

**ILTER Science Council Business Meeting May 19, 2016
Host: Moorea Coral Reef
Santa Barbara, CA**

These notes are provisional until approved by the Science Council

1. Roll call

AND – Nelson
ARC – Shaver
BES – Rosi-Marshall
BNZ - Ruess
CAP – McGraw
CCE – Ohman
CDR – Seabloom
CWT – Jackson
FCE – Gaiser
GCE – Alber
HFR – Foster
HBR – Lovett
JRN – Browning
KBS – Hamilton
KNZ – Blair
LUQ – Zimmerman
MCM – Goosef
MCR - Schmitt
NWT - Suding
NTL - Stanley
PAL - Ducklow
PIE - Giblin
SBC - Reed
SEV – Litvak
VCR – McGlathery

2. Minutes of 2015 Science Council meeting approved unanimously.

3. Report from the chair (Peter Groffman):

- a. New LTER site preproposal competition:
 - i. - Arid Terrestrial: 6 of 13 preproposals going forward for full proposals
 - ii. - Coastal: 12 of 50+ preproposals going forward for full proposals.
 - iii. - January 1, 2017 is the target date to announce the final decision.
- b. New LTER NSF working group at NSF consists of Dave Garrison, Lou Kaplan, John Schade and Peter McCartney.
- c. LTER renewal panel has met and there will be decision by the end of June on these proposals.

- d. The 2017 Science Council Meeting will be at Coweeta. The Science Council will likely meet in Athens, GA with a field trip to the site in North Carolina.
4. LTER National Communications Office (LNCO) communications efforts update (Marty Downs):
 - a. The primary mission of the LNCO is to present a coherent face of the LTER network to multiple audiences.
 - b. The LNCO can help to amplify message from individual LTER's, however NCO won't and can't displace relationships between individual LTER's and the press or other consumers of outreach material.
 - c. Currently taking a deep look at the LTER INTRANET to determine what is used and what is not. The site is a very comprehensive compilation of LTER documents but is large and somewhat difficult to navigate.
 - d. The LNCO is close to launching a new website. Goal is to create a few simple categories for the main page: About the Network, Research, Education, Science for Decisions, Data Portal. Current data portal seems good, and changes will need to be negotiated with EDI.
 - e. A great challenge is how to keep information on the site up to date. Marty is the only full-time person to generate content and she is exploring other sources of content, e.g., Bren School interns, more social media work, and a new writer who will be visiting all sites (Erica Zambello - Cross Country Conservation).
 - f. Marty would like a more direct conduit to each of the sites. How should this be done; through the PI? A specific appointed individual?
 - g. The LNCO hopes that its offices will become a physical “home” for the LTER network. They can help to support working groups, organize meetings, videoconferences, etc.
 5. LNCO general update (Frank Davis):
 - a. Synthesis working groups:
 - i. Very happy with the quantity (24) and quality of the proposals received in response to the first request for proposals (RFP) in spring 2016.
 - ii. 22 of 24 were LTER plus other sites.
 - iii. Three proposals were funded:
 1. Stream Elemental Cycling: Global Patterns in Stream Energy and Nutrient Cycling -- PIs: Adam Wymore (LUQ) and Sujay Kaushal (BES)
 2. LTER Metacommunities: A synthesis to identify how metacommunity dynamics mediate community responses to disturbance across the ecosystems represented in the LTER network -- PIs: Eric R. Sokol (MCM), Christopher M. Swan (BES), Nathan I. Wisnoski (AND)
 3. Communities-to-Ecosystems: Integrating plant community and ecosystem responses to chronic global change drivers: Toward an explanation of patterns and improved global predictions -- PIs: Kimberly J. La Pierre (KNZ/CDR/SGS), Meghan L. Avolio (KNZ), and Kevin R. Wilcox (KNZ/SGS)

- iv. Next synthesis working group RFP will follow the Science Council and will have with a fall deadline date.
 - v. Important criteria considered by panel included strong ties to 5 core LTER research areas, whether data were already available, diversity of participants.
 - b. Recruiting new Education person to replace Carol Blanchette.
- 6. LTER Network Office update (Bob Waide)
 - a. Transition to LNCO has been smooth and cooperative.
 - b. Waide is writing a paper on the use and acknowledgement of LTER datasets in publications. The ability of PASTA to assign DOI numbers should be quite helpful in tracking.
- 7. National Information Management Office (NIMO) update. Margaret O'Brien made a presentation and led the discussion:
 - a. Two proposals were submitted early in 2016:
 - i. PASTA-PLUS. Submitted by the University of New Mexico with Servilla, Waide and Brunt as PIs. Requested ~\$1 million for three years to: 1) expand access to PASTA to other programs, e.g., Macrosystems Biology, Organization of Biological Field Stations and 2) make some improvements to PASTA itself (identify manager, metadata, etc).
 - ii. NIMO. Submitted by University of Wisconsin with Gries and Hanson as PIs. Requested \$2.1 million for three years to manage LTER Information Management activities.
 - b. NSF (Twombly and McCartney) provided two key pieces of feedback:
 - i. They were concerned about overlap between the two proposals and requested removal of the outreach and training components from the PASTA-PLUS proposal and removal of PASTA development activities from NIMO. These changes would reduce the PASTA-PLUS proposal to \$815K and NIMO to \$1.35 million, a total cut of \$1 million.
 - ii. It is possible that some of this \$1 million can be restored but NSF has requested a “project execution plan” with budgets and budget justifications that reflect that there are more tasks that need to be done with these extra funds.
 - iii. They wanted to broaden the scope of NIMO beyond LTER to more of a broad-based “Environmental Data Center.”
 - c. Project execution plans have been submitted and we'll know just what the total amount of funding is pretty soon.
 - d. As of May 2016, NIMO is now the Environmental Data Initiative (EDI), an information management (IM) effort that includes LTER and a variety of other research networks.
 - i. While this is considered to be an exciting development and affirmation of the accomplishments of LTER IM over the last 30 years, it will be important to ensure that LTER site and network needs are met by the new structure.
 - ii. EDI is very much a three year experiment. We will need active dialog with NSF, other networks and with the LTER IM community to help this develop into a more permanent IM program. Questions for further discussion:

- iii. How are LTER synthesis needs met?
 - iv. How are LTER databases maintained?
 - v. How will the Community Advisory Board be constituted?
 - vi. What happens after three years?
 - 1. How will the “fee for service” model work?
 - 2. Will all NSF projects need data management and be willing to pay?
 - 3. Will we need to pay?
 - vii. There is a strong sense that we just have to move forward and see how the issues emerge and resolve. Probably, we should begin to consult with the other partners in the EDI.
8. Minisymposium revisioning. Sherri Johnson has led a subcommittee on this topic:
- a. The committee suggests that there are three options that we could consider:
 - i. Option 1 - Very short, science focused talks highlighting LTER science achievements. Focus on NSF Directors and Program Officers.
 - ii. Option 1 - Present on highly topical issues and showing how LTER funds this work. NSF and Agency focused audience.
 - iii. Option 3 - Use Executive Board (EB) to communicate the LTER message to NSF.
 - iv. There is a sense within the network and Executive Board that it is a good idea to present science directly to NSF once a year and for the EB, or some subset of it, to go to Washington once a year.
 - b. The LNCO will take up this issue; working with the Johnson subcommittee, the EB and NSF to propose some specific ways forward.
9. By-laws revisions
- a. The LNCO and EB are working on revisions to bylaws to reflect the new configuration of the LNCO. Ultimately these will need to be voted on by the Science Council.
 - b. Some issues under consideration:
 - i. Committees - Do we have too many committees either standing or ad hoc? For example, currently there are 3 LTER IM committees.
 - ii. Do we need a National Advisory Committee? While we used to have an active and useful National Advisory Board, we have not had one for several years.
 - iii. The current bylaws say that the chair will get 2-6 months of compensation. Groffman has been getting approximately 2 months for the past two years. While there is strong support for continuing this among the Science Council, there needs to be discussion with NSF.