

NSRC

*A Partnership of New Hampshire, Vermont,
Maine, New York and the USDA Forest
Service for Research to Benefit Northern
Forest Lands and Communities*

Northeastern States Research Cooperative

Structure, Governance and Operating Guidelines

The Northeastern States Research Cooperative (NSRC) is a competitive research grant program specifically created for studies of the 26-million acre Northern Forest -- a forested region spanning the states of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York. Established by Congress in 1998 (Public Law 105-185, Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978 section 1642 (d) (3) as amended in 2003), the NSRC supports cross-disciplinary, collaborative ecosystem, socio-economic, forest product, and conservation research that benefits the unique landscapes and communities of the Northern Forest region.

STRUCTURE

NSRC partners currently include the USDA Forest Service, Northern Research Station and a designated institution in each of the four Northern Forest states: The University of New Hampshire in cooperation with the Hubbard Brook Research Foundation in New Hampshire, the University of Vermont, the University of Maine, and SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry in New York. Each NSRC partner will be responsible for a specific research Theme that falls within the guidelines of the overall congressional NSRC authorization.

GOVERNANCE

For NSRC governance and coordination, each partner of the NSRC shall designate an Executive Advisory Committee (EAC) member. Current EAC members are listed in Table 1. The EAC will work closely with designated Theme Managers in each state to ensure strong institutional support for the NSRC, to ensure program management consistency, to preserve scientific integrity in the competitive grant process, and to enhance relationships with federal and state NSRC supporters.

TABLE I: Structure and Governance of NSRC as of January 2008

NSRC Partners	State Funding Recipient Program and Theme Manager	State Research "Theme"	Executive Advisory Committee Appointee
USDA Forest Service	Center for Research on Ecosystem Change <i>Dr. Christopher Eagar</i> NSRC Program Manager	--	Michael Rains Director, USDA Forest Service Northern Research Station
New Hampshire	Department of Natural Resources and the Environment <i>Dr. John D. Aber</i>	Disturbance and Ecosystem Health	David Sleeper, Executive Director, Hubbard Brook Research Foundation
Vermont	Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources University of Vermont <i>Kate Baldwin</i>	Integrated Social, Economic and Ecological Research	Dr. Don DeHayes, Dean, Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources, University of Vermont
Maine	Center for Research on Sustainable Forests University of Maine <i>Dr. Bruce Wiersma</i>	Forest Productivity and Forest Products	Dr. Bruce Wiersma Director, Center for Research on Sustainable Forests, University of Maine
New York	College of Environmental Science and Forestry State University of New York <i>Dr. David H. Newman</i>	Biodiversity and Protected Area Management	Dr. David H. Newman Chair, Forest & Natural Resources Management, College of Environmental, Science and Forestry State University of New York

OPERATING GUIDELINES

Active NSRC partners agree to share common operating guidelines for overall collaboration, fund distribution, and research proposal processing. These include:

Appointment of a Program and Theme Managers The Northern Research Station will designate a NSRC Program Manager to administer NSRC funds to the partner institutions, coordinate NSRC activities, work to ensure the continuation of cooperation among the four Themes in meeting the objectives of the NSRC, and work with the Theme Managers in each state on NSRC reporting and information dissemination. The university, government agency or non-profit identified in each state as the recipient of NSRC funds shall name a Theme Manager who will manage the NSRC program in that state and coordinate overall NSRC programs and research between states, help develop additional funding sources for the NSRC, build a database of NSRC researchers, communicate with forest managers and policy-makers, host a website that links the four NSRC Themes together, and update the operating guidelines of the NSRC as needed.

Establishment of a research theme The Program Manager and each Theme Manager will work to ensure that stakeholder interests help develop the research theme for their institution and state that also correlates to specific Northern Forest research goals stipulated in the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research

Act of 1978 section 1642 (d) (3) as amended in 2003. In all research themes, NSRC partners should strongly encourage collaborative, regional studies -- research that is not often funded by other federal sources.

Coordination of joint RFP release The Program Manager and Theme Managers will work together to combine individual themes into a joint Request for Proposals (RFP) each year that is distributed to researchers working throughout the four Northern Forest states. The joint RFP will stipulate a date for receipt of both pre-proposals and full proposals. The annual NSRC RFP is open to all qualified researchers as long as the proposed research addresses the research themes of the NSRC and will provide direct understanding and benefit to the Northern Forest.

Creation of an Independent Review Panel (IRP) for each state Each Theme Manager will create an Independent Review Panel to review proposals. Members of the IRP will not be eligible to apply to NSRC funding while they serve and will remain as anonymous reviewers throughout the process.

Acceptance of common proposal award guidelines

Pre-Proposal Pre-proposals will be reviewed by Theme Managers and a select panel to initially determine which submissions will progress to the full proposal stage. The Theme Manager will notify all proposal authors of the submission's status after pre-proposal review.

Proposal Each full proposal will be reviewed in detail by at least three independent reviewers on the IRP before a final vote on the award by the full IRP and Theme Manager. The Theme Manager will ensure that all proposal authors receive written reviews from the IRP (with IRP member names remaining anonymous).

Administrative costs The Theme Manager and his/her institution shall not hold more than 20% of its NSRC funds for NSRC administrative costs, special projects, or other NSRC-related activities at the home institution or organization. Each Theme Manager will be encouraged to distribute as much of NSRC funding as possible each year to the competitive research program.

Acknowledgement of NSRC funding All funded proposals shall identify the NSRC Authorization (Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978 section 1642 (d) (3) as amended in 2003) as a source of funds. This does not and will not preclude acknowledgement of other collaboration/affiliation identification and/or other funding sources.

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NSRC PARTNERS AGREEMENT

By signing below, the Executive Advisory Committee representatives of the Northeastern States Research Cooperative partners agree to uphold the basic structure, governance, and operating guidelines outlined in this document.

D. A. DeHayes

Dr. Don DeHayes, Dean, School of Natural Resources,
University of Vermont

Date 1/30/08

Paul Sleeper

David Sleeper, Executive Director
Hubbard Brook Research Foundation, New Hampshire

Date 1/30/08

Bruce Wiersma

Dr. Bruce Wiersma, Director, Center for
Research on Sustainable Forests, University of Maine

Date 30 Jan 2008

David Newman

Dr. David Newman, Chair, Forest and Natural
Resource Management, State University of
New York, College of Environmental Science
and Forestry

Date 1/31/08

Michael Rains

Michael Rains, Director, Northern Research Station
USDA Forest Service

Date 2.19.2008