

March 16, 2022 Joint Social Science and Partners Call

Attendees: Kira Sullivan-Wiley, Melissa Kenney, Mike SanClements, Jody Peters, Güray Hatipoğlu, Jaime Ashander, Jonathan Cummings
Regrets: Diana Dalbotten

Agenda

1. Introductions
 - a. Name
 - b. Organization, title, expertise
 - c. Why are you part of EFI and part of this workgroup?
2. Discussion of opportunities to merge the two groups
3. Joint interest across the groups is a focus on translational activities - brainstorm what activities the group wants to do together
 - a. Examples of past activities
 - b. What impact do we want to have; what's the best way to do that?
4. Next steps

Discussion from the Call

Both Social Science and Partners group calls had gotten to the point where the meetings had only a few people that could make each call and the two groups were working on similar projects or interests in translation. So wanted to explore advancing research and engagement related to translational work with ecoforecasting.

Wanted to pick people's brains to think about what we want to do over the next few semesters. What is the best way to move things forward? What can we do for a refresh?

From Mike S. - NEON just hired a new engagement lead. Do we want to have Bonnie join a call to discuss ideas about broader strategic engagement? Yes!

Reinitiate conversations with the group. Looking for ideas to put forward. Could have people do 3 minute micropresentations.

Is there something you want to give or get in the next couple of months as part of engagement with EFI and this working group?

Figure out how to build teams and make connections between social scientists and partners. The idea of co-production. It is an idea with a lot of interest, but not a lot of traction moving forward, which is understandable because people need to make relationships and connections for this to work. Figure out what this would look like for different people in the organization as a pre-cursor before this. There is a lot of potential for co-production and connections. Would like to figure out what the next step is.

NEON Ambassador group example - from that group NEON was able to generate lots of good ideas. Had a period with lots of ideas and interests, but needed to step back to find the resources to support the connections. While working on finding resources to support the connections the group focused on what are the low hanging fruit that can get us moving or to avoid a stall out.

The lull we have seen with Social Science/Partners seems to be because this is not part of a project related to people's jobs - so is volunteered time. Do we need to pivot the groups so they align with current full time positions?

How do we get resources to make the work we want to do within EFI actually paid for or a meaningful contribution to other professional work.

Start small so people don't feel they are stalling out.

Forecasting Challenge - is there a way to help with co-production and partnerships for this. The Challenge is just starting on Round 2. Round 1 was the beta round to test things out. We have made updates and made it easier for people to submit forecasts and we have set up a collaboration with USGS to locate aquatic sites they would be interested in forecasting. The goal is to develop more partnerships for Round 3 perhaps with LTAR and/or Ameriflux.

Would the Tick challenge be a way to connection with stakeholders? For the Tick forecasts - there is a definite connection to human health, but the NEON tick data has a long lag time getting processed. So currently the challenge provides the data from the previous year and releases the "new" data with the assumption/ask that teams do not look at the "new" data even though it is available from NEON. The long lag time would probably make this challenge less appealing to stakeholders. The Tick Challenge design team had discussed whether to keep the protocols as is by using data from last year and releasing it throughout the challenge so teams can see how their forecasts performed or to make the forecast real time so people make forecasts this year, but would not be able to verify their forecasts until next year when the data becomes available. There was also a discussion about potentially going with both approaches.

As we scope the scaling of the Challenge to additional non-NEON sites that will be an opportunity for this group to engage. As the forecasts get scaled and verified, how do they best get reported - this will be a window of opportunity for this group to get involved. But it will be a few years from now.

There are different levels of co-production. There is a continuum for being aware of stakeholder needs to the research for what is needed to true collaboration where everyone is learning and generating products together. You can find out more about the continuum in this Meadow et al 2015 paper:

https://journals.ametsoc.org/view/journals/wcas/7/2/wcas-d-14-00050_1.xml

Think about when to bring partners in.

Do a larger check in with the RCN team for what it looks like long term for the goal. If it is pulling together on the federal side, and building out the community to be able to do multiple forecasts, then there isn't as much of a need to think about scaling at this point of time.

If thinking about aspects of scaling and decision support - then have RCN have conversation with the translation team about what things look like. Could do this in early fall to

see what the RCN is planning to do and get the translation working groups input. This will work with Quinn's travel schedule and will help the design teams as they plan for round 3 for 2023.

Are people in this group interested in doing social science or decision science or forecasting to engage with stakeholders. In addition to the RCN are there others in EFI that are in need of collaborators.

Dedicated time at the May meeting to discuss opportunities to bring in social scientists into projects?

Could be small - even if we just got two groups together

Citizen science - would it be possible to add a citizen science component that would generate interest from local admins? There would be topics and data that would be useful for social science and made stronger with partners. It could potentially be useful for the Forecasting Challenge.

There are forecasting examples from citizen scientists such as the onset of spring (bud burst) and the work the National Phenology Network does.

There is a community of scholars that focus on citizen science. In order to have robust data collection for operational forecasts, you have to figure out who will be the long term stewards of the data collection and verification, cleaning, hosting, and data management. So EFI and/or the Forecasting Challenge may not have the resources to support this type of work yet.

Decision to make today - is there broad enthusiasm in pulling together our two separate working groups or is there interest in keeping things separate?

The group was in favor. No concerns/dissents

Next Steps

- Update Slack to have 1 channel #translation and bring everyone from Social Science and Partners into that. (Jody)
- Let the EFI community know that in case others want to join (Jody)
- Put meeting on calendar for end of April/beginning of May. (Jody to send out poll)
- Before this meeting, think about 1-2 ideas for the things we should do together
- Have idea pitches and develop groups to move forward those ideas.