December 6th, 2021

To: SBARE Input Session, December 7, Dickinson, ND

This is to request an animal research/extension specialist position at the NDSU Williston Research Extension Center (WREC). Our joint WREC/EARC Advisory Board unanimously approved a resolution to request a 60 percent research/40 percent extension position at WREC on November 17, 2021. (See attachment 1)

The USDA-ARS-NPARL Focus Group President Connie Iverson also reiterated in a letter of November 30, 2021, their support for the establishment of a new livestock position at the WREC. (See attachment 2)

The USDA-ARS-NPARL focus group includes more than 80 farmers and ranchers and representatives from ag industries and organizations across eastern Montana and western North Dakota. The Williston Regional Economic Group, a consortium of stakeholders, has also endorsed and supports a new WREC livestock position to diversify and expand both livestock and irrigation in our region. (See attachment 3)

There is an urgent need for research and education to aid producers to incorporate livestock grazing along with cover crops into our dryland operations to increase crop diversity and livestock into area farms. There is also increasing awareness and interest in the use of irrigation for irrigated grazing systems because of our extreme drought conditions the past 2 years.

Our Advisory Board stresses the need for a facility at our Nesson Valley Irrigation Project, 27 miles northeast of Williston, to provide an office, lab and meeting room, and heated shop. The irrigation staff currently utilizes a small office in a chemical storage/chemical handling facility. The facility has been on the master plan needs for WREC since 2012.

We respectfully ask that the SBARE support these requests for WREC as vital components in the mission of WREC and NDSU agriculture.

Sincerely,

Tom Wheeler

Tom Wheeler, Chairman, Joint WREC/EARC Advisory Board

THE JOINT NDSU WILLISTON RESEARCH EXTENSION CENTER & MSU EASTERN AG RESEARCH CENTER ADVISORY BOARD RESOLUTION REQUESTING A NEW ANIMAL RESEARCH/EXTENSION SPECIALIST POSITION AT WREC

WHEREAS; Soil health experiments appear to require livestock grazing and animal impact, and ruminant livestock are considered to be the missing key in the establishment of a holistic farm ecosystem.

WHEREAS; many producers specialize only in crop production with no livestock, research and education is needed to support livestock ownership and cropping production to be separate owner/operators.

WHEREAS; continuous cropping research at Williston conducted by WREC in the 1970s and '80s produced dryland corn yields ranging from near zero to in excess of 100 bushels per acre. Then, Ernie French, pioneer no-till farming researcher and past WREC director, concluded in order to grow dryland corn in Northwest North Dakota, "you need to own livestock or have a neighbor who owns livestock" to utilize the corn crop.

WHEREAS; Northwest North Dakota grasslands are in the short-grass prairie, and total annual precipitation is of a unique seasonal distribution. Livestock/crop management in Northwest North Dakota presents different challenges and strategies than in Central and Southern North Dakota.

WHEREAS; producers of both flood and overhead irrigation systems are seeking information on establishing and managing irrigated crop grazing systems.

WHEREAS; Current commodity prices are depressed. That, combined with increasing input costs and unfavorable weather conditions has led to a cost-price-squeeze for crop production in Northwest North Dakota. Winter feeding for cow calf producers offer cost-cutting opportunities, and research and educational programs supporting winter feeding strategies is needed to improve crop returns while enhancing soil health.

WHEREAS; Rangeland and pastureland are disturbed by ongoing oil field construction including construction and installation of a maze of oil/gas pipelines. Unique grazing management challenges for disturbed land and construction as well as interruption of normal seasonal growing calendars call for animal research and education.

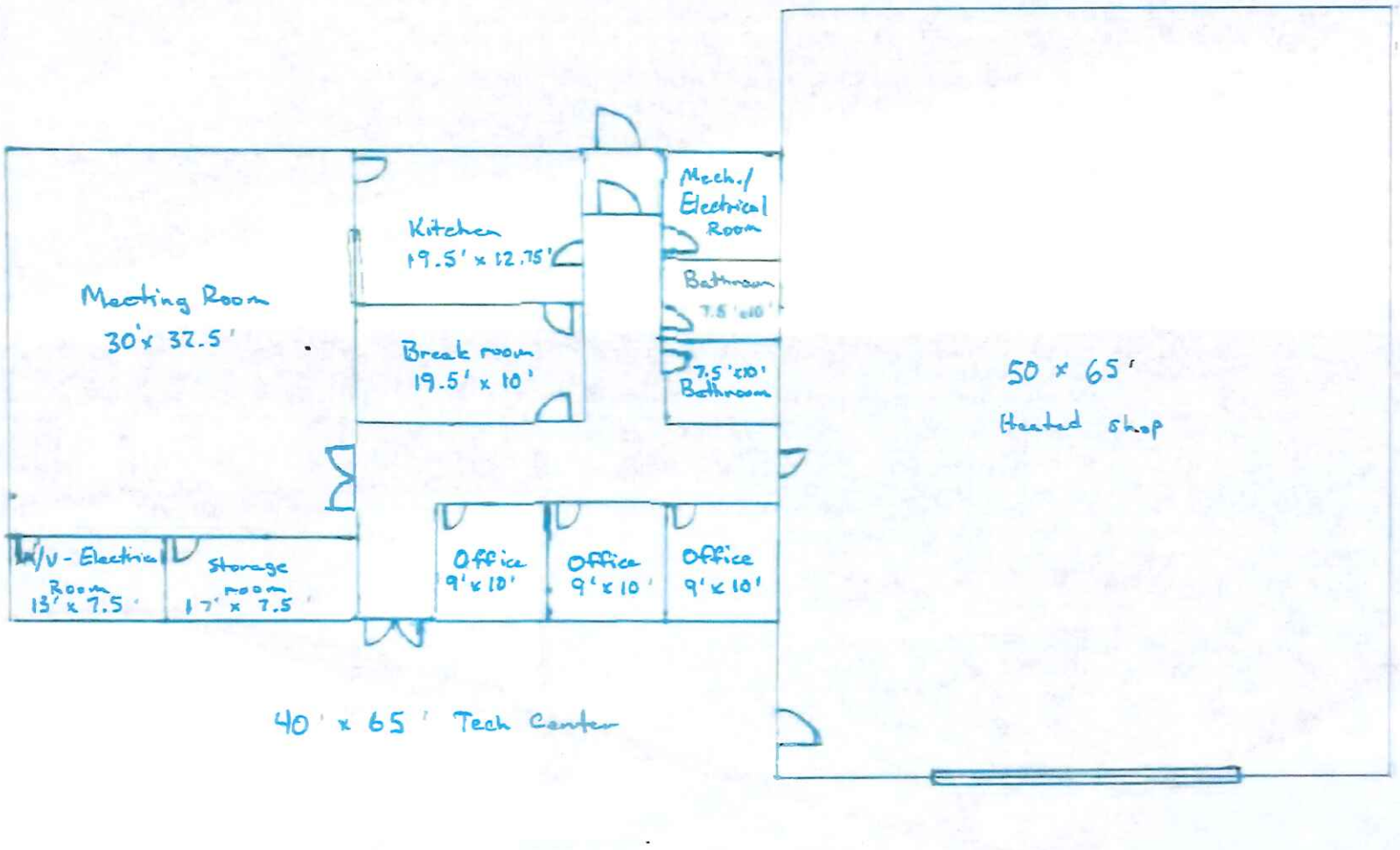
WHEREAS; area county soil conservation districts are supporting and promoting soil health in collaboration with WREC and improved grazing management producer education is critical for current and developing management strategies.

WHEREAS; research evidence supports full season cover crops over after-harvest cover crops in cropping systems. Northwest North Dakota producers are skeptical of economic stability of full-season cover crops. Research is needed to determine best cropping systems, potential grazing strategies, and cash returns that currently lacking in our knowledge base.

WHEREAS; there is a need for a livestock specialist to educate county extension agents to provide them knowledge in their education efforts on integrated cropping systems/livestock management systems with agricultural producers.

THEREFORE; the Joint Advisory Board on Nov. 5, 2019 unanimously approved this resolution to request a 60 percent research / 40 percent animal extension specialist position at WREC.

Nesson Valley Shop/Technology Center



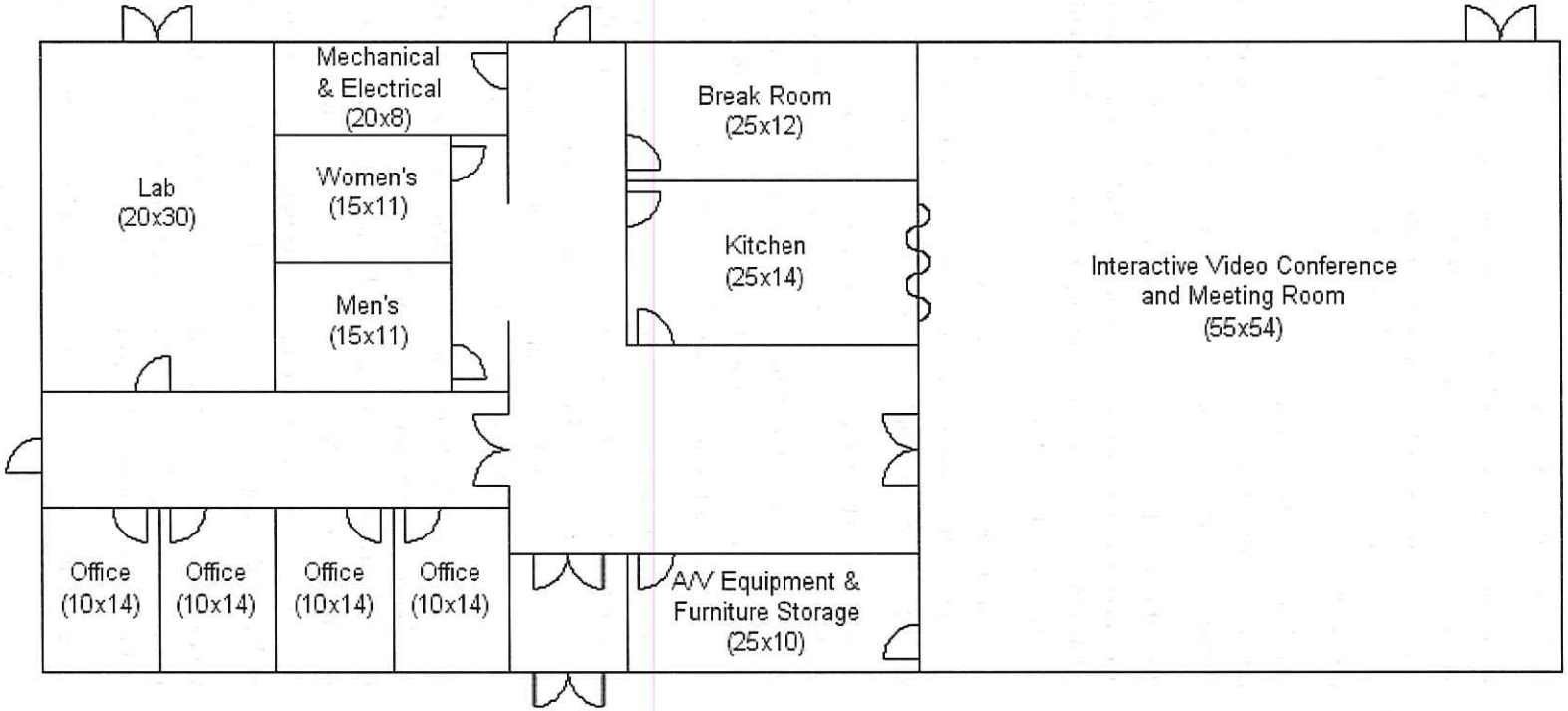
* 16' sidewalls
* biggest overhead door that's available

WREC Irrigation Research and Development Technology Transfer Center-Nesson Valley

The Nesson Valley Irrigation Research and Development Project (NVIRDP) located 27 miles northeast of Williston has four 40-acre automated variable rate linear irrigation systems and fully operational with remote monitoring systems. Additionally, the fully operational irrigation linear systems have the capability to utilize either Lake Sakakawea water or aquafer ground water each with separate pumping and pipeline systems. Expanded agricultural economic development in western North Dakota will be driven mostly by expanded irrigation research and development as the catalyst to promote new and expanded production of high value crops and irrigated agricultural processing capability.

A Research and Technology Transfer and Research facility is needed for office and lab space and a conference room for irrigation conferences and grower meetings to support the espansion of irrigation and food processing industries in western North Dakota. The Nesson Valley Irrigation Research and Development Project is located 27 miles from Williston and the irrigation staff currently utilize a small office and bathroom in a chemical storage building. The MonDak Irrigation Frontier has the potential to expand to 500,000 acres.

Irrigation Research & Development Technology Transfer Center
Nesson Valley



130 ft x 54 ft = 7020 sq. ft

November 30, 2021

To whom it may concern,

At our November 2019 fall stakeholder meeting for the USDA-Agriculture Research Service's Northern Plains Agricultural Research Laboratory (NPARL) in Sidney, MT, our members voted unanimously to endorse a resolution put forth at that time by the NDSU Williston Research and Extension Center (WREC) and the MSU Eastern Agricultural Research Center joint Advisory Board seeking to establish a new Animal Research Extension Specialist post at WREC.

This letter is to reiterate our support for establishment of that new livestock position at WREC, a key component for area producers hoping to increase the resiliency and sustainability of their farming operations under climate change and related stressors such as drought and low commodity prices.

Recent research has shown the need for incorporating livestock grazing and animal impacts, along with cover crops, in efforts to build soil health and holistic and sustainable farm ecosystems, particularly in our semi-arid dryland operations. There is also increasing interest in establishment and management of irrigated grazing systems by both flood and overhead sprinkler operators.

Given that today many producers in this region specialize largely in crop production, with no livestock in their operations, there's a need not only for additional research for incorporating ruminant animals, but also education to aid producers in adopting these new strategies.

Adding a new Livestock Research and Extension post at the Williston research facility can provide producers with the knowledge needed to add livestock to their operations or to work cooperatively with neighboring livestock owners to the benefit of both. Increased diversity is a vital component of economic sustainability in agriculture, but one that is difficult to achieve in semi-arid areas like ours where precipitation and operating margins are thin. Research and education are needed to overcome those limitations.

Both the NDSU and MSU research facilities are strong partners with our Sidney, MT ARS research facility in what we describe as our "MonDak Agricultural Research Triangle." By working together, our cross border federal and state research facilities are able to avoid unnecessary duplication of research efforts and leverage expertise and equipment from all three facilities to reduce costs and increase the value of research conducted in this region to the benefit of local and regional producers like those on our NPARL Focus Group.

As that research leads us in new directions additional expertise is needed. While the 20 plus scientists at WREC, EARC and Sidney ARS have the skills to address issues with any crop being grown or proposed for this region, none has a livestock research background. And while there is a joint MSU-ARS livestock research facility at Miles City, MT, their focus is primarily on animal breeding and management in rangeland systems. By adding a new Livestock Extension position at Williston, we can begin to address those issues related to joint crop and livestock systems, as well as addressing related agricultural issues unique to this region, such as energy development and its impacts.

Consequently, our NPARL Focus Group, which includes more than 80 farmers and ranchers and representatives from various ag industries and organizations across our two-state region, strongly supports the addition of a new animal extension specialist position at WREC.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the USDA-ARS-NPARL Focus Group by:

Connie Iversen 12/1/21

Connie Iversen, Focus Group President and MonDak area farmer/rancher
406-798-7770, nji@midrivers.com

November 27,

2019

To whom it may concern,

At our recent November 25th fall Focus Group meeting of the USDA-Agriculture Research Service's Northern Plains Agricultural Research Laboratory (NPARL) in Sidney, MT, our members voted unanimously to endorse a resolution put forth by the NDSU Williston Research and Extension Center (WREC) and the MSU Eastern Agricultural Research Center joint Advisory Board seeking to establish a new Animal Research Extension Specialist position at WREC. Both the NDSU and MSU research facilities are strong partners with our Sidney, MT ARS research facility in what we describe as our "MonDak Agricultural Research Triangle."

By working together, our cross border federal and state research facilities are able to avoid unnecessary duplication of research efforts and leverage expertise and equipment from all three facilities to reduce costs and increase the value of research conducted in this region to the benefit of local and regional producers like those on our NPARL Focus Group. As that research leads us in new directions, such as reincorporating livestock into specialized crop production systems to help rebuild soil health, additional expertise is needed. While the 20 plus scientists at WREC, EARC and Sidney ARS have the skills to address issues with any crop being grown or proposed for this region, no one at any of those facilities has a livestock research background. And while there is a joint MSU-ARS livestock research facility at Miles City, MT, their focus is primarily on animal breeding and management in rangeland systems. By adding a new Livestock Research Extension position at Williston, we can begin to address those issues related to joint crop and livestock systems as described in the approved

resolution, as well as addressing related agricultural issues unique to this region, such as energy development and its impacts.

Another key component associated with the addition of this new research position is the potential it holds for increasing agricultural diversity and sustainability in the MonDak region. Increased diversity is a vital component of economic sustainability in agriculture, but one that is difficult to achieve in semi-arid areas like ours where operating margins are thin. Adding a new Livestock Research Extension position at the Williston Research Extension Center will provide producers with the knowledge needed to potentially add livestock to their operations or to work cooperatively with neighboring livestock owners to the benefit of both.

With the above justification and need, our NPARL Focus Group, which includes more than 80 farmers and ranchers and representatives from various ag industries and organizations across our two-state region, strongly supports the addition of a new animal research extension specialist position at WREC.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the USDA-ARS-NPARL Focus Group by:

Connie Iversen

Connie Iversen, Focus Group President and MonDak area farmer/rancher
406-798-7770, nji@midrivers.com

December 3, 2021

WESTERN REGION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Connecting Divide, McKenzie, Mountrail & Williams Counties, North Dakota

State Board of Agricultural Research and Education
North Dakota State University
Morrill Hall 314
NDSU Dept. 7520, PO Box 6050
Fargo, ND 58108-6050

To Whom It May Concern:

RE: Livestock Specialist NDSU Williston Research Extension Center

Western Region Economic Development (WRED) supported the critical need for the NDSU Williston Research Extension Center (WREC) to receive full funding for 2021-2023 and are excited that it passed in the legislative session.

Now WRED, is supporting the Williston Research Extension Center (WREC)/Eastern Agricultural Research Center (EARC) Advisory Board on the critical need for a Livestock Research/Extension Specialist at the WREC. Such a position is currently void in our region and this missing position is a key component for an integrated cropping/livestock program for northwest North Dakota.

We are all aware of the effects climate change and related stressors such a drought and low commodity prices have had on the farmers in our region. The addition of a Livestock Research/Extension Specialist at the WREC is key in increasing the resiliency and sustainability of farming operations for our region.

As stated by USDA-ARS-NPARL Focus Group:

> "Recent research has shown the need for incorporating livestock grazing and animal impacts, along with cover crops, in efforts to build soil health and holistic and sustainable farm ecosystems, particularly in our semi-arid dryland operations. There is also increasing interest in establishment and management of irrigated grazing systems by both flood and overhead sprinkler operators.
>
> Given that today many producers in this region specialize largely in crop production, with no livestock in their operations, there's a need not only for additional research for incorporating ruminant animals, but also education to aid producers in adopting these new strategies."

Therefore, WRED asked that you support the WREC in the hiring of a Livestock Research/Extension Specialist.

Sincerely,

Hercules Cummings
President