Assembly of SGEPL Executive Committee
Conference Call (1/17/03)

In attendance: Jay Rasmussen, Ralph Rayburn, Jim Falk, Bill DuPaul, Brian Miller, and Jim Murray

Jay Rasmussen. assumed his new duties as chair of the committee and we welcomed a new addition, Bill DuPaul as chair-elect. Jay also indicated he would be undergoing some surgery within the week and asked B. DuPaul (chair-elect) to assume any chair duties for the next month. Jay hopes to be up-and-around by early March.

SG Week 03

The committee that was developing the Assembly program for SG week "lost some steam" when it was learned that an all-day SGA/National Review Panel/NSGO staff retreat was being planned for Sunday of Sea Grant Week (the day we were planning our Assembly program). The retreat would tie up review panel members (especially Frank Kudrna, Assembly liaison, and recent appointees John Woeste, former Dean of FL Cooperative Extension, and Robin Alden, former SG Extension agent and Director of Marine Fisheries in Maine) that we wanted to invite to our program, as well as Ron Baird and Jim Murray. After much discussion we decided to hold our Assembly business meeting in the morning and a program in the afternoon. Our hope is that some of the individuals attending the retreat could break away in the afternoon to address our Assembly. J. Murray also suggested inviting Roan Conrad, NOAA's new head of Education and Sustainable Development to address the Assembly.

Ralph Rayburn will get in touch with Jeff Gunderson (MN) the chair of the program committee for SG Week and let him know how we plan to proceed and ask him and his committee to plan a one-half day program.

March SGA Meeting

J. Rasmusssen mentioned that the next SGA meeting would be held in the Washington DC area March 17-18 and the Assembly representative (Jay) would have 15 minutes to address the SGA on Assembly issues. Over the next couple of months the Executive Committee will work with Jay to identify Assembly activities to highlight.

Climate Change Initiative

J. Murray updated the Executive Committee on what has occurred in this area. Mike Spranger (FL) chairs the Assembly climate committee and has been working with a small group to develop a SG Extension "think-piece" on the topic. A group of SG extension folks: M. Spranger, Virginia Lee (RI), Dale Baker (NY) and J. Murray visited the NOAA offices in the fall and met with a number of NOAA climate personnel to discuss ways to work collaboratively. In addition, J. Murray, M. Spranger and Jay Tanski (NY) attended

a climate change meeting in the Fall and gave a SG perspective on "Sea Grant's Role in Climate Change".

J. Murray indicated that SG probably could not lead a budget initiative effort within NOAA, for major funds to tackle climate change outreach and education. There are too many other climate players competing for funds. However, he did indicate that by working with NOAA climate and global change personnel there is movement to retain about $2 million in funds to support projects with an extension component. The NOAA climate folks are supportive and actually pushing for the funds and it could definitely benefit SG.

NOAA climate people will be meeting in Baton Rouge, LA within next couple of months to further discuss ideas pertaining to outreach and extension projects related to climate change. LA Sea Grant folks have been invited and will attend.

Later in February 2003, M. Spranger plans to expand his climate change working committee and make more progress on developing the climate change "think-piece".

RecFish 2003

J. Murray noted the 2nd RecFish Symposium which was suppose to be held in late February in St. Petersburg, FL was canceled. Sea Grant was a major co-sponsor of the meeting and many Sea Grant staff were planning to attend. He indicated that since much of the program was going to focus on Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) that certain recreational fishing interests (like the American Sportfishing Association [ASA]) thought it would direct too much positive attention to the issue (which many recreational fishing interests do not support). NMFS director, Bill Hogarth made the decision to cancel the meeting.

ASA wants to meet with NMFS and SG personnel to discuss issues surrounding the canceling of the meeting and other issues of concern. It is still uncertain who will be represented at the meeting but the Executive Committee indicated that we would support J. Murray and Emory Anderson from NSGO to attend, and if possible a representative from the Assembly (possibly M. Spranger since the meeting will be held in FL).

Fisheries Extension Enhancement

We discussed a few issues related to the FEE effort underway. There is still some concern about NSGO not having enough funds to support the program (NSGO still does not have a budget). However, Congress still wants to see this FEE program work. R. Baird is still committed to the $3 million program this year and it is still being looked at as a 5-year program (minimum).

The deadline for proposals is February 19, and much of this is being driven by the fact that all decision on NOAA grants need to be in their hands by April 1. So NSGO is forced to go ahead with the planning of this FEE effort without a budget in-hand.

Awards Committee

R. Rayburn reminded everyone that he needs an award winner from each region by the end of January, or early February to be considered for the National Superior Outreach Award to be awarded at Sea Grant Week 03. He mentioned that he is still having some problems getting the award sanctioned by the SGA, so it can be distributed during the SG Week banquet. Ralph will follow-up with Barry Costa-Pierce and see if he can move this along and he also plans to circulate an e-mail message to the Assembly reminding them when the regional awards need to be sent to him.

SG/EPA Training Opportunity

J. Murray mentioned that he and a few other SG extension folks (active in the Coastal Community Development initiative) met with Geoff Anderson and some of his staff in the SmartGrowth Office of EPA in Washington DC. Geoff was at our Assembly meeting in Baton Rouge and gave a nice presentation on EPA's efforts in SmartGrowth and sustainable development. They "brainstormed" how SG and EPA could better connect on this issue.

The idea that came to the surface (with EPA providing some funding) was for EPA to offer a week-long training program for SG extension agents/specialists for them to better learn about the many programs and materials that EPA has to offer. SG folks would be required to develop "plans of work" using some of the ideas and resources that EPA has to offer. Stay tuned for more on this in the coming months.

Other Items

In an effort to get Executive Committee meeting minutes out to the Assembly more promptly, we decided that future minutes would be circulated to the Assembly list serve and then sent to J. Rasmussen's secretary for posting on the web site to archive and for others to view. This will expedite getting minutes in the Assembly's hands in case they have issues they need to raise.

The Executive Committee reviewed liaison assignments and for the new members of the committee.

J. Rasmussen mentioned that we would schedule another call for early March and then try to schedule calls every other month to conduct Assembly business.

With no further business the conference call was adjourned at 3:00 p.m. (EST).

If you have any issues you would like the executive committee to discuss or explore, on your behalf, contact any member of the committee (See e-mail addresses and phone numbers below).

J. Rasmussen – Jay.Rasmussen@oregonstate.edu (541-867-0368)
B. DuPaul – dupaul@vims.edu (804-684-7163)
B. Miller -- bmiller@fnr.purdue.edu (765-494-3573)
R. Rayburn -- ralph-rayburn@tamu.edu (979-845-3854)
J. Falk – jfalk@udel.edu (302-645-4235)

Submitted by: James M. Falk, ASGEPL Secretary/Treasurer 2/07/03