

AIS Workshop for Assistant Attorneys General?:
A Proposal for Activity/Funding by the MRBP

Background

- In May, the National Sea Grant Law Center and the National Association of Attorneys General hosted a pilot workshop for assistant attorneys general (AAGs) on AIS in Chesapeake Bay

Background

- The workshop was designed to:
 - Educate AAGs and state agency counsel on the AIS problem in their region and
 - Provide opportunities for networking and sharing lessons learned.

Background

- 15 individuals from 5 states (Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia) and DC attended.
- Most were AAGs, but we also had some state natural resource agency attorneys.
- The feedback was very positive and Stephanie (Sea Grant Law Center) stated that the attorneys learned much

Proposal

- Stephanie recommended additional workshops throughout the country

Mississippi Basin State Workshop?

- I proposed that MRBP consider helping to host a workshop
- MRBP EXCOM reviewed the proposal, and sent several questions

Question 1 and Response from Stephanie

- How much input will the panels have regarding agenda topics and speakers?
 - “During the first workshop, we did not work directly with the Panel.
 - We worked with the AAGs to determine what was of interest to them, in addition to the general background information...”

Question 1 and Response from Stephanie (continued)

- How much input will the panels have regarding agenda topics and speakers?
 - Stephanie would “love to hear what the Mississippi River Basin feels should be covered in the workshop.
 - We could then work to make sure the agenda and speakers addressed those issues”

Question 2 and Response from Stephanie

- Why is the Sea Grant Program not covering the \$25,000 - \$30,000 cost to coordinate the workshop?
 - “Because we don't have enough funds. We've submitted a number of grant proposals...
 - We've allocated \$10,000 for an AIS AG workshop in the National Sea Grant Law Center's FY12 budget....”

Question 2 and Response from Stephanie (continued)

- Why is the Sea Grant Program not covering the \$25,000 - \$30,000 cost to coordinate the workshop?
 - “We hope to hear in the next couple of weeks whether that proposal is successful.
 - If it is, we will have some funds to add to the Panel's contribution...”

Question 2 and Response from Stephanie (continued)

- Why is the Sea Grant Program not covering the \$25,000 - \$30,000 cost to coordinate the workshop?
 - “The Western Regional Panel is also considering [submission of] a proposal to the west coast Sea Grant programs for supplemental funding for a workshop out there
 - If we do have the opportunity to move forward, then... might be able to approach Sea Grant programs in other regions for small amounts of funding...”

Question 2 and Response from Stephanie (continued)

- Why is the Sea Grant Program not covering the \$25,000 - \$30,000 cost to coordinate the workshop?
 - “However, I don't think we really need that much additional money.
 - We can do these workshops pretty cheap.”

Question 3 (two parts)

- Why are Regional Panels being asked to contribute 20% of their annual budget when they have repeatedly reported to the ANS Task Force that current funding levels are inadequate to meet existing needs?
- Is it necessary for the Panels to contribute financially to participate in planning for a workshop?

Responses to Question 3

- “I think there may have been a bit of a misunderstanding as to what we were asking of the Panels.
- Just to clarify, the NSGLC and NAAG would handle all the work to plan for the meeting (logistics, conference calls, etc.), with the input and guidance of the Panels.
- We were just hoping to secure some additional funds to provide more travel stipends or secure larger space (depending on which panel we were working with) ”

Question 4 and Response from Stephanie

- Are there other opportunities for organizing such a workshop that would result in better attendance and/or reduced costs?
- “yes...”

Question 4 and Response from Stephanie (continued)

- Are there other opportunities for organizing such a workshop that would result in better attendance and/or reduced costs?
- “We are open to suggestions. However, one of the benefits of the meeting in the Chesapeake Bay was its small size (30 participants) which provided a good opportunity for discussion and networking...”

Question 4 and Response from Stephanie (continued)

- Are there other opportunities for organizing such a workshop that would result in better attendance and/or reduced costs?
- “We wouldn’t want to reduce the benefit of the workshop by having it attached to a larger meeting and drawing a larger audience with less of an active interest...”

Question 4 and Response from Stephanie (continued)

- Are there other opportunities for organizing such a workshop that would result in better attendance and/or reduced costs?
- “It all depends on what we are hoping to accomplish.
- I'd like to stick with the model of AAGs and their lawyers in the natural resource agencies.
- That's a good core group to bring up to speed on the issues.
- If you bring in a law enforcement person as a speaker, you can get some really good discussions without a large audience.”

Additional Background

- No pressure from me to fund this...
- If:
 - State reps believe informing AAGs [and AGs] is worthwhile, then maybe we can find a way to help support
 - Financially or otherwise
 - State reps consider this unworthy of Panel support, then let's move on...

Questions and Discussion

