Minutes of the LTER Coordinating Committee Meetings
Cape Charles, VA
September 19-21, 2005

Wednesday, September 21

Approval of agenda

Introductions of NSF staff

Henry Gholz – LTER Program-DEB
Roberta Marinelli - Antarctic Biology & Medicine-OPP
Dave Campbell - Division of Elementary, Secondary, & Informal Education (EHR/ESIE)

Gholz

Henry Gholz gave a brief overview of activities related to the LTER program. Among his major points:

- The Congressional briefing went smoothly
- OUP books are coming out slowly, and this process should be accelerated because it can be a key factor in some site reviews
- Site annual reports are due soon, and they should contain all the requested information

Campbell

How can we get the Education Directorate to support LTER education?

- Proposals to EHR should focus on single target office
- Venture fund program (EdEn) has worked well over last two years). Next year funds may or may not be there.
- Check out the EHR program called "Communicating Results to Public Audiences" in Informal Education
- Leverage activities with existing education programs, e.g., WGBH in Boston
- Investigate Citizen Science approaches
- Need to understand realities of K-12 environment (e.g., few computers, low band width, firewalls)
- Phase things into high schools by testing them out on college freshmen

Planning grant

Scott Collins and Jim Gosz presented the current state of the LTER planning activity. Their goal was to confirm a consensus on the overarching research question and its components.

Comments

Ohman – Is it possible for people to do strictly natural science under the proposed overarching question? Has balanced tipped too far away from natural scinces?

A: The overarching question does not constrain or effect renewals. Site science will go on as before, and new money will be provided for new science.

Foster – There is very little pure natural science that is truly transformational, integrative and synthetic without invoking historical data. Therefore, the triangle and box cannot be disentangled as suggested.

The real problem for social scientists is the absence of long-term funding.

This is a huge opportunity to be transformational

Schmitt – There is a model existing in the LTER Network to incorporate social science into LTER sites, which consists of the augmented sites (CWT and NTL).

A: Gholz – This was a 1993 effort that turned out to be a one up activity. Approaching this as an augmentation would be DOA.

A: Gosz – Increased levels of science above inflationary rates requires new science initiatives

A: Childers – Not just talking about adding moneys to sites, but rather long-term, large-scale, highly-integrated network level activities.

Reuss: What are next steps? Will sites self organize, or will there be salting of ideas that need to be followed?

Grimm: Aren't they writing a proposal?

A: Gosz – First thing to be produced is a science plan. The science plan will then provide the basis for proposal/s.

Reuss: How will this play out in terms of getting funding?

A: Collins – Several visions still being considered. Need feedbacks from site by early November about what sites can do under the overarching framework.

A: Gosz – There will be multiple iterations for sites to respond to.

A: Collins – The idea is to provide a new large pot of funds some of which will be aimed at LTER Network Office, University of New Mexico

McKnight – We should be including emphasis on important global change issues that are causing more extreme events

Grove – At what point do we need to seek commitments from other agencies?

A: Gosz – We solicit input from you about this.

Foster – Will need input from other agencies in terms of their needs early in the process.

Hobbie – Urge you to read reports from STFAC. Need to set up schedule for approval of CC at various phases of the project.

McKnight – If a goal is to inform policy makes, we need a more interactive approach to informing decision makes (e.g., decision support)

Grove – Need to involve mid-level agency people and perhaps get them invited to the ASM

Tilman – Linkages to informal education is critical in order to influence policy makes

Grimm – How can ESA assist in this effort?

A: Gosz – Once plan is drafted, societies can help support it.

Grove – Other societies need to be brought on board

Grimm – Bring this to meeting of society presidents in December

Gholz – Should you aim for an Editorial in Science?

Gosz – Potential 2007 Funding Initiatives

Tilman – Need both new sites and groups of scholars, which argues against satellite sites

Grimm – Try to build community efforts at larger scales into proposal including centers

Gholz – Planning grant funded by eight offices in at NSF

Fahey – Is possibility of multi-agency long-term program too optimistic?

Gholz – Present LTER program already supported by a variety of agencies

Gholz – Another way for agencies to contribute would be to provide core funding for new sites

Motion: To approve framework for design as presented to the committee - Approved 26-0

Amendment: Shaver – Direct STF to address science questions

Motion for amendment withdrawn

NIS Strategic Plan

Don Henshaw presented the most recent version of the NIS Strategic Plan on behalf of the NIS Advisory Committee

Motion to approve NIS Strategic Plan as presented by Don Henshaw – passed 26-0

NISAC vacancies

There was an election for new members of NISAC (candidates included Melinda Smith, Alan Knapp, Chuck Hopkinson, and Will Pockman

Knapp and Hopkinson were elected.

TRENDS book

Deb Peters made a presentation on the TRENDS book and suggested the development of an NIS data module based on the data to be used in that book.

Johnson moved and Childers seconded the motion that data for Trends be used to create a data module within the Network Information System (NIS) – Approved 26-0.

Considerable discussion revolved around the need for such a book, with a couple of sites (HFR, LUQ, SBC). There was less concern about the NIS module

LTER children's book series

Diane McKnight made a progress report on the LTER children's book project. There was discussion about the formation of an editorial committee by the Executive Committee.

Presentation on change in bylaws

The Executive Committee recommended the following change in the LTER bylaws:

Section 1. Executive Committee: There shall be established an Executive Committee of the LTER Network comprising the elected Chair of the Coordinating Committee serving as Chair of the Executive Committee, and six additional members elected by the Coordinating Committee.   Elected members of the Executive Committee shall have

terms of three (3) years or until a successor is duly elected. Terms of the members of the Executive Committee will be staggered, so that the terms of one-third of the members expire each year. During the first Coordinating Committee meeting of each calendar year, two new members will be elected to replace those whose terms are expiring. The Coordinating Committee may determine by vote at the meeting preceding each election that specific areas be represented in the Executive Committee (such as Data Management). For such specified areas, the elections shall be from nominees representing that area. Candidates can be nominated by any member of the LTER Network, but only those candidates who agree to serve beforehand will be eligible for election. The two candidates receiving the most votes will be elected. Current and past Executive Committee members can serve additional terms if duly elected by the Coordinating Committee. In the event that an elected member of the Executive Committee is not able to fulfill his or her term, the Executive Committee will choose a replacement to complete the term. The Executive Director of the Office shall serve as an ex officio member of the Executive Committee.

Pennings moved and Tilman seconded to accept change in bylaws – Passed 26-0

Discussion of specific areas of expertise for the Spring 2006 EC election

No recommendations for specific areas to be elected in the next Exec election

NEON

Jim Gosz gave a brief overview of NEON progress.

ASM 2006

Bob Waide gave an update on progress for the 2006 ASM. So far the following has been accomplished:

- Venue selected and reserved
- Dates agreed upon
- Program Committee and sub-committees formed and two teleconferences held
- Basic program agreed upon
- Meeting organizers contracted
- Partial funding achieved

Meeting was adjourned at 12 noon

Education Committee Report.doc

Social Science Committee Report.doc

IM Committee Report.doc

NISAC Committee Report.doc

Graduate Committee Report.doc

Climate Committee Report.doc

Technology Committee Report.doc

Bylaws Change.doc

LTER NIS Strategic Plan.pdf