

Notes from meeting of Long Term Ecological Research (LTER) network Executive Board (EB) – October 18, 2016

Attending: Frank Davis, Anne Giblin, Mike Goosef, Peter Groffman, Sally Hollbrook, Sherri Johnson, Dan Reed, Sarah Hobbie (for Eric Seabloom), Wade Sheldon

Items discussed

1. Approval of notes from last meeting.
2. Approval of request from publications committee to accept the book, “Hubbard Brook: The Story of a Forest Ecosystem” by R.T. Holmes and G.E. Likens for inclusion in the LTER Book Series. We note that this was an “after the fact” inclusion and the authors did not go through the normal process. Still, the book is highly relevant to LTER and we are glad to include it.
3. Planning for discussion with NSF about expectations for LTER renewal proposals:
 - Given the personnel changes at NSF and the busy fall proposal review season, we are unable to have this meeting this fall as we hoped.
 - The NSF LTER Working Group recognizes the need for revisions in the renewal call and they welcome our input. In particular they want to know what is unclear in the current guidance. Groffman will send a note to the site PIs requesting input on the RFP.
 - Michael Nelson (AND) is preparing a document analysis of changes in the RFPs over time that should be a useful basis for some discussion with the Working Group.
 - Groffman will continue to refine the questions that we have been generating for the discussion and we will finalize these at our next meeting.
 - Davis will work with NSF to schedule the meeting, hoping for January.
4. Socio-ecological research in urban LTER sites:
 - Just before retiring, Saran Twombly sent a note to the PIs of the Phoenix and Baltimore sites suggesting that they should de-emphasize their focus on socio-ecological research. Discussion with program officers that remain has suggested that this is not the case.
 - This episode emphasizes the need for us to pay attention to changes at NSF, to communicate amongst ourselves, and to maintain a regular dialog with our program officers at NSF.
5. Mini-symposium:
 - March 21, at NSF, 3 hour session, theme is “Vulnerability and resilience in a changing environment: emerging ecological insights from long-term research.”
 - The NSF LTER Working Group is working closely with the LTER National Communications Office to finalize the program and clarify the intended audience.
 - We should suggest people from other agencies to invite; e.g., EPA, USFS.
 - Should we plan to meet with NSF at this time as some subset of us will be there? It is a great opportunity to meet, but NSF does not want this to be a governance event, so we should proceed with caution.
6. Science Council meeting:
 - May 15 – 19 final dates.

- What should the theme be:
 - We have been moving through the 5 core areas so the next topics could be “disturbance” or “organic matter.”
 - It might be good to take a break from the core areas and instead focus on the unique value of insights from multiple decades of work. We could perhaps focus on the special value of 30 – 50 years of research at a site.
 - Could focus on both disturbance and long-term data, which is certainly a good topic to take up at Hubbard Brook. Maybe focus on integration of observations, experiments, models and long-term data related to disturbance.
 - Steering committee nominations?
 - Davis will serve
 - Michael Nelson will serve
 - Someone from Hubbard Brook
 - Should we discuss “is there a natural life to LTER projects?”

7. Items for discussion at future meetings:

- Inquiry about IM review from Peter McCartney
- Planning for discussion with NSF about expectations for LTER renewal proposals
- Mini-symposium
- 2017 Science Council Meeting
- Update on Environmental Data Initiative
- By-laws
- National Advisory Committee
- New site orientation
- Institution contributions
- ILTER
- An integrated supplement plan
- Diversity statements