

LTER Executive Board (EB) meeting February 2, 2017

Approved: February 28, 2017

Attending: Sherri Johnson-AND, Eric Seabloom-CDR, Michael Gooseff-MCM, WadeSheldon (IM rep), Peter Groffman (Chair), Steven Pennings-GCE, Michelle Mack-BNZ, Dan Reed-SBC, Sally Holbrook-MCR, Anne Giblin-PIE, Frank Davis-NCO; Marty Downs-NCO

Not Attending: Kari O'Connell (EOC rep), Roger Ruess-BNZ, Charles Driscoll-HBR

Notes

1. January Meeting Notes Notes,

- a. Distributed on January 22; approved

2. What is the nature of our network?

In light of the addition of new sites and a de-emphasis on cross-site research by NSF, perhaps we should begin a discussion about the “nature of the LTER network.” Some topics that might be worthy of discussion include:

- The geographic distribution of sites? We note however, that this has never been a key consideration in the selection of LTER sites and was a strong focus of NEON.
- What to get from cross-site studies and what’s missing?
- The upcoming Science Council meeting would be a good time to start this discussion. Groffman could bring this up as part of his “State of the Network” talk?
- To drive the discussion with data, we could do a network analysis to see which sites are publishing with which. Does the LTER National Communications Office (LNCO) have the ability to do that? We note that no supplements are available from NSF this year.
- There was a strong sense that this should be an internal exercise, focused on improving our science and not any kind of advice/communication to NSF that could be interpreted as “meddling.”

3. Governance activities to be taken on by the LNCO

- **Problem:** The EB frequently has agenda items (bylaws, committees, etc) that we never get to. At the same time, NSF support to LNCO regarding governance is limited and needs to be clearly prioritized.
- The LNCO wants to lighten the EB’s load and streamline decision making as much as possible. To that end:
 - i. Marty Downs will take EB notes and distribute minutes.

- ii. LNCO has also launched a google site to gather key documents and agendas.
 - iii. For complex organizational problems, such as bylaws and committee structure, LNCO will gather information and propose a plan for EB to discuss, amend and enact.
 - iv. Clarity about what is an NCO job versus what is an EB or a Committee job is important
 - **Committees** - LNCO launched a committee survey to gather information about who is on committees, what their activities have been, what they need to be more effective, and what needs to be preserved and archived. Based on survey and additional conversations with committee chairs, LNCO will propose a way forward.
 - i. Many committees thought they needed to be bigger and needed to meet annually
 - ii. Concerns: how important is full site representation on committees?
- SC Chair compensation update: Bylaws say 2-6 months compensation for chair. During Groffman's tenure, it dropped from 2 months to 6 weeks and it is unclear if it will continue at all.

- PG reports a positive conversation with NSF program Officer John Schade, who regrets the current situation and will try to find support to maintain at least 1 month of support during transition. Probably ending coincident with end of current NCO funding model (October 2019)
- **Concerns:** This information should be transparent to those who stand for election as new chair. It's critical to clarify whether it's a compensated position or not.
- **Suggestion:** Could we fix an amount rather than a set period of time? Would improve NSF's ability to plan.

4. Mini-symposium update

- Speakers are confirmed, see <https://lternet.edu/node/84404>
- Posters are under development in collaboration with Marty
- Panel will be scientist-only. Given the Federal government transitions, it would be difficult for agency personnel to participate.
- Invitations will go out soon
- Practice session scheduled for: March 7

5. 2017 Science Council Meeting

- Theme is disturbance in the context of long-term science. Planning Committee is Frank Davis, Evelyn Gaiser, Michael Nelson, Gary Lovett.
- Draft agenda for discussion is on the EB drive
- What type of high impact product could we produce? Last year's meeting led to an effort to develop "stories" on what long-term research tells us

about where ecosystems are going that is coming along nicely -- aiming to publish in Ecosphere.

- Must include: EB business meeting, PI meeting, field trip, site updates, but how can we best leverage the time together?
- Aiming toward synthesis papers, in addition to inspiration for new synthesis groups. To that end, committee is recruiting short plenary talks from key synthesizers.
- **Important Note:** Tuesday EB meeting will start in the afternoon--not first thing in the morning. May be able to travel Tuesday morning.

6. Update on Environmental Data Initiative (EDI)

- 2 sites -- (BNZ and ARC) got pushback from NSF because PASTA data policy is not compatible with Arctic Data Center (PASTA data policy is more restrictive.) Working to extend PASTA to accommodate an alternative data use agreement.
 - i. Need to revise LTER data use policy -- no longer compatible with NSF data use policy, which requires data be redistributable, no strings, after 1 year.
- Pre-planning underway for the April data management and archiving discussion with EDI, NCO, DataONE, LTER.
 - i. Funds from a prior EAGER award will help fund this workshop.
 - ii. Includes a broad landscape discussion, as well as more formal plans for disposition of databases -- climate database, etc. -- currently in caretaker mode at LNCO which is not funded for these activities.
 - iii. Currently there are additional May use \$ for a broader meeting -- then conclude with a more on the ground discussion
 - iv.
- **Concern:** how does the IM community feel about all this?
 - i. Some pulling back has already been observed. What's needed is a clear pathway for interaction (both for IMs and EB). That should be should be one product of the April meeting.
 - ii. Hearing from IM's: having an IM in-person meeting was a big deal - - should we make a serious effort to support a meeting? Informal plan is to have an IM meeting with ESIP in Bloomington, but it's not clear how many will/can attend.
- ~~IM's have shared site review criteria~~ [Revised (3/8/2017 via communication from Krisitin Vanderbilt - IM Executive Committee is discussing revised IMS guidelines, including revised data access policy.)]
 - i. **Note:** Data policy that's online (2005) still points to James Brunt

7. Items for next month

- Workshop on synergies between LTER and NEON -- questions
- Science council planning discussion
- Meeting to talk with NSF about renewal proposals