

Draft I
JFFranklin

Minutes of January 29-30, 1994
LTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Washington DC

Attendance: Bledsoe, Franklin, Hobbie, Meyer, Seastedt, Swanson, and Vande Castle; Gosz (guest for Jan. 29 a.m.)

I. INFORMATION SESSION FROM NSF (GOSZ)

A. National Science & Technology Council has been formed which is chaired by President Clinton. The Committee on Environment and Natural Resources within the Council replaces the old FCCSET committee. There are several subcommittees including one on Biodiversity & Ecosystem Research; this is where the NSFDEB interests are represented. Cochaired by the new NBS Directory (whoever that is), Jim Baker from NOAA, and Bob Watson the Asst for Environment at OSTP. See attachment for complete structure of the CENR.

B. There is much support for LTER within DEB, NSF, and agencies. Lots of plans in the works but cannot talk a lot about until after the 94 \$arrive and the 95 budget is made public. Can probably expect to see some funding for (1) supplements similar to what have had in past, (2) for cross-site synthesis and comparisons, and (3) for site augmentation—to begin bringing LTER sites to same scale as a STC (science & technology center).

Cross-site supplements would probably involve an open competition with a special announcement. I.e., non-LTER

sites could put in proposals, too, but would have to involve at least one LTER investigator (site?) if they did.

Proposals

might be for up to \$200K in total out of a one time pot. LTER sites should expect calls from other interested participants. Proposals should be based on questions or hypotheses, could involve collaboration between scientists in other countries and a US LTER project. Must be clear how the work will augment existing research programs.

Last category (site augmentation) would probably use regular supplement procedures to bring several sites to a (\$1 million) annual funding level with FY94 funding, others to follow in future fiscal years. Avoid development of 2 classes (super and other) of LTER sites, although a site would not be required to submit proposals/undertake the additional responsibilities if they did not want to. Supplement proposals would have to be based on 1 of 3 thematic expansions: (1) regionalization of program; (2) development of comprehensive site histories--e.g., longer temporal time perspectives; or (3) linkages with other disciplines--such as social sciences. Proposals would be peer reviewed.

C. General discussions with Gosz on other issues: concern at NSF that Network Office have sufficient capacity to handle connectivity to other US agency networks and support international networking; development of a congressional briefing on applications of science and long-term data to policy issues by the LTER Chair, sometime in '94; Congressional Research Service' plan for a symposium on ecosystem management in March 24-25, desire to get LTER display (at least) to that meeting [NETWORK OFFICE STAFF NOTE].

D. Global Change Information System. Gosz reported on plans for development of a GC Information System and pressures to generate shared data sets. Does LTER want to participate in this information system--would we be interested in sharing data [feeling of EXEC was definitely]. Participation may carry stipulations, at some point in time, of data sets needing to go online available. Is LTER supportive of this concept [EXEC said yes, in concept, although would need to know much more about specifics before agreeing in detail].

This led to substantial discussion about how good LTER sites really have been at getting data online. General

feeling that LTER has not done very well at this and needs to do much better (see next item).

E. NSF attitudes toward online (available) datasets. LTER needs to give much more emphasis to this. Archiving, providing accession numbers. GENOME project may be a model for us. EXEC agreed with NSF that LTER projects ought to be required to provide a minimal number of data sets on line; yearly additions to the sets (by accession number, type, and lead scientist) should be a part of the annual reports--documented just like publications. LTER should be leading in developing, listing, and citing (as in publications) such data sets. EXEC agreed that online data sets should be a significant element of the project review process and be specifically identified as important elements in any augmentation process. THIS WILL BE AN ITEM FOR DISCUSSION AT THE SPRING LTER/CC MEETING. [RUDOLF--CAN YOU IDENTIFY FOR US HOW MANY SITES HAVE ONLINE DATA SETS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE AND HOW MANY THERE ARE TOTAL?]

F. NSF remains very interested in the concept of a National Competition for High School Students that would capture some of the best students nationally for summer participation in LTER activities. Possibilities include from 1-2/site to a teacher + 2-3/site. Total amount for the program might be \$200-300K. We need to find someone in LTER (or otherwise) that would be willing to take the lead in developing the concept and a proposal for NSF. The support is probably there for the taking if we can put together an appropriate proposal. ACTION TIME—WE NEED TO IDENTIFY INDIVIDUALS THAT WOULD BE PREPARED TO TAKE A LEAD IN DEVELOPING THIS CONCEPT AND A FORMAL PROPOSAL. THIS IS AN ITEM IN WHICH THE ASST. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE HAS A STRONG DIRECT INTEREST. [STEPHANIE--TALK TO TIM SEASTEDT ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF CONTACTING DIANE EBERT-MAY AT NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY ABOUT HER INTEREST IN WORKING WITH HER ON THIS PROJECT]

G. NSF perspective on LTER publications is that LTER NEEDS TO BE PUTTING OUT NETWORK LEVEL PUBLICATIONS OF ALL TYPES. Science type books/articles sponsored through/by network should be synthesis oriented. Although we produce a lot through normal channels, LTER is short in more synthetic efforts. NSF does not think all such publications have to be in the "10" category--acceptable efforts should not be deterred by concern that it will open LTER to criticism; likely to get more criticism for lack of such efforts.

H. Lot of interagency activities going on. Gosz has staffer working on this area. LTER is viewed as research platform and model by agencies. May be lot of potential for collaborative efforts as there is much pressure on agencies to do intramural efforts (EPA--restoration \$). Strong potential NBS linkage [BOTH GOSZ AND FRANKLIN ARE WORKING ON THIS WITH NBS STAFF AND BABBITT'S OFFICE].

EMAP-LTER proposals have been reviewed, responses back to the sites are being developed. All preproposals were positively reviewed and will be encouraged to develop full proposals.

I. LTERCC needs to be developing lists of candidates for NSF to consider for Division Director (Gosz replacement beginning Jan 95) and Ecosystem program director. We have a strong concern with continuity, sympathetic view of LTER. [EXEC DEVELOPED A LIST FOR BOTH POSITIONS WHICH WILL BE SUBMITTED TO NSF. MEMBERS OF LTER CC SHOULD ALSO BE THINKING ABOUT POSSIBILITIES. THIS WILL BE AN ITEM AT THE SPRING LTER CC MEETING]

J. Gosz shared with us some collective NSF perspectives on the issues of future governance of the LTER network.

a. Cooperative Agreement as funding mechanism for network office: As has been previously discussed future funding (from 1995 on) of the LTER Network Office will be by a cooperative agreement rather than by a grant mechanism. The grant mechanism was never really appropriate to the activities covered and will end with the second year of the current grant (which begins Feb. 1, 1994). Cooperative agreements are negotiated beforehand between NSF and the recipient institution and PI; Gosz handed out material from the NSF manual and an example (from Tiedje's Sci.

& Tech. Center) to show the structure of the cooperative agreement (this is the same mechanism used to fund the centers). With coop. agreements a series of evaluation criteria are identified beforehand, the agreements are for six

years, there are site reviews every 18 months done by an external review team, there are annual reports structured around the criteria, and there will be a lead person in NSF to handle the agreement.

In effect, the LTER Chair will, with the participation and input of the Executive Committee and LTER/CC, develop a series of objectives and metrics for the Network Office and Program and then negotiate the specifics of the contract (cooperative agreement) with NSF. [As will be noted later, we are structuring the schedule of LTER/CC meetings so that timely review and input can occur from the whole CC.]

The current chair (Franklin) will have to develop the first cooperative agreement but this contract can be moved-- i.e., it does not have to remain at the University of Washington but can be moved during its contractual period (which is six years).

The Executive Committee responded to Gosz discussion with a strong endorsement that the Cooperative Agreement is the best approach/instrument for funding the Network Office in the future.

b. NSF feels strongly that the RIGHT PERSON FOR THE LTER CHAIR IS CRITICAL. Having the right person is far more important than where they are located or their tenure. "Right" means a well known senior scientist well respected within LTER and recognized as a leader by scientific programs, agencies and decision makers outside of LTER.

c. NSF is prepared to react favorably to alternative structures developed by the CC with regards to Director and Exec. Director positions and relationships. E.g., with regards to whether we have an executive director or not and what the relationship is with the Chair. It seems likely that an Executive Director will be needed due to the difficulty of getting full time commitment from the type of senior scientists desired in the Chair position and it also allows flexibility with regards to location and management of the Network Office. Again, most important issue is best people; make arrangements to achieve that end.

d. NSF feels that the Network Office should continue to be in Seattle at least initially, although it should not necessarily be viewed as permanent. It probably cannot/should not move with each Chair, however. It should be based in an academic institution. NSF strongly recommends that LTER/CC not propose to move the office to the DC area; it could send the wrong signals both internally and externally as to the mission of the Network Office. The Synthesis Center may eventually be one possibility as a home for the Network Office. \$ are available for the synthesis center this year and preproposals will be due April 1. Objective is site reviews this summer and an award in October/November for the Synthesis Center.

The Executive Committee agreed that the Synthesis Center might be a home but that several years would be necessary before an adequate assessment of the potential for such a linkage could be made: i.e., we would need to see the nature of the program, personnel, and facilities as they developed before we could reach a conclusion.

II. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DISCUSSION ON LTER GOVERNANCE QUESTIONS

A. Chairman. On Saturday afternoon, after Gosz departure, the Executive Committee began its discussions on the governance issues beginning with the Chair. Input from the CC on tenure was extremely varied regarding tenure but most indicated flexibility, 3 years +/- with potential for renewal. There was virtual agreement on the desired attributes: e.g., well established, credible, visible, senior, advocate, visionary, strong (but gracious!), etc. After extended discussions, the EXEC came up with the following recommendation to the LTER/CC:

The CHAIR OF THE LTER/CC SHOULD BE A WELL ESTABLISHED SENIOR SCIENTIST RECOGNIZED BOTH INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY AS A LEADER IN ECOLOGICAL SCIENCE. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SHOULD OPERATE AS A SEARCH COMMITTEE SOLICITING NOMINATIONS, DEVELOPING A SHORT LIST, INTERVIEWING CANDIDATES, INTERACTING WITH NSF, AND PROVIDING LTER/CC

WITH A RECOMMENDATION, AS IS NORMALLY DONE IN AN ACADEMIC SEARCH PROCESS. FINAL SELECTION IS BY A VOTE OF THE FULL LTER/CC. AS A GUIDE THE EXEC WILL SEEK CANDIDATES WILLING TO MAKE A HALF-TIME COMMITMENT FOR A 3 YEAR PERIOD; HOWEVER, RECOGNIZING THE DIFFICULTY OF FINDING SENIOR SCIENTISTS (AND CONSISTENT WITH THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING THE RIGHT/BEST PERSON), A MINIMUM COMMITMENT REQUIRED OF A CANDIDATE WILL BE 3 MOS/YEAR FOR 2 YEARS, PLUS AN ADDITIONAL YEAR FUNCTIONING AS A "PAST" CHAIR.

If this proposal is approved by the LTER/CC in April the following schedule is proposed: the Search (Exec) Committee will begin its activities in May, make a final selection and recommendation to the LTER/CC for a vote at the October LTER/CC meeting; the new Chair would take over in January 1995.

One suggestion is that the Chair provide an annual "State of the LTER Network" report to the full LTER/CC. (Another element in trying to provide for higher levels of accountability to the full CC).

B. Executive Director. The majority of the sites feel that a full-time Exec Director is needed. The Exec. Committee believes that we are most likely going to need such an individual based on the assumption that 1) we will not be able to get a full-time Chair and 2) the Chair and Network Office are likely to be in different locations a majority of the time. The volume of work and the various needs (developing materials and representing the Chair, regular supervision of the Network Office and program, high level of availability as a representative of the network, etc.) almost mandates an Executive Director position.

The Executive Committee discussed potential activities/responsibilities for an Executive Director at length. The individual would supervise/manage the operations of the network office on a day-to-day basis. She/he would also provide the continuity/institutional memory as Chairs turnover. The responsibilities of the Network Office would have to be considered; these include network electronic communication and data sharing, network publication and other external communications, meeting management, fiscal management, some responsibilities for workshop and other proto-synthetic activities, acquisition and management of remote imagery, linkages with other agency programs, and international networking/collaboration. An executive director would clearly have a major role in the extensive communications that will be necessary among the Chair, Exec Comm, Coordinating Committee, relevant NSF personnel, standing LTER/CC committees, etc. An executive director should probably make a regular annual report to the full CC on the network office and its activities; an "accountability" exercise.

The Executive Committee also feels that an Executive Director should probably be a recognized mid-level scientist in order to assure both the competence on technical subjects and insure necessary respect/recognition by LTER and other scientists. A selection process was suggested that involves a 3- year renewable contract, the Executive Committee as a search committee, and the final selection by the Chair and Exec. Committee with ratification or confirmation by the full LTER/CC.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BELIEVES THAT WE WILL NEED AN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR THE LTER NETWORK BUT RECOMMENDS THAT DEVELOPMENT OF A DETAILED JOB DESCRIPTION, A FIRM DECISION TO PROCEED, AND INITIATION OF RECRUITMENT AWAIT THE SELECTION OF A CHAIR, WHO SHOULD PROVIDE THE LEADERSHIP ON THIS TOPIC.

C. Major responsibilities/activities of Network Office (Question 4). There was general agreement among the site responses that the current Network Office mission statement is basically sound. Major suggestions for change involved expanded efforts in stimulating and facilitating cross-site science and acquisition of additional staff and funding to better implement the activities identified in the statement. (Some additional suggested activities are identified in the attached summary of responses.)

The Executive Committee discussed the Network Office mission for several hours. We agreed that the current mission statement works well with some modifications: 1) changing (c) to "stimulating and facilitating intersite scientific activities;" 2) stipulating a role with regards to coordination with other agency programs; and 3) identifying a role in stimulating and facilitating international LTER activities. These suggestions will be incorporated into a revised

Network Office mission statement if the full LTER/CC agrees.

The Executive Committee also agreed that a major focus of the Network Office should be on facilitation of cross-site science involving (but not confined to) LTER sites. This should include more effort by the Network Office to develop small workshops and other protoactivities which lead to significant cross-site comparative and synthesis efforts. Funding should be acquired to do this. Further, it is expected that the Chair, Executive Director, and other scientific personnel associated with the Network Office will be actively involved in these scientific efforts as leaders and participants.

D. Location of the Network Office. There is agreement among NSF, the Executive Committee and the site responses that the Network Office should be semi-permanent; i.e., moving the office at frequent intervals is not desirable. The Executive Committee concluded that the Network Office should be viewed as semi-permanent (stable for 5-10 year periods) but that occasional changes of locale are possible. The Network Office cannot be moved with each new Chair,

assuming that Chairs actually rotate at 3-5 year periods. **THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS THAT THE NETWORK OFFICE BE VIEWED AS SEMI-PERMANENT, LOCATION SUBJECT TO PERIODIC REVIEW. IT FURTHER RECOMMENDS THAT THE NETWORK OFFICE REMAIN IN SEATTLE IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE BUT THAT THIS LOCATION BE REVIEWED IN TWO YEARS.**

Variables that would be considered in the review include the views of the Chair, development of the Synthesis Center, potential for other academic bases, and the potential of a distributed approach with regards to specific Network Office functions.

If this proposal is adopted by the LTER/CC the Executive Committee will request a site visit to the University of Washington by appropriate NSF staff and members of the Executive Committee with regards to concessions/commitments by the University to the Network Program.

E. Governance roles of the Executive Committee and full LTER/CC. There is general agreement in the responses that the full CC should make the decisions about major policy and issues but that it cannot function as the primary management body. The current arrangements with the Executive Committee meeting quarterly and carrying out a great deal of preliminary work for the full CC, more frequent oversight of the Network office and Chair, and more frequent contact with NSF remains, in large measure, appropriate. Nevertheless, the Executive Committee feels that the involvement of the full CC with governance can and should be improved by 1) adding an additional site representative to the Executive Committee, 2) providing for better continuity in representation from the sites, and 3) better use of standing and ad hoc committees. Objective 2) can be aided by developing a more regular sequence of LTER/CC meetings with regards to meeting schedule, size, and focus.

The Executive Committee makes the following recommendations to the LTER/CC for consideration at the April meeting:

THAT THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BE ENLARGED BY ONE MEMBER TO INCLUDE 5 SITE REPRESENTATIVES IN ADDITION TO THE CHAIR FOR A TOTAL OF 6 VOTING MEMBERS. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WOULD CONTINUE TO BE ELECTED FROM THE EXISTING PI OR CO-PI POOL FOR (STAGGERED) THREE-YEAR TERMS. The purpose of this change is to provide for some additional site PI representation on the Executive Committee while still keeping it sufficiently small to be efficient.

THAT A REGULAR SITE REPRESENTATIVE BE SELECTED FROM EACH SITE WHO WILL BE COMMITTED TO ATTENDING ALL FULL LTER/CC MEETINGS FOR A THREE-YEAR PERIOD. THIS PERSON SHOULD BE ONE OF THE SENIOR SCIENTIST PI OR CO-PIs, i.e., representing its most experienced scientific leadership. The purpose of this change is to provide for a much higher level of knowledge and continuity on the LTER/CC. In order to provide experience for other site personnel, a second nonvoting representative can attend the LTER/CC meetings open to two representatives, which will occur at least once each year; this individual should

probably be a rotator.

In order to provide for greater regularity the Executive Committee will recommend to the LTER/CC a schedule of meetings for at least the next 24 months. They will alternate between weekday and weekend meetings and between limited attendance (the regular representative of a site only) and open attendance (regular reps + rotator). The proposed schedule is as follows (limited size means 1 representative/site, presumably the "committed" rep, while open means 2 representatives/site):

Date	Size	Period	Location
April 22-24, 1994	Limited	Weekend	Washington,DC
October 19-21, 1994	Open	Weekday	Coweeta, NC
April 21-23, 1995	Limited	Weekend	Virginia Coast, VA
October 23-25, 1995	Open	Weekday	Seattle, WA
April 26-28, 1996	Limited	Weekend	Not selected
October 28-30	Open	Weekday	Not selected

The October meetings are timed to provide the Executive Committee and Chair with input prior to the negotiation with NSF about the content of the next year's Cooperative Agreement.

F. LTER/CC COMMITTEES. There is general agreement that we need to make more use of committees in getting our work done and in sharing more of the load with the full LTER/CC membership. Therefore, the Executive Committee recommends adoption of the following standing committees of the LTER/CC:

- Data Managers
- Climate
- Remote Imagery/GIS/GPS
- Publications
- Programs and Workshops

Graduate Student The Publication and Programs and Workshops Committees are viewed as completely new and important committees composed of regular LTER/CC site representatives with ex officio participation/staffing by appropriate individuals from the Network Office staff.

The Executive Committee recommends that the PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE CONSIST OF 5 REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE SITES, PREFERABLY THE REGULAR LTER/CC REPRESENTATIVE, WITH AD HOC PARTICIPATION BY THE CHAIR OR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND NETWORK PUBLICATIONS DIRECTOR. THE INITIAL CHARGE IS TO 1) RECOMMEND A POLICY FOR LTER WITH REGARDS TO THE PUBLICATION OF NETWORK- LEVEL BOOKS AND LTER BOOK SERIES INCLUDING OBJECTIVES OF SUCH BOOKS/SERIES AND A PROCESS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF PROPOSALS AND REVIEW FOR CONTENT AND QUALITY; 2) RECOMMEND A POLICY ON ELECTRONIC PUBLICATION OF LTER DOCUMENTS AND PUBLICATIONS; 3) PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS ON CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF THE LTER BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATA BASE; AND 4) CONSIDER AND ADVISE LTER/CC ON THE POTENTIAL FOR OTHER MEDIA, SUCH AS VIDEO. Initial membership of the Publications Committee (based on volunteers for this activity) are Hayden (proposed Chair), Foster, Seastedt, Wharton, and Hobbie.

The Executive Committee that a PROGRAMS AND WORKSHOPS COMMITTEE BE ESTABLISHED CONSISTING OF FIVE REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE SITES, PREFERABLY FROM THE REGULAR LTER/CC REPRESENTATIVES, WITH ADDITIONAL PARTICIPATION FROM THE NETWORK OFFICE AND ASSOCIATED PERSONNEL, TO 1) PROVIDE LEADERSHIP IN DEVELOPMENT OF NETWORK LEVEL SYNTHESIS AND CROSS-SITE ACTIVITIES, 2) PROVIDE SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CHAIR AS TO TOPICS FOR PROTO-WORKSHOPS, FULL WORKSHOPS, SYMPOSIA AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

THAT SHOULD BE SPONSORED AND/OR SUPPORTED BY THE LTER NETWORK, AND 3) HAVE ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROGRAMS OF THE ALL SCIENTISTS AND OPEN LTER/CC MEETINGS. RESPONSIBILITY #2 IS TO BE CARRIED OUT AT LEAST ANNUALLY IN TIME FOR CONSIDERATION OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES AS A PART OF THE ANNUAL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS. Initial membership will be decided by the LTER/CC following adoption of Programs and Workshops as a standing committee.

G. Caroline Bledsoe reported on her continuing activities in development of the bibliographic data base, cross-site research (including personal research on belowground processes) and stimulation of activities with other agencies. The Executive Committee discussed the importance of Bledsoe's role and the desirability of continuing to assure her participation in the intersite program. One proposed activity, the development of a Dream Suite of interactive electronic capabilities to facilitate intersite research, was discussed and will be initiated during the next year.

H. The LONG TERM RESEARCH AGENDA, a draft document developed by John Hobbie and others to provide more substantive backup for the LTER 2000 program provided to NSF, was discussed. Further development of this document is needed and could provide the basis for an LTER open-literature publication that would highlight LTER views as to where the science can and should go. A paper copy of this will be sent out prior to the LTER/CC meeting for discussion. One possibility would be to refer it to either an ad hoc committee or a Program and Workshops Committee for further development. Representatives coming to the April meeting should read and discuss this document prior to the meeting so they are prepared to contribute to a dialogue. Again, one ultimate objective may be a published document in the literature that could combine elements of the existing draft and the LTER 2000 document.

I. Candidates for the NSF Division Director and Ecosystem Analysis Program Director slot were discussed and a list of possible candidates has been forwarded to NSF.

An exhausted Executive Committee adjourned late on Sunday afternoon to catch the remnants of the Superbowl.

Attachments:

- Long Term Research Agenda (Hobbie document)
- Summary of site responses to questions on organization of LTER
- Network office personnel responses to questions on organization of LTER
- National Science & Technology Council diagram
- Original memo to LTER PIs from Chair (12/30/93)
- NSF News Release on Tilman study
- Material on NSF Procedures for Cooperative Agreements

Blind copies of these minutes & attachments to Lubchenco, Risser, Callahan, and Gosz (attachments provided by NSF do not have to be copies to NSF)