

**Minutes**  
**LTER Science Council Business Meeting May 17, 2012 (6:30 PM)**  
**Andrews Experimental Forest, OR (AND)**  
**Conference Room**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Collins at 6:50PM. Attending as voting members were Nick Brokaw (LUQ), John Blair (KNZ), Barbara Bond (AND), Breck Bowden (ARC), Steward Pickett (BES), Roger Ruess (BNZ), Mark Ohman (CCE), Deb Peters (JRN), Sarah Hobbie (CDR), Dan Childers (CAP), John Chamblee (CWT), Evelyn Gaiser (FCE), Meryl Alber (GCE), David Foster (HFR), Tim Fahey (HBR), Phil Robertson (KBS), Jeb Barrett (MCM), Russ Schmitt (MCR), Katya Hafich (NWT), Emily Stanley (NTL), Hugh Ducklow (PAL), Anne Giblin (PIE), Dan Reed (SBC), Will Pockman (SEV), Karen McGlathery (VCR). Also attending were Saran Twombly and Matt Kane from NSF  
Absent: Gene Kelly (SGS)

1. Roll call / Agenda review & approval

Robertson moved and Giblin seconded approval of agenda. Approved by voice vote

2. Approval of May 2011 Minutes

Approved by voice vote

3. NSF Report – Saran Twombly and Matt Kane

The deadline for the submission of the 2012 IM Supplements was moved from 1 June to 15 June 2012. Matt Kane apologized to group about not providing information on the outcome of the recent renewal panel prior to the SC meeting. Results will be out by the end of the month.

- A. Annual and final reports. What does NSF do with these reports? People read them! These reports are used for two primary purposes. One is for the PO to assess timely progress on research. This is to avoid unpleasant surprises at the end of the funding cycle. However, LTER projects are rather complex with lots of components. The program wants to know if we are making progress on our major objectives, not the details of each component of the project. Secondly, Program Directors are often asked by NSF admin to produce evidence of NSF support related to various situational topics that arise during the year. These requests could come from BIO, the NSF Director, Congress, etc. Program Directors need to pull information from these reports rather quickly. Therefore, a distilled version of the major findings each year is extremely useful. Some LTER reports may be up to 200 pages that are hard to scan quickly for topical information. Because these are ANNUAL reports, they can be more focused to accomplishments/findings from the past year. Therefore, the site should report what has been done during that year rather than a cumulative listing of findings and activities from the start of the award. Distilled versions of major activities and findings that emphasize the value of long term research are the key component of the report. This will reduce the complexity and structure of the report, making it easier on PIs and Program Directors. The findings may be more important than activities with regard to content for requests. The structure of a final report is still not clear, but a cumulative document containing the annual reports could work, as long as they also contained a short general summary and overview section.
- B. What does the LNO do and what should or could it do? This is a general discussion of the needs of the community. NEON is coming on line. Ocean observing systems are up and expanding. How can we pull all these groups together to get the most out of these efforts? LNO could pull this together because they are out in front of this now. The LNO serves

lots of critical functions for this community. This is an important opportunity to work with this community to guide the next iteration of the LNO. Lots of opportunities. Current functions could be advanced, altered or even discontinued. There will be NSF derived workshops to design the structure of the LNO of the future. The LNO is very important to the success of the LTER Network. The LTER SIP is an important source of information for planning the next LNO. The office needs to support both short term and long-term goals and this should be congruent with the SIP. The LTER Network spent a lot of time over the last 4 years thinking about how the LNO fits into LTER structure and that is encoded in the SIP. The LNO is an award like any other and needs to be managed by NSF as an award but it is not treated as an independent entity separate from LTER Network needs and goals. It might be useful to map the collaborative networks of LTER to educate other developing networks. NSF is considering a variety of different models for the next version of LNO. Think about not only what should the LNO do, but also what structure should it have? All LTER information management? Lose the working groups? Just do organization? Nothing is off the table. Communication and Outreach Director is something that could benefit the LNO and does not exist in the current model. LTER needs to develop a set of recommendations for what the LNO should do. This new office should be planned for 20 years into the future, not 3 years into the future. Building synthetic data products is a future (current) need.

- C. To whom does a PI respond if they need further information based on an email from Saran as the spokesperson of the LTER Working group at NSF? Go to your program officer first if not in DEB, but if confusion remains or more information is needed to go Saran.
- D. Supplements: Lots of possible themes for supplements over time, and budgets vary regarding amounts and timing. However, if you could actually plan for the supplement money from year to year, what would you propose? Because of technicalities of budget percentages it is best this year to keep each supplement limited to \$150K. So no horse-trading of budgets in order to avoid big players and little players in this effort.
- E. Rumors? Anything we can dispel? Has the attitude of NSF changed fundamentally about LTER over the last 5 years? If anything it has gotten better/stronger. LTER is still viewed as a flagship program in Biology and NSF. The program also receives great support and understanding in SBE and OCE. Some wonder what the feeling is within NSF regarding the relationship between NEON and LTER. The LTER budget was very well protected this year by the BIO Directorate. NSF Leadership views these programs as highly complementary. Are CZOs going to become long-term and possibly integrated into LTER? These are GEO programs and that decision has not been made yet. Discussions are on-going within NSF. What about ULTRA? Lots of on-going discussions within NSF regarding how or if ULTRA will be integrated in LTER. At this point not sure where USFS stands on partnering in ULTRA because that agency is facing significant budget issues. As far as is known, NSF will go forward with ULTRA but it is not ready to do so yet. Given budget constraints it is unlikely that there will be specific initiatives to expand LTER research more into the social sciences. If ULTRA goes forward, how many sites? Two initially, but there could be more down the road depending on budgets and agency priorities. It is important for a variety of scientific organizations to present to NSF and other potential sources of funding the value of this kind of research to the nation.

#### 4. Science Initiatives Reports

- BioScience Outreach Effort – Foster

The outreach effort was extensive and generated a lot of publicity for LTER, NSF and BioScience. This effort was coordinated by staff at Harvard Forest with input from NSF OLPA, LNO and some sites.

- Pickett: Next effort: Scientific American!

Steward Pickett happily volunteered to lead the charge to get an LTER article into Scientific American

- ILTER – Vanderbilt

ILTER is up and running well. Many scientists are ILTER sites are interested in collaborations. The US ILTER committee is particularly interested in helping to develop more concrete network-to-network interactions with Mexico and Canada, along with a few other well-established networks (e.g., South Africa, China, France). A more detailed presentation with PowerPoint was given to the EB, and that summary plus the PowerPoint is available with the minutes of the May 2012 EB meeting

- Future Scenarios Initiative – Foster

Foster et al. submitted a proposal to the NSF Macrosystems Biology competition. Although it was not funded they received some interesting feedback and this group plans to revise and resubmit soon.

- Coastal Zone – Alber

Several PIs from Coastal Zone LTERs met with Dave Garrison at NSF to discuss the upcoming SEES competition on Coastal Vulnerabilities. That group plans to submit to that competition once the rfp is issued.

- Cryosphere - Ducklow

The Cryosphere group has been semi-dormant lately as the cryosphere continues to slowly disappear. That group plans to gather muster soon and will be ready for upcoming relevant competitions when they are announced.

- Inland Climate Change – Collins

The Inland Climate Change group (Knapp et al.) submitted a large, multisite proposal to the first round of the NSF Macrosystems Biology competition. The proposal was not recommended for funding for a variety of reasons. The group submitted a more focused proposal to the 2011 MSF Competition including the addition of a climate change modeling component that was not included in the original submission. This proposal was funded. Sites (3 LTER sites, 2 non-LTER sites, non-LTER modeler) have been selected and prototype rainout shelters are being constructed with plans for full deployment in 2013 after a year of gathering preliminary data.

#### 5. Report from the LNO - Bob Waide

Bob Waide presented a brief description of LNO recent accomplishments and sought feedback from the group in preparation for the upcoming LNO site visit by NSF. More details on LNO accomplishments including a slide presentation can be found in the minutes of the May 2012 EB meeting. Include link to the presentation and to the NSF annual report

#### 6. Election of the Chair

Scott Collins was elected for a second term as Chair.

#### 7. Report from the Chair – Scott Collins

- Changes to LTER Bylaws

The Science Council was presented with two different changes to the LTER Bylaws. One set of changes were considered to be “housekeeping” in that they corrected grammar, eliminated contradictions, and added the Past Chair as a non-voting member of the EB for one year following the end of his/her term. These changes passed unanimously. The second change to the Bylaws was a request for recognition of the Education Committee via a non-voting membership on the LTER EB similar to that of the LTER Data Managers. The Science Council considered the merits of this proposal and voted unanimously in favor of this motion and changes to the Bylaws. The revised version of the Bylaws has been posted on the LTER Network website at

<http://intranet2.lternet.edu/documents/bylaws-long-term-ecological-research-network-revised-5-12>.

#### 8. 2013 Minisymposium

The Chair called for suggestions for the theme of the 2013 minisymposium. A theme of “Globalization of LTER research” was proposed and adopted. Volunteers to organize the minisymposium included Kristin Vanderbilt, Dan Childers, Evelyn Gaiser, John Chamblee, Jeb Barrett

#### 9. 2013 SC Meeting

The Jornada LTER will host the 2013 Science Council meeting. Deb Peters will serve as the local organizer. The SC science theme will be the same as that of the minisymposium, but with an expanded set of speakers including international contributions (Mexico, perhaps Canada). Hugh Ducklow and Dan Childers volunteered to organize the Science Council meeting in consultation with local host Peters.

Moorea Coastal Reef LTER will host the 2014 Science Council Meeting followed by Konza Prairie LTER in 2015 and Coweeta LTER in 2016.

#### 10. The Science Council expressed recognition and thanks to:

- Local SC Hosts (Julia Jones and a cast of THOUSANDS)
- Outgoing EB members David Foster, Nick Brokaw, Hugh Ducklow
- Incoming EB Members: Mark Ohman, Evelyn Gaiser, Gus Shaver
- The 2012 Minisymposium Organizing Committee: Dan Childers, Chair; Nancy Grimm, Dave Tilman, Mark Ohman, Barbara Bond
- The Science Council Science Program Committee: Karen McGlathery, Evelyn Gaiser
- Outgoing committee chairs: Sally Koerner – Grad Student, Will Pockman - NISAC
- The *ad hoc* Nominating Committee for Chair: Deb Peters, David Foster, Evelyn Gaiser, Mark Ohman, Ted Gragson
- Many many other committee members and chairs, and all the hard working scientists and staff across the LTER Network

#### 11. The meeting was adjourned at 9:50PM.