

Minutes of the LTER Executive Board Meeting
March 3-5, 2010; Washington, DC

1. Meeting called to order at 1pm Wednesday by Chair Phil Robertson; Members attending: Nick Brokaw, Hugh Ducklow, David Foster, Ted Gragson, Corinna Gries, Sarah Hobbie, Sally Holbrook, Dave McGuire (arrived Thursday a.m.), Steve Pennings, Bob Waide, Mark Williams; Unavailable: none. Also present: Todd Crowl, John Vandecastle, and others at various times as noted (Enriqueta Barrera, program officer for CZOs; David Schimel, CEO for NEON; Joann Roskoski, Acting AD-BIO; Bette Loiselle, DEB Director; Penny Firth, DEB Assistant Director).
2. Minutes for 16 February 2010 meeting approved by consent.
3. Reports and Discussions with NSF and NEON (note- meetings were not sequential and happened over 3d)
 - a. Todd Crowl, LTER Program Officer
 - i. Supplements. DEB still lacks a budget for FY10, as do divisions in other directorates. As soon as budgets are provided supplement requests will go out. Schoolyard, RETs, ROAs, and REU opportunities will be first priorities; others will depend on budget outcome.
 - ii. 30y review. The 30y review committee, co-chaired by Allison Power and Anthony Michaels, has been formed but not formally charged. The charge has been formulated and awaits approval by the BIO Advisory Committee, which meets in a few weeks. The charge remains forward-looking, and NSF does not expect the Committee to request materials from the Network for a retrospective review.
 - iii. Legacy data prospectus. The prospectus is now at NSF, circulating in LTER and NEON circles. Expect a positive reception.
 - iv. Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP). The plan is seen by NSF as an update and implementation path for the Decadal Plan. Ensuring it is on hand this summer for FY2012 discussions this fall should be a high priority.
 - v. Macroscale ecology and biodiversity rfp's should be out shortly.
 - vi. LNO's reverse site visit this morning went well, and the LNO Operational Plan should be accepted without problem. Involving CISE (Directorate for Computer and Information Science and Engineering) program officers in the review may open future doors for cooperative funding.
 - vii. Because LTER is now nearly a Foundation-wide project, NSF is considering a broader management strategy.
 - b. Enriqueta Barrera, Program Officer for Critical Zone Observatories (CZOs), GEO
Provided an overview of CZOs, initiated in 2008 to advance understanding of earth surface processes as mediated by the presence and movement of fresh water. Two of 6 CZO watersheds abut or include LTER sites (NWT, LUQ). CZO is interested in pursuing workshop potentials to discover opportunities to integrate LTER and CZO science.
 - c. Dave Schimel, NEON CEO (Thursday afternoon, with NAB)
Provided a short overview of NEON status, and emphasized that with the final design review behind them and with funding to pursue a build-out schedule that begins this fall, NEON is seeking further opportunities to collaborate with LTER. Final build out cost will be \$433 million and annual operational costs \$70 million. Opportunities already under discussion with Robertson and others include instrumentation workshops (e.g. remote sensing workshops to support airborne instrumentation flyovers of LTER and NEON sites) and legacy data curation and management.
 - d. Joann Roskoski, Acting Assistant Director for Biology (Friday morning, with NAB)
 - i. Budget. The 2011 NSF budget has a significant NSF increase. Refer to the front section for BIO priorities. Of particular note is the cross-directorate SEES initiative (Science, Engineering, and

Education for Sustainability), which builds on the FY10 Climate Research activities, and will enhance support for Coupled Human Natural Systems Programs. \$100M of new funding is requested, to be combined with \$600M of existing disciplinary funding; community workshops are expected to help flesh out initiative priorities.

- ii. LTER Strategic Implementation Plan. NSF would most value an SIP that lays out clear priorities for the Network and how they fit together; where the Network would like to be in 20 years; how LTER can contribute to regional to continental scale understandings; and how LTER can best synergize with environmental observatories – NEON for our terrestrial sites and the Ocean Observing Initiative (OOI) for our coastal/marine sites. An effective SIP will position the Network for the opportunity to take an evolutionary jump, which ties into the forward-looking charge being provided to the 30y review panel.

4. National Advisory Board (NAB) Charge and Agenda

The NAB will be meeting concurrently with the EB beginning Thursday afternoon. Robertson presented a provisional response to the NAB's 2009 recommendations, which was discussed and amended. Primary NAB agenda items include an orientation and response to 2009 recommendations, an ARRA funding report, and strategic planning discussion. The primary charge for this meeting is to have the NAB provide advice on strategic planning.

5. Strategic Implementation Planning (EB-only and joint with NAB)

The format and initial outline for the SIP was discussed, and a general design adopted that is concise and covers areas important both to the Network and NSF. These include 5 sections: Research; Education and the development of human capital; Public engagement and communication; Information management; and Relationships with other observatories. Substantial discussion centered on ways to make the SIP effective as a build-out of the Decadal Plan, including the ISSE as a foundational research framework. EB consensus is to have for the SIP Workshop in May as much of a straw plan as the DP allows us to assemble, which will allow workshop time to discuss developments and strategies not in the DP. Subcommittees will create initial drafts for each of these 5 sections plus an overview introduction, as well as incorporate whatever recommendations the NAB will provide in their report.

6. LNO Review / Annual Evaluation

Bob Waide reviewed the LNO Annual Report, received in January. This is the first report in the new format, built around performance milestones approved by the EB last year. These include 6 milestones related to synthesis goals, 7 to cyberinfrastructure goals, 8 to Network governance goals, 6 to communication goals, and 5 related to interoperability with other networks. Also delivered was NISAC's evaluation of progress towards CI goals, as requested by the EB. Waide reported that all milestones were met but for 2-3 for which progress was slower due to dependence on outside groups or external requests to slow the timetable. NISAC reported that all CI milestones were met or exceeded. The EB met in executive session (without Waide, LNO staff, or NSF) to further discuss. Milestones for the current year will be discussed and approved at the March EB meeting, including input from NISAC following their March meeting. The EB's evaluation report, as required by Bylaws, will be prepared following that meeting.

7. BioScience Prospectus

David Foster presented progress on the BioScience prospectus, as prepared by the prospectus committee. Discussion endorsed the current direction, and noted the opportunity to tie the strategic implementation plan into the effort.

8. SC Meeting May 12-13, 2010 Plans

- a. Day 1 format to include morning presentations that will enhance SIP development on Day 2, and an afternoon field trip to PIE. Suggestions for presentations include status and plans for observatories (NEON and OOI in particular) and for the Network Information System, and background and rationale

for the SIP. Day 2 will be devoted to SIP development, led by a facilitator scientist (suggestions now being solicited from NAB, others). There may additionally need to be discussion of a legacy data proposal depending on the outcome of NSF discussions.

- b. The business meeting will include election of a chair-elect; theme for the 2011 minisymposium and for the Science Council meeting at Moorea, and an NSF report from Todd Crowl.
 - c. EB rotation occurs at the Business Meeting: NTL, SGS, and KBS rotate on, CDR, GCE, MCR rotate off.
9. Thanks and congratulations will be extended to minisymposium organizers and speakers for an excellent program and an enthusiastic overflow turnout, including >100 web viewers. Speakers included Barbara Bond (HJA), Chris Boone (CAP & BES), Steve Carpenter (NTL), Terry Chapin (BNZ), Kelli Larson (CAP), Hunter Lenihan (SBC), Fred Scatena (LUQ), and Scott Swinton (KBS). Organizers were David McGuire (BNZ), Morgan Grove (BES), and Jess Zimmermann (LUQ). Todd Crowl provided welcoming remarks and an NSF perspective of LTER.
10. Next meetings
- a. March, April tbd
 - b. May 11 (EB) and 12-13 (SC), Boston (PIE)
 - c. Summer VTC schedule tbd
11. Meeting adjourned Friday, 12:00 pm