

ALERT Users Group
2002 Fall Meeting Minutes
Courtyard by Marriott, Sacramento, CA
Thursday, October 3, 2003

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 10:20 AM by Don Daves, President of the ALERT users Group. Members introduced themselves. The meeting was well attended (about 40 people).

NWS Forecast for Upcoming Winter

- Weak to moderate El Nino thru spring 2003 (much weaker than 97-98 El Nino).
- U.S. southern tier forecast to be "Wetter".
- Higher than normal temperatures forecast for Western U.S., in Jan-Feb- Mar (which could melt Sierra snow-pack and cause spring floods).
- Nice graphic of the Multivariate Enso Index (MEI):
 - Shows Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO)
 - We're heading into "cold phase" (since 1979)
 - Integrates SST, SLP, Low-level winds and other factors
- Southern Oscillation Index (SOI) also shows PDO
- El Nino, average precipitation "Statistical Forecast": 140% of normal for southern California coastal areas.
- See www.wrh.noaa.gov/cnrfc for more information.

Updates/Changes Regarding AUG Officers and Board

Power Point presentation by Todd Mendell (see handout) followed by a good discussion of the proposed changes. The main issue was whether or not to allow vendors to be on the Board:

- Would our bylaws allow vendors?
- Pros and Cons of allowing vendors.
- Some possible rules to prevent "Conflicts of Interest":
 - No more than 3 vendors allowed on Board (minority).
 - No more than one person, on the Board, per vendor.
 - Vendors can't vote on issue they have a direct interest in.

There was a discussion of the need to find someone to replace Chris Crompton and start doing our newsletter again.

There was a motion (seconded and past) to keep our current Vice President (George Wilkins) on board until we sort out the future board make-up.

There was a decision (consensus) to post AUG bylaws on our Web site.

There was some discussion on hiring a Web site administrator to keep the site current.

There was a motion (seconded and past) to accept the changes to the bylaws and add vendors.

AUG e-mail list: about 180 members (actual membership)

AUG snail-mail list: about 300 members (many are just conference attendees)

Vendor Updates

David Ford Consulting: Real-time GIS maps and forecast.

High Sierra: SDI-12 shaft encoders; GOES ground stations; low-water crossings with R.R. gates.

JBS Instruments: Hydrologic/Water Quality instruments and database management.

Vaisala: 555 transmitter - GOES, modem, surface mountable.

Fox Weather: New QPF modeling, better orographic rainfall interpolation; 3 hour snow level amounts.

Nexrain: Design and analysis of flood warning system; gage adjusted radar rainfall and hydrograph forecast.

Jim Goodridge: California State Climatologist; Would be a good speaker on effect of "Solar Constant"

ALERT Protocol Update

Project Leadership:

- Project Manager Jim Longthorne (L.A. County)
- Technical Study Chris Roark (Beam Reach LLC.)
- Business Manager Don Van Wie (DIAD Inc.)

What Do We Want?

- Increased transmission baud rate.
- Increased data packet size.
- Enhanced format - error checking, etc.
- Current format:
 - 300 baud;
 - FSK
 - 4 byte packet (with 4 stop bits)
- Proposed format:
 - 4800 baud (min);
 - GMSK (or similar);
 - Error checking;
 - Buildable by ALERT vendors (lower level of complexity)

Major Issues:

- Vendor search: Proprietary vs. Non-proprietary.
- FCC Type-Acceptance: Integrated vs. Non-integrated - FCC will only type-accept an "integrated radio-transmitter" (radio and modem) that transmits at 9600 baud or faster

SAAS Conference- October 23-25 2002, Huston, Texas.

- Chris and Don will report on:
 - Protocol progress.
 - Side-bar meetings to see what people think.
 - Perhaps hand out questionnaire
- To inform others, not at the SAAS conference, we should;
 - Post Power Point presentation on the our Web.
 - Post questionnaire on the Web.
 - Post all other reports and preliminary stages on the Web.
 - Push key information out on the list-server.

SCAN Update (Southern California ALERT Network

Splinter groups have been cleaning up their individual systems

Next AUG Conference - April 2004

Tenaya, Yosemite Lodge

- 2000 sq. ft. for meeting space.
- 4000 sq. ft. for vendor area
- \$84 per night for rooms.
- Close to "Yosemite Mt. Sugartime Railroad
- Hotel bills first nights stay (\$84) as a deposit (NON-refundable)

- Nice hotel. One mile from Yosemite.

Role of USGS in ALERT Flood Warning System

Presenter from USGS couldn't attend meeting.
Postponed until May 2003 business meeting.

AUG Treasurer's Report

\$15,970.73 in savings account

\$18,137.48 in checking account

New "Protocol Grant" - \$25,000.00

- To cover cost of consultants and travel
- Money will come from NOAA (Dept of Commerce)
- Money will be electronically deposited in AUG account.

NHWC Budget Report

- \$3,265.58 in savings account
- \$11,772.92 in checking account
- Money came from past NHWC conferences

Presentation of "Flood Warning System" Video

Available on CD from NWS soon (by end of October?)

Narrow-banding Update

Todd says much work has been done. Dead line is January 2005.

Meeting adjourned at 2:20 PM