

## **Dialog on Sustainability Summary July 19-20, 2007**

On July 19-20, 2007, the Consortium for Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability and its consortium partners hosted a Dialog on Sustainability to disseminate information on current sustainability related activities, groups and resources; and to explore opportunities for further collaboration and future funding.

The following presentations were made during the dialog on July 19.

- Ecological Forecasting, Walter Dodds, Kansas State University
- Eating as if the Future Matters, Ken Warren, The Land Institute
- Landscape Architecture and Sustainability, Lee Skabelund, Kansas State University
- The Market for Transformation, Greg Norris, New Earth
- Public Policy and Sustainability, John Carlin, Kansas State University
- Sustainability and Economics, Jeff Peterson, Kansas State University
- Applications of Solar and Wind Energy, David Sampson, Oak Grove Fabrication
- Green Chemistry and Green Engineering, Jennifer Anthony, Kansas State University
- University of Kansas Center for Sustainability, Jeff Severin, University of Kansas
- Sustainability Educational Activities, Laura Downey, KACEE

### **Outcomes of Facilitated Discussions**

Participants engaged in facilitated discussions on the following topics:

1. Sustainability Needs and Opportunities in Kansas with respect to education, research and service.
2. Dialog on strengths and opportunities within CESAS
3. Dialog on next steps

Participant comments have been organized into the following five categories: administrative actions and needs; curricular/academic issues; education/awareness/communications actions and needs; research; and facilities issues.

### ***Administrative Actions and Needs***

- The Board of Regents could focus on campus sustainability issues at universities to help drive, support, and facilitate community sustainability in terms of buildings, programs, and initiatives. Steps to this include 1) sustainability audit of universities involving students; 2) promote what has already been done (lighting/lightbulbs, chillers at power plant, replacing utility lines, toilets)
- Create incentives for moving toward sustainability, such as receiving benefits from Regents for attaining sustainability goals. Awards could be given to students, buildings, departments.
- The upper admin at KSU doesn't want to be visible on this issue due to concerns over losing financial support.

- A representative from the president's or provost's office needs to be an active member of CESAS
- KSU should sign onto the American College and University President's Climate Commitment <<http://www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org/>>.

### ***Curricular/Academic Issues***

- Create opportunities for students to work with businesses to set and achieve sustainability goals.
- Focusing on sustainability through the curriculum will help educate the citizens of Kansas. San Diego State and Emory University have models for how to engage faculty in sustainability issues and how to bring sustainability into higher education. KSU needs to explore this. The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education is a resource for this <<http://www.aashe.org/>>.
- We need to integrate environmental issues and sustainability into other educational activities (ex. chemistry class). This isn't easy, but educating teachers is essential.
- Create a minor and/or certificate in sustainability.
- Create a requirement similar to a diversity requirement, which doesn't add additional courses, but gives faculty and students incentive to offer and take courses related to sustainability. Sustainability could be inserted into different classes, highlighted by the catalog and departments can give requirements of taking these classes.
- Provide experiences for faculty to connect with nature and bring that connection into classroom.

### ***Education/Awareness/Communications Actions and Needs***

- Publish a sustainability newsletter to communicate to the campus community what is happening with respect to sustainability (actions, courses, programs). This should be supported by a website and would facilitate communication about sustainability.
- There is a strong grassroots effort on the part of students and organizations. Leadership is needed and we need mechanism for reeducating the campus' leadership.
- Education is least threatening way to approach sustainability issues.
- We need to question the role of material application and role of corporations in society.
- Distribute information to parents on how to send your kids to college responsibly in a sustainable fashion (ex. shop at thrift stores, purchase energy star appliances).
- Obtain funding from the National Science Foundation's informal science education program for a project related to sustainability and for bringing sustainability to

communities (sustainable communities). There is a need for community volunteers/leaders to be involved and educated about sustainable/environmental issues.

- Promote the January 2008 intersession class on sustainability. This course is available for students and the community.
- Develop a sustainability lecture series similar in scope to the Landon Lectures. There is a problem that sustainability is seen as a science only issue. Departmental seminars on sustainability topics should be promoted.
- Create a campus community education program, so every one knows where to put recycling and that people know that it matters if you run the AC on mild days, these kinds of issues. Teach the janitors how to naturally ventilate stairwells.
- One.org is a website campaign by Bono to end world poverty. On a campus level, one possibility is to start [asustainability.org](http://asustainability.org) to have people sign up to commit to sustainability. This is a way to build a group of supporters.
- Promote and participate in membership organizations like the Kansas Natural Resource Council and New Earth.
- Create a state of Kansas wiki on sustainability, which would have subsets for KU, KSU, and other organizations activities.
- Provide email addresses and short bio on today's participants to other attendees. Create a ready made resource for getting in touch with others with sustainability interests.
- There is a safety seminar for graduate assistants– sustainability could be added to this seminar, which would be an effective way to reach graduate students. They can take this information with them to industry or future faculty jobs.
- Educate the community first; this will influence university, industry, policy. If we focus on making our own lives sustainable, it will grow from there.
- CESAS can become a clearinghouse of information and activities for working at the different levels – community, university and industry.
- CESAS could take political stands/or opinion stands on proposed changes (i.e. parking garage). CESAS could be a group that can provide expert opinion on these types of issues.
- Start a petition drive with students and faculty to invite Wes Jackson as an Earth Day speaker as part of the Landon Lecture Series.
- Tie speakers/seminars to action steps and opportunities

- Apply for an MTV grant, which provides \$100,000 for student initiated projects.
- Utilize the campus newspaper by creating a sustainability beat as a regular feature.

### ***Research Issues***

- Look into other models, greening the campus movement for example.
- Support research based demonstration projects.
- Maintain a network and body of research related to sustainability

### ***Facilities/Infrastructure Issues***

- Create a zeroscaped area on campus.
- Insist that leaf blowers be retired. Let's return to rakes and give students jobs.
- The challenge course has erosion problem and getting funding to address this issue needs faculty and student involvement.
- The new Child Development Center could be more sustainable, but more funding is needed by facilities. This requires faculty involvement for grant funding (EPA 319 grant).
- Parking garage – for Nichols Hall events, need to push for parking shuttle post 5PM.
- Provide shuttles from Jardine to cut down on students driving to campus.

### **Evening Session**

The evening session was a presentation on Sustainable Communities by Bruce Snead. This was followed by a discussion and an update on New Earth activities.

### **Life Cycle Analysis Workshop**

On July 20, CESAS sponsored a workshop on Life Cycle Analysis by presenter Greg Norris of New Earth. Life cycle assessments are important in decisions related to sustainability.