

LTER



*Long Term Ecological Research
Network Office*

Public Information & Outreach (PIO)

- Overview -

*by **McOwiti** O. Thomas*



Introduction: Roles + Goals of PIO

- **Support for LTER mission**
 - Provide means for exchanging ideas, information
 - Outlet for highlighting applications/achievements
 - Provide means for communicating with public
 - Provide editorial support (e.g. OUP Synthesis Series)
- **Show the public face of LTER**
 - Interface with the public/window to LTER
 - Visibility/create public awareness
 - Highlight relevance & scope of LTER research
 - Develop corporate image/enhance LTER brand



Responsibilities

- **Public Information tasking**
 - **McOwiti**
 - for plans, strategies, tools, products
 - **Patty Bonito (nee Sprott)**
 - part time on special projects, e.g., site brochures
- **Every member of LTER is an “ambassador”**
 - serendipitous (lucky break☺ senator in elevator)
 - Interpersonal (word-of-mouth)/informal meetings



Functions/Activities

- **Defined in the Scope of Work**
 - i.e., core activities that we must do
- **Requests from NSF**
 - e.g., for information, photos, etc. (NSF's BI brochure)
- **Requests from LTER sites**
 - e.g., acting as liaison for Education Committee;
clearing house for external requests for information
 - site brochures, posters
- **Dictated by local, national, international events**
 - e.g., new sites/developments within LTER



Achievements

- Presented LTER to its various publics
 - Exhibited at ESA/INTECOL, SACNAS, NSF Day at UNM, and others
 - Sent PIO material to AAAS, NSF-LTER Mini-symposium
- Updated information materials
 - Traveling display—updated, redesigned
 - Network brochure—new content, format
 - Assisted with NSF's Broader Impacts brochure
 - Network News—new philosophy, fresh look, new format



Network News

Newsletter of the Long Term Ecological Research Network Vol. 18 No. 1 Spring 2005

2005 LTER Mini-Symposium a Big Success

Washington's scientific community was all ears recently as the national Long Term Ecological Research (LTER) network held its 5th Annual LTER Mini-symposium at the National Science Foundation (NSF) in Arlington, VA, on March 3, 2005. The purpose of the annual mini-symposium is to showcase to Washington the relevance and broader impacts of the scientific research undertaken by the LTER network.

The symposium has earned a reputation in D.C. as a "must attend" event for people from federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, professional societies, private organizations, and others who are interested in learning what LTER scientists and educators are doing and planning.

Each year the LTER coordinating committee announces the following year's theme in the fall and solicits nominations for topics and speakers from within the Network. This year's theme was "Long-Term Marine Research and the Grand Challenges in Ecology." This theme provided opportunities for scientists and educators from the LTER's two newest sites, California Current Ecosystem (CCE) and Moorea Coral Reef (MCR) in French Polynesia, as well as scientists from other marine sites, to present their work to a diverse public audience of scientists, policy makers, educators, members of the media, and the general public (see Table 1, p. 2).

The event was hosted by NSF's Division of Environmental Biology (DEB) and Di-

vision of Ocean Sciences (OCE) and attracted over 120 people from across the nation's capital and beyond. Participants included representatives from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), National Academies of Science (NAS), Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC), Capitol Hill (Knauss Fellows), American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS), Ecological Society of America (ESA), U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP), Joint Oceanographic Institutions Ocean-Research Interactive Observatory Networks (JOI-ORION), American Association for the Advancement of Science

See "Symposium," p.2

NSF Director Praises LTER

NSF Director, Dr. Arden Bement, recently spoke to a large audience of scientists and policymakers at the National Council for Science and the Environment's 5th National Conference on Science, Policy and the Environment, in Washington, D.C. Bement featured the LTER network prominently as he addressed the theme of the conference, "Forecasting Environmental Changes." He presented research activities of several LTER sites, spoke about LTER reflections from several Principal Investigators, and highlighted the children's book from Niwot Ridge ("My Water Comes From the Mountains") when talking about environmental education and public outreach. His speech also covered other NSF-funded research, cross-agency initiatives, earth observation systems, cyberinfrastructure, environmental education, and future foci for U.S. science.

See excerpts of Bement's speech on page 10.

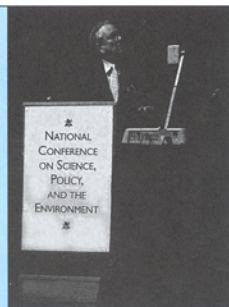


Photo: Michelle Kollischer

NSF Director, Dr. Arden Bement, addressing the National Council for Science and the Environment's 5th National Conference on Science, Policy and the Environment "Forecasting Environmental Changes" in Washington, D.C.

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Achievements (cont...)

- Updated website
 - New structure; updates more frequent, quicker
 - Documentation/archives improved (new structure)
- Implementing new design policies
 - For consistent look and feel





Simple Strategy

- Developing a Communication Plan
 - Need to be **proactive** rather than *reactive*
 - Need to be **targeted** & **strategic**

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Strategy (cont...)

- Enhanced Communication Tools + Products

[Tools]

- Web, print, interpersonal, electronic (radio, TV), stand-alone audio visual (CDs, DVDs)
- *Earth & Sky* radio—ref. Bob's presentation

[Products]

- Traveling display, brochures, fact sheets, flyers, etc.
- OUP Synthesis Series
- Information kit



Coming soon...

- More core tasks (scheduled)
- Greater interaction with popular mass media
- Further enhancements to existing tools & products (e.g., brochures, website)
- New tools, products



Conclusion

- Finish communication plan
- Address existing and emerging challenges + opportunities
- Work with the Network Planning Group, sites, the LTER EC/CC, and NSF to enhance the public image of LTER
- Continue fulfilling mandate/providing services to LTER, NSF, ecological community