

Meeting Minutes of the Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction

5 June 2003, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., White House Conference Center, Eisenhower Room

Names of absent members are indicated in italics.

Officers

Helen Wood (NOAA), Chair
John Filson (USGS), Vice-Chair for Science
Margaret Lawless (FEMA), Vice-Chair for Policy

NSTC Liaison

Gene Whitney (OSTP)

Working Group Chairs

Remote Sensing Applications Working Group

Rosalind Helz (USGS), Co-Chair
Steve Ambrose (NASA), Co-Chair

International Working Group

Larry Roeder, Jr. (State), Co-Chair and
Fernando Echavarria (State), Co-Chair
Larry Weber (NSF), Co-Chair

Designated Representatives

CDC

Josephine Malilay

DOD

Earnest Paylor

Robert Feden (alternate)

EPA

Peter Jutro

FEMA

Margaret Lawless

FERC

Dan Mahoney

HUD

John Kennedy

NASA

Steve Ambrose

NIST

Shyam Sunder

Noel Raufaste (alternate)

NOAA

Helen Wood

NRO

Keith Fennell

NSF

Priscilla Nelson

OHS

Bill Jeffrey

OMB

Erin McCartney

Gary Reisner

Jason Freihage

OSTP

Gene Whitney

State

Fernando Echavarria

Larry Roeder, Jr.

USACE

Michael O'Connor

USCG

Ernesto Montijo

USFS

Sue Conard

US Public Health Office

Eric Noji

USGS

Tim Cohn

Other Attendees

DOT

K. Thirumalai

NOAA

Chris Lewis (NESDIS/IA)

Dori Akerman (GRS)

John Gaynor (USWRP)

Levin Lauritson (NESDIS)

Margaret McCalla

Nathalie Valette-Silver (NOS)

NSF

Dennis Wenger

USACE

Andy Bruzewicz

USGS

Kathleen Gohn

William Leith

Agenda

10:00 Welcome and Introductions
10:05 Approval of Summary from Last Meeting
10:10 Report from the Chair
10:25 Report from the OSTP Liaison
10:40 Brief, US Weather Research Program
11:10 Proposed Grand Challenge Task Force
11:25 Proposed Research Coordinating Council
11:40 Working Group, Remote Sensing Applications
11:50 Working Group, International
12:00 Close

Handouts

Agenda
Minutes, May 2003 Meeting
Minutes, April 2003 Meeting
Minutes, Remote Sensing Applications Working Group
Web site information
Grand Challenge Materials
Invitation to Disaster Roundtable brunch
Invitation to USFS seminar
USWRP Presentation on CD

Call to Order

Chair Helen Wood called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Summary of Discussion

1. Report from the Chair

Helen Wood began her report with a discussion of the Earth Observations Summit. As chair of the SDR, Ms. Wood is the SDR liaison to the CENR Earth Observations Task Force and receives all notices and meeting invitations. In addition, she is now the NOAA lead to and co-chair of the US group that is supporting preparations for the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Ad Hoc Working Group (IAHWG). The IAHWG has several responsibilities, including the charge to design the elements of a ten-year plan to engage all entities and make maximum use of already-existent data and sources.

Action: SDR members have an advance opportunity to comment on the Earth Observation Summit Framework Document prepared for the Intergovernmental Ad Hoc Working Group (IAHWG). The file is available on the sdr.gov web site in the "For Members" section under the "SDR Documents" heading. To access the section, enter the interim login: **SDR.member** and password: **SDR#2003**. [Please note: you must enter the period at the end of the password.] If you are interested, please review the document available and respond to dori@grs-solutions.com with comments and suggestions.

Kathleen Gohn suggested the Subcommittee draft a two-page document on Earth Observations for Disaster Reduction that focuses on international efforts rather than specific examples of which individuals are doing the work. For example, the document could examine the work accomplished by the Integrated Global Observing Strategy (IGOS, www.igospartners.org) and look at ways to fill gaps by improving capacity or integrating data.

Action: If you are interested in working with the team drafting the proposed two-pager, write dori@grs-solutions.com.

Ms. Wood also mentioned the upcoming Disasters Roundtable Forum. Entitled "The Emergency Manager of the Future," the Roundtable will be held Friday, June 13, 2003 at the National Academies (Room 100, 500 Fifth Street).

Action: If you are interested in attending the Roundtable, you may obtain an agenda from http://www7.nationalacademies.org/ndr/Roundtable%20_8_%20Emergency%20Manager%20of%20the%20Future%20Agenda.doc. To register, go to <http://www8.nationalacademies.org/isc-registration/public/default.asp?event=DE122819>.

Noel Raufaste mentioned the new organizational chart describing the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) structure and Ms. Wood distributed copies of the document. Please see Attachment – Current NSTC Structure as of 5 June 2003.

The SDR web site is complete and is available at <http://sdr.gov>. To access the "For Members" section, enter the interim login: **SDR.member** and password: **SDR#2003**. [Please note: you must enter the period at the end of the password.]

Action: Send web site comments and suggestions to dori@grs-solutions.com.

2. Comments from the OSTP Liaison

Dr. Whitney reported on the SDR Interim Report entitled, “America at Risk: Reducing Disaster Vulnerability through Science and Technology.” Officials in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and the Office of Management and Budget approved the document on June 2, 2003. Final edits are in process and will be completed in time to publish the document in June.

3. US Weather Research Program Briefing

John Gaynor provided a briefing on the US Weather Research Program (USWRP). Mr. Gaynor focused on the research possibilities for predicting extreme weather, especially the deterministic and ensemble predictions of high-impact weather around the world.

Sue Conard asked about capabilities for monthly and quarterly forecasts. Mr. Gaynor answered, noting that the Program may ultimately look at subseasonal forecasts, but that anything beyond that is a question for the NOAA National Climate Prediction Center. Tim Cohn asked about current capabilities to predict the international pattern creating high-impact weather. Such a capability does not exist at this time, but there is a lot of focus on this area of research right now.

Action

- CD copies of the USWRP presentation will be available at the June meeting, or members may request a copy by sending an email to the Secretariat (dori@grs-solutions.com). A copy of the presentation also may be downloaded from <http://www.sdr.gov/pdfs/>.

4. Grand Challenges

Priscilla Nelson (NSF) and Tim Cohn (USGS) reported on the next actions required to advance the work of the ad hoc SDR Grand Challenges Task Force: (1) Substance - creating the list of proposed Grand Challenges; and (2) Process – creating a series of working sessions to which all member agencies send a representative. At the end of the Grand Challenge process, the Task Force will present a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the Grand Challenges and designed for use when speaking to the Office of Management and Budget or to the Congress.

Ms. Wood focused the discussion by re-examining the purpose of the Subcommittee: (1) Work together as agencies to improve disaster reduction support for the Nation; and (2) Advise the Administration and the Congress. John Filson concurred, adding that there are really three major areas in disaster reduction for which focus is required:

1. Expand and improve the observational base;
2. Model the phenomena;
3. Translate the first two items into public policy in the form of mitigation, warnings, and other opportunities for action.

Members agreed that the Grand Challenge process is a worthwhile endeavor and that the Subcommittee should continue the effort by soliciting one-page Grand Challenge ideas from each agency, along with nominations for members to the Grand Challenge Task Force. The

group will accept Grand Challenge submittals through the summer to create a base document which will be presented at the September 2003 SDR meeting. The full Grand Challenge process will begin in September, with a final product available by December 2003.

Action: Each SDR member may appoint one or more Grand Challenge Task Force members by sending a note to dori@grs-solutions.com. Task force members will engage in several discussions over the summer in order to create a preliminary Grand Challenge document to be presented at the September 2003 meeting of the SDR. The SDR Grand Challenge process will begin in the September 2003 meeting and will culminate with a final report presented in the December meeting.

Action: SDR members also agreed to send in ideas for Grand Challenges related to disaster reduction. Please note the following details when submitting your ideas: (1) Identify the Grand Challenge; (2) Describe the Grand Challenge; and (3) Identify the "hard problems" (e.g., integrating security or real-time simulation of complex physical systems). Your submission need not be comprehensive, but please note as many details as possible.

5. Update on the Fire Research Coordinating Council

Dr. Susan Conard (USFS) will provide a full update on the Fire Research Coordinating Council in the July meeting.

6. Report from the International Working Group

The International Working Group co-chairs were not present and the report was postponed to the July meeting.

The International Working Group will meet again on July 15, 2003. If you are interested in participating, please R.S.V.P. to dori@grs-solutions.com.

Action: The authors of the International White Paper seek brief descriptions of each agency's international disaster reduction programs to construct a proper inventory/directory-type living document. If you have not yet submitted your agency's contribution to the International White Paper, please forward your information to dori@grs-solutions.com.

7. Report from the Remote Sensing Applications Working Group

Remote Sensing Applications Working Group co-chair Steve Ambrose (NASA) reported on the activities of the working group, noting the status of the Synthetic Aperture Radar White Paper, and the success of the two events for the International Charter: Space and Major Disasters, the Commercial Providers Briefing and the Users Workshop

The Remote Sensing Applications Working Group will meet again on July 17, 2003. If you are interested in participating, please R.S.V.P. to pcolohan@grs-solutions.com.

8. Agenda Items and Other Communications with the Subcommittee

Please send proposed agenda items and any other items intended for distribution to the full Subcommittee to Dori Akerman (dori@grs-solutions.com) by July 2, 2003.

9. Contact Information

SDR Leadership

Helen Wood, Chair, 301-713-1140, helen.wood@noaa.gov

John Filson, Co-Chair for Science, 703-648-6715, jfilson@usgs.gov

Margaret Lawless, Co-Chair for Policy, 202-646-3027, margaret.lawless@dhs.gov

International Working Group

Larry Roeder, Jr., Co-Chair, 202-647-5070, roederla@state.gov

Fernando Echavarria, Co-Chair, 202-663-2395, echavarriafr@state.gov

Larry Weber, Co-Chair, 703-292-7240, lweber@nsf.gov

Remote Sensing Applications Working Group

Rosalind Helz, Co-Chair, 703-648-6086, rhelz@usgs.gov

Steve Ambrose, Co-Chair, 202-358-0851, sambrose@hq.nasa.gov

Secretariat

Dori Akerman, 703-560-7448, dori@grs-solutions.com

10. Future Meetings

The SDR meets on the first or second Thursday of every month from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the Eisenhower Room of the White House Conference Center:

2003

July 10, 2003

August 7, 2003

September 11, 2003

October 2, 2003

November 6, 2003

December 4, 2003

2004

January 8, 2004

February 5, 2004

March 4, 2004

April 1, 2004

May 6, 2004

June 3, 2004

July 8, 2004

August 5, 2004

September 9, 2004

October 7, 2004

November 4, 2004

December 2, 2004

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 pm.

