	PI	Title of Working Group	Date of Meeting
1	Laws, Prather, Pelini $7,205	Invertebrate Impacts on Ecosystem Services under Climate Change: A Synthesis Using Insights from the LTER Network	April 2-5, 2010
2	Lajtha $12,000	Soil organic matter dynamics: a cross-ecosystem approach	
3	Grove, Ogden $8,100	Identifying the benefits and barriers to graduate student urban cross-site socio-ecological research	
4	Amaral-Zettler $11,935	From Molecules to Metadata: MIRADA LTERS Follow-up Working Group Meeting	March 9-10, 2010
5	Valentine et al. - $5,000	LTERMaps Internet Mapping Workshop	March 31-April 1, 2010
6	Kofinas, Sayre, Pontius $11,100	Synthesis Papers and Research Proposal from the Maps and Locals (MALS) Project	
7	Jones, Dahm, Grimm, Covich, Williams $12,000	Hydrologic effects from ecosystem responses to climate change and land use change	
8	Swanson, Chapin, Leigh, Foster, Kratz - $12,000	Engaging Arts/Humanities in Future Scenarios Work	
9	Craft $12,000	Towards a Predictive Understanding of Coastal Wetland Response to Sea Level Rise: Synthesis of Data to Test a Model of Tidal Marsh Accretion	
10	Millar, Hamilton $15,000	A Role for the LTER Network in the Carbon-Offset Market	
11	Kominoski, Wollheim, Barnes, Blair, Hotchkiss, Ulseth - $11,300	Predicting the influence of inland climate change on continental-scale carbon and nutrient processing in river networks.	
12	Thompson, Foster $12,000	Proposal to establish a large forest plot network across LTER and NEON sites.	December 16-18, 2008
13	Baker $7,500	An LTER Unit Registry: In Support of Data Integration	May 24-26, 2010
14	San Gil $8,000	Facilitating cross-synthesis research : PASTA à la carte	
15	Robinson, Komatsu, Thomey - $11,885	The impacts of within season rainfall variability across ecosystems	April 16-18, 2010
16	Hopkinson $20,000	Coastal zone climate changes: Understanding and adaptation	February 23-24, 2010
17	Williams et al. $20,000	Disappearing Cryosphere: Socioecological Consequences for Ecosystem Services	December 7-9, 2009
18	Foster et al $20,000	Landscape Vulnerability and Resilience to Climate and Land Use Change	
19	Blair, et al $20,000	Inland Climate Change: Social and Ecological Sensitivities and Responses	February 21-22, 2010 April 29-30, 2010

Activities and Accomplishments

Funding and Staffing

The proposal for the renewal of the LNO, submitted in March 2008, was funded in two Cooperative Agreements (CA) dated May 1 and September 1, 2009. The first CA covers core operations of the LNO; the second CA includes a cost-of-living increment and funds to address some of the research and cyberinfrastructure goals of the Decadal Plan. Funds for the second CA come from ARRA monies. The LTER Executive Board conducted a thorough review of the activities of both of these awards and concluded, with a few exceptions, that proposed activities were still relevant and funded at appropriate levels.

The second CA includes funds to expand research synthesis efforts and to advance the development and implementation of the Network Information System (NIS). Around $235,000 have been allocated to research working groups (see table below) and synthesis prospectus working teams. Updates from those prospectus teams were heard Wednesday morning.

Members of the Network Information System Advisory Committee provided an overview of plans for the NIS to the Science Council on Wednesday. The first steps towards completing the NIS included the development of a detailed operational plan (see below) and recruitment of new staff members: an Analyst/Programmer II, a Programmer intern, an Information Manager, and a Web Designer intern. Three of these positions have been filled, and we are interviewing candidates for the fourth. The official kickoff for NIS development was May 1.

Operational Plan

As one of the requirements for ARRA funding, NSF requested a detailed operational plan describing tasks and expenditures of funds and provided the LNO six months to complete this plan. NSF further requested that the LTER EB be closely involved in the development of the operational plan, and that external experts be consulted to assure interoperability between the NIS and other information management approaches.

The first draft of the LNO operational plan was distributed to the LTER Executive Board, the Information Management Committee, and the Network Information System Advisory Committee on December 1, 2009. The plan was prepared to address the requirements in the General Programmatic Terms and Conditions that govern the Decadal Plan Cooperative Agreement. The LTER Executive Board provided advice and guidance on the scope and structure of the operational plan. Specifically, the Executive Board requested that the operational plan cover all 17 activities proposed in both LNO Cooperative Agreements, rather than just the 10 activities in the Decadal Plan Cooperative Agreement, as requested by NSF. Comments on the initial draft were incorporated in a second draft that was sent to the Executive Board, Information Management Committee, and the Network Information System Advisory Committee for additional review. In addition, the second draft was reviewed by a panel of external reviewers, who met with the Executive Board and NISAC in January, 2010. A final draft was prepared from this meeting and was approved by the Executive Board. A revised version of the operational plan, covering only the 10 ARRA-funded activities, was submitted to NSF on February 28, 2010.

Annual review of LNO

The Executive Board conducts an annual review of the LNO, beginning in January in each calendar year. At that time, the LNO submits a report that addresses goals and milestones jointly set with the EB and NISAC in the previous year.

The EB reviews this report, with input from NISAC on technical elements of the NIS, and prepares an evaluation with recommendations for operational changes. At that time, new goals and milestones are set for the upcoming year. This process has worked successfully for two years, although the timing of reports and meetings is still being adjusted.

Revision of LTER Intranet Page

A revised Intranet page is available online at the following URL: http://intranet2.lternet.edu. The website has a standardized format and look and feel and is integrated with the LTER Personnel Database and LTER LDAP Server. The website provides the same functionality as the previous version as well as updated capabilities for web based content management by multiple users and communities with the Long Term Ecological Research Network. The main features include group capabilities, event management, working group tracking, and LTER Committee management. The website uses the Drupal content management system (CMS), which is an open source, PHP-based CMS. The website is highly modular and was tested during the LTER Graduate Student election in the fall of 2009.

ASM Final Report

The 2009 All Scientists Meeting was held at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, Colorado from September 13 to the 17th. The Program Committee, working with the LTER Network Office, created a program that included six plenary speakers (Phil Robertson, Jim Collins, Dave Schimel, Bill Clark, Laura Ogden, Carol Brewer), including an evening plenary presentation on the pre-history and future of LTER (Dave Coleman and Henry Gholz). There were over 75 Working Group meetings in seven working group sessions, over 400 posters, four evening mixers, and pre-ASM meetings for information managers, graduate students, education representatives, international attendees, and the LTER Executive Board. Logistics for the meeting were handled by the LTER Network Office in collaboration with The Schneider Group, a company specializing in meeting organization.

At the conclusion of the All Scientists Meeting (ASM), participants were offered the opportunity to participate in an exit survey. Approximately 30% of the ASM attendees completed the survey (211 respondents).

Overall, respondents rated the ASM as Excellent to Very Good (84%) with only 3% dissatisfied in some way with the LNO facilitation regarding ease of on-line registration, ease of travel or YMCA accommodations.

Respondents were satisfied or neutral regarding meeting components of workshop effectiveness (95%), timing (92%) and space (89%) and they agreed that the printed ASM schedule was useful and should be provided again in the future (80%). No respondents indicated they were dissatisfied with LNO responses to requests.

Respondents were asked to evaluate various activities designed to enhance the networking experience. They were satisfied with the opening mixer (84%), poster session space (88%), local attractions (84%), and poster session length (84%), while slightly less satisfied with the main plenary speakers (70%) and the mixer entertainment (52%).

The following factors were rated in importance with respect to the decision to attend. Workshop content (51%), networking opportunities (82%), availability of LNO support to attend ASM (42%), and meeting with peers of similar expertise (75%) were rated extremely important factors. Poster sessions (58%), social activities (52%), and ASM location (53%) rated important. Not important in the decision to attend the ASM were the local attractions (48%). Finally, most respondents would like to have the ASM 2012 return to the YMCA of the Rockies (51%) and would like to have the meeting in September (60%).

Respondents were given the opportunity to answer open-ended questions designed to elicit broad-based responses in terms of what they liked or disliked about the meeting. Respondents providing negative comments generally did not like: food (n = 50), working groups (n = 30), plenary sessions (n = 22), agenda (n = 19) and location (n = 19).

- Although some respondents did not care for the YMCA food, most of the comments associated with this negative response were geared toward considering more vegetarian items in the cafeteria.
- Respondents that did not like the working groups felt that the groups were disorganized, cliquish, needed better stated goals and unfocused, and needed more of a graduate student presence
- Those that did not like the plenary sessions noted that some keynote addresses went over time, were boring, too formal, or were preaching to the choir.
- Those that did not like the agenda felt the need for more downtime, that the schedule was overcrowded, or there was too much overlap in workshops to participate in groups of interest.

Finally, those that did not care for the location felt they were stuck at Estes Park and wanted to experience downtown restaurants and bar scenes other than the YMCA. They also felt travel time from Denver to Estes Park was cumbersome, and two mentioned altitude problems such as headache.

DataOne

The University of New Mexico received an award from NSF to establish DataOne, a national data repository. Bill Michener is the PI, and because of time demands from DataOne and other projects, Bill has had to step down as Associate Director of the LNO. DataOne is a collaboration among LTER, Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL), U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII), National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis (NCEAS), National Evolutionary Synthesis Center (NESCent), and others. The LTER Network will derive benefit from being a DataONE Member Node by serving data into a broad and diverse repository that will expose LTER Network data at national and global scales for subsequent analysis and synthesis. Equally important, LTER Network data that reside in the DataONE network will be preserved indefinitely through the DataONE commitment for distributed replication and storage of data contributions, including technological provisions for discovering, accessing, and integration of DataONE hosted data packages.

Funds for international activities

In response to a request from NSF, the LNO submitted a proposal to the NSF for $100,000 to address collaboration between US LTER and ILTER Networks. Support was requested for US representatives to attend ILTER meetings to strengthen interactions at all levels of research cooperation. Over the next five years, selected participants shall work to ensure that collaborative ideas from ILTER activities are made accessible to the LTER community, shall identify key variables needed for success in start-up of collaborative research, and identify ILTER and LTER trends for future decision making.

Review of working group progress

More than 75 research working groups were held as part of the 2009 LTER All Scientists meeting. Following a call by the LTER EB for follow-on proposals, 29 requests for funding were received, most of which were associated with ISSE research. John Vande Castle created a website to provide access to the proposals for review. Fifteen proposals were selected for funding by the EB and will be supported by the LNO in 2010. The successful proposals have been entered into a new section of the revised LTER intranet web page dedicated to working groups (http://intranet2.lternet.edu/working_groups) and can be accessed directly at: http://intranet2.lternet.edu/category/working-group-type/2009-post-asm.