

The Long Term Ecological Research Network

LTERR Major Milestones

1977-1979

The National Science Foundation (NSF) sponsors three workshops to initiate and maintain close consultation with the ecological sciences community. At these workshops the philosophy of collaborative research is developed and a centralized working hypothesis approach to collaboration proposed. Five core areas of research are defined to orient long-term ecological research projects toward question/hypothesis formulation and resolution over long time and broad spatial scales.

[Workshop #1 1977](#)

[Workshop #2 1978](#)

[Workshop #3 1979](#)

1979

NSF announces a call for proposals for pilot projects in long-term ecological research with goals of 1) initiating the collection of comparative data at a network of sites representing major biotic regions of North America, and 2) evaluating the scientific, technical and managerial problems associated with such long-term comparative research

1980

An initial set of six sites is selected and funded at \$300,000 per year:

- North Temperate Lakes
- H.J. Andrews Experimental Forest
- Coweeta Hydrological Laboratory
- Konza Prairie
- North Inlet Marsh
- Niwot Ridge

LTERR lead scientists meet in Washington, D.C. and constitute a steering committee to begin the tasks of LTER communication and coordination and accommodation of mutual goals

NSF announces second call for long-term ecological research proposals

1981

Dick Marzolf (Konza Prairie) serves as first LTER Steering Committee Chair. NSF awards a coordination grant to Kansas State University (with Marzolf as PI).

An NSF proposal competition results in five new sites added:

- Central Plains Experimental Range (now called Shortgrass Steppe)
- Okefenokee
- Illinois Rivers
- Cedar Creek Natural History Area
- Jornada Basin

1982

Representatives of five new sites join Steering Committee

First Data Management Workshop, Champaign-Urbana, Illinois

First LTER Meteorological Committee (now Climate Committee) meeting, Coweeta Hydrologic Laboratory

Steering Committee creates a policy for workshops supported under the coordination grant

1983

NSF conducts a national review of the LTER Program

Jerry Franklin replaces Marzolf as LTER Steering Committee (now Coordinating Committee) chair

Coordination grant awarded to Oregon State University (Jerry Franklin, PI). LTER Network Office established

1985

First LTER All Scientists Meeting, Lake Itasca, MN

1986

LTER Intersite Climate Committee (formerly Meteorological Committee) develops standards for meteorological measurements at LTER sites (Greenland 1986; Swift and Ragsdale 1985)

NSF announces third call for long-term ecological research proposals.

1987

An NSF proposal competition results in five new sites added:

- Arctic Tundra
- Bonanza Creek Experimental Forest
- Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest
- Kellogg Biological Station
- Virginia Coast Reserve

First issue, *LTER Network News* newsletter published

LTER Intersite Climate Committee summarizes climates at first 11 LTER sites (Greenland 1987)

NSF creates LTER Technology development position at Division of Environmental Biology (Robert Robbins hired)

NSF announces fourth call for long-term ecological research proposals

1988

NSF proposal competition results in addition of three new sites:

- Luquillo Experimental Forest
- Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge
- Harvard Forest

and two are withdrawn (Illinois Rivers and Okefenokee)

NSF Advisory Committee on Scientific & Technological Planning for LTER identifies scientific issues addressed by the sites and recommends Network-wide capabilities to address them. Report is referred to as "Shugart Report" after chair H.H. Shugart.

LTER Climate Committee reviews research and understanding of climate variability and

ecosystem responses of the LTER sites (Greenland and Swift 1990)

Minimum Standard Installation (MSI) for LTER site data management developed

NSF creates LTER Research Coordinator position at Division of Environmental Biology to encourage LTER cross-site research efforts (Caroline Bledsoe hired)

First comprehensive directory of LTER personnel is compiled by Bob Robbins and Caroline Bledsoe at NSF

1989

NSF conducts national LTER Program review

Coordination grant is awarded to University of Washington-Seattle (Jerry Franklin, PI). LTER Network Office enlarged and established on the University of Washington campus, in the College of Forest Resources.

Network Data Manager is hired and Network-wide electronic mail forwarding system is developed. LTER personnel database from NSF is incorporated.

LTER Technology Committee identifies and recommends technology requirements and criteria to meet primary LTER Network research goals (global change assessment and comparative studies of ecological phenomena and theories). Report is referred to as "Gosz Technology Report" after chair Jim Gosz.

LTER working group develops "Global Change Research Action Plan"

LTER Network electronic bulletin board established at Central Plains Experimental Range site

Network Office hires Program Assistant for meeting and travel coordination (replaced Administrative Assistant position)

First issue, *Databits*, LTER data managers electronic newsletter

LTER-Chinese Ecological Research Network (CERN) exchange/collaboration develops

1990

NSF announces Antarctic LTER site competition, supported by funds from Polar

Programs and Environmental Biology divisions

Network Office hires John Vande Castle as Network Manager and acquisition of satellite imagery and aerial photography for all sites begins

Network Office creates Publications/Public Information Coordinator position

LTER Coordinating Committee develops site data management policy guidelines

LTER Core Data Set Catalog developed and published

Second LTER All Scientists Meeting, Estes Park, CO

LTER Network Office establishes LTER Geographic Information Systems/Remote Sensing Laboratory at University of Washington-Seattle

1991

NSF Antarctic research proposal competition results in addition of new site:

- Palmer Station, Antarctica LTER

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) working group analyzes the status of LTER Network technical supplements and assesses future technical needs (recommends enhanced Internet connectivity, individual site remote sensing capability, annual acquisition of remote sensing data, site archival storage capability, additional GPS units, enhanced site database software capabilities, automated field data collection)

Global Positioning Systems (GPS) units acquired for shared LTER site use and GPS training provided for representatives from all sites

Network Office creates Communications System Analyst position

1992

NSF announces new Antarctic LTER site competition with funds from Polar Programs and Environmental Biology divisions

LTER Coordinating Committee, at the request of NSF, develops an eight-year vision--*LTER 2000*--for the creation of a global environmental research network based upon approaches established in the LTER Program

1993

NSF Antarctic research proposal competition results in addition of new site:

- McMurdo Dry Valleys, Antarctica

NSF commissions 10-Year Review of the LTER Program

Third LTER All Scientists Meeting, Estes Park, CO

International LTER Summit held (Argentina, Brazil, Australia, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, France, Hungary, Mexico, Mongolia, New Zealand, Russia, Taiwan, United Kingdom, and the United States represented)

International LTER (ILTER) Network established, Jerry F. Franklin (U.S. LTER Chair) is elected ILTER Steering Committee Chair

LTER Network Internet (gopher) server established at Network Office

LTER All-Site Bibliography developed and put online in searchable form

LTER Core Data Set Catalog put online in searchable form

LTER Personnel Database put online in searchable form

North Inlet LTER site withdrawn; 18 LTER sites remain in Network

1994

NSF announces a special competition for cross-site comparisons and synthesis at LTER and non-LTER sites and international research awards in response to the 10-year review of the LTER Program. Nine grants ranging from \$109,353 to \$200,000 are awarded to LTER and non-LTER U.S. sites, and sites in Ireland, Scotland, Costa Rica, Argentina and Russia.

NSF announces a special competition for augmentation of LTER projects for regionalization, comprehensive site histories, and increased disciplinary breadth. North Temperate Lakes and Coweeta Hydrologic Laboratory receive awards of \$499,959 and \$498,906, respectively.

LTER Network assesses leadership and governance in response to 10-year review and in preparation for the election of a new Coordinating Committee chair

LTER Publications and Synthesis committees established

LTER Network World Wide Web site established at Network Office

First International LTER (ILTER) Steering Committee meeting, Rothamsted, U.K.

NSF and U.S. Forest Service sign a Memorandum of Agreement to cooperate/collaborate in LTER Program research

NSF and the National Biological Service sign Memorandum of Agreement to cooperate/collaborate in LTER Program research

1995

Coordinating Committee Chair Jerry F. Franklin announces his retirement as Chair after over 12 years of service

James R. Gosz is elected LTER Coordinating Committee Chair

Need for LTER Advisory Board established

International LTER (ILTER) Network expands membership; James R. Gosz elected ILTER Network Committee (formerly Steering Committee) Chair

LTER Executive Committee revises LTER workshop policy

LTER Publications Committee develops plan for publication of Network research syntheses volumes

NSF announces open competition for LTER Network Office cooperative agreement

NSF announces the 1995 special competition for cross-site comparisons and synthesis at LTER and non-LTER sites. Thirteen awards ranging from \$150,000 to \$200,000 are given.

1995 NSF/DOE/NASA/USDA Joint Program Awards, Terrestrial Ecology and Global Change (TECO), are announced. There are seven LTER recipients, including researchers at Bonanza Creek, Cedar Creek, Central Plains, Harvard Forest, H.J. Andrews and

Jornada.

1997

NSF announces special proposal competition for urban LTER sites

March 15: Network Office officially begins operation from new University of New Mexico:

- Robert Waide- P.I.
- John Vande Castle- Co P.I.
- James Brunt- Co P.I.

NSF posts International Programs Officer, Christine French posted at Network Office

NSF proposal competition results in addition of two new sites:

- Phoenix Urban LTER
- Baltimore Urban LTER

NSF announces proposal competition for new Land Margin LTER sites

1998

NSF proposal competition results in addition of new Land Margin Ecological Research (LMER) site: Plum Island Ecosystem LTER

1999

National Advisory Board reviews LTER Network (link to Newsletter article- spring 1999)
LTER Network signs contract to produce Science Synthesis Series with OUP

choolyard LTER Supplements added to LTER grants (\$15k/yr to each site)

Social Science Committee added (link to white paper)

LTER Network and SDSC strengthen bonds by employing joint research staff

NSF Announces special LTER Competition for land margin sites

Tom Callahan passes away

KDI Grant Funded: LTER Network Office/NCEAS/SDSC collaborate on "Knowledge and Distributed Intelligence" <http://nsf.gov/od/lpa/news/press/99/pr9950.htm>)

2000

Three New Coastal Sites Join Network:

- Georgia Coastal Ecosystem
- Florida Coastal Everglades
- Santa Barbara Coastal

LTER and ILTER All Scientists Meeting- Snowbird, Utah (add link to website)
(add link to post-all sci mtng workshops table)

LTER strengthens link with OBFS by employing joint research staff- William Michner

2001

NSF commissions 20-Year-Review of the LTER Network (October, Albuquerque)