programs in North America and around the world. NAU has a good reputation in this group – continued from the Ponderosa Group's first formation a dozen years ago, which is still seen as a model. There was great interest in some of the ideas coming out of NAU to encourage inter-disciplinary collaboration currently as well. Anyone interested is encouraged to join AESS. Membership is \$25, for more information see: ([http://www.aess.info/content.aspx?page\\_id=0&club\\_id=939971&sl=47472193](http://www.aess.info/content.aspx?page_id=0&club_id=939971&sl=47472193)).

The next meeting is in Portland, OR in June 2010. Nice mix of business, curriculum, and research. The newsletter is helpful. The organization is looking for student membership and involvement in committees.

**IV. Presentation: "Climate Change Efforts of NAU's Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP)" – Mehrdad Khatibi**

ITEP's website: [www.nau.edu/itep](http://www.nau.edu/itep) . ITEP formed at NAU in the early 1990s. There are now 25-30 employees. Largely EPA funded. The organization works with tribes all over the US and conversations include discussion about climate change issues and efforts.

They are hiring a Climate Change Program Manager to provide tribes with training and resources for natural resources and environmental protection and development. The focus is on air quality, K-16 programs, and other forms of support.

See website's new tool entitled Tribes and Climate Change. This includes information and data about what tribes are doing around the country related to climate change. The challenge will be to keep working with the EPA to make sure the site is regularly updated. EPA Office of Atmospheric Programs.

How the Environmental Caucus can help. ITEP wants to make connections with campus departments and they need help with the research and development of action plans to work with tribal communities on specific projects – focused on resource management issues.

The group strives to stay out of the politics and focus on training and technical assistance. Helping tribal groups with renewable energy development programs is a primary focus of ITEP and they are working towards the development of a Sustainable Energy Resource Center.

**V. Action Team Breakouts - quick check-in with the groups.**

1. Curriculum and the Environment/Ponderosa 2.0
2. Advocacy for ACUP Climate Commitment
3. NAU's Environmental Identity
4. Student Environmental Caucus
5. Water Action Team

**Save the Dates!**

**Environmental Caucus December Meeting**  
Thursday, December 3, noon-1:30, ARD Large Pod

**Spring Semester Meetings**

*All are in the ARD Large Pod, noon-1:30*

Thursday, Jan. 14

Wednesday, Feb. 3

Tuesday, March 2

Monday, April 5

Wednesday, May 5