

Approved Meeting Notes - LTER Executive Board

December 20, 2017

Attending:

Name	Present	Absent
Peter Groffman (chair)	x	
David Foster (HFR)	x	
Michael Gooseff (MCM)	x	
Sally Holbrook (MCR)		x
Steve Pennings-GCE		x
Dan Reed (SBC)	x	
Michelle Mack/Roger Ruess (BNZ)		x
Eric Seabloom/Sarah Hobbie (CDR)	x	
Katie Suding (NWT)	x	
Jess Zimmerman (LUQ)	x	
Kari O'Connell (EOC-rep)	x	
Wade Sheldon (IMC-rep)	x	
Frank Davis (NCO)	x	
Marty Downs (NCO)	x	
Corinna Gries (EDI)	x	

Previous Meeting minutes: approved

Current Discussion Items

Sexual Harassment Policies (10 minutes)

Background: Following on the harassment allegations in the [Marchant case](#), which happened at McMurdo Station (not McMurdo LTER), NSF requested that the NCO gather information from each site on their sexual harassment policies. NSF is considering how to improve the guidance they give to field stations and universities, based (in part) on that information. Unless and until there is some new guidance, they recommend contacting the Title 9 officer of the responsible university. Sites can help by making that information more visible on their websites and in their onboarding process.

Discussion: There is also a petition circulating to request that NSF take on the role of investigator and reporter for field stations. The motivation for this is that most title 9 rules are written in the context of campus and laboratory settings and doing a full investigation at a remote location involving multiple institutions is beyond the capacity of most individual university title 9 offices.

Mike Gooseff has been asked to sign and does not intend to. He would favor starting a dialog with NSF about what can reasonably be done. Gooseff also noted that he is a new member on the polar research board at the National Academies and that there may be some opportunities to make recommendations through that avenue and related relationships.

Outcomes: Some suggestions emerged for things that could be done in the short-term:

- Ensure (to the extent possible) that institutions require participants to take any existing sexual harassment trainings.
- Share ideas across sites for preventative/proactive training and communications at the sites.
- In addition to end of year surveys, consider doing shorter surveys along the way in order to maintain communications and nip any potential problems in the bud.

Mike Gooseff, Marty Downs, and Frank Davis volunteered to form a working group that could bring a few key recommendations to the Executive Board.

Science Council Meeting

Background:

- Date: May 15-18 at NTL
- A theme was proposed at 2017 Science Council: Land Cover/Land Use Change, moving on from core biophysical themes to include core SES themes.
- But we don't yet have an organizing committee and we discussed many possible changes to the structure of the meeting (bringing data, setting up working groups before the meeting, defining who the "second" should be), but didn't decide whether there were any specific suggestions we wanted to try to implement.

Discussion:

- Peter Groffman thinks we have not covered all 5 original core areas, i.e., we have not covered organic matter, which no one could recall covering. Marty Downs will verify that is true.
- Could we bring more students and postdocs? It would improve leadership development and would engage more junior scientists in the synthesis process, which might speed the time to products.
 - We have a limited budget and not much room to change the composition of attendees. Some sites need to commit their second person to someone who will be stepping into leadership -- whether or not they have expertise in the theme topic.
 - Perhaps we could identify just one or two who have an a priori interest in the theme area? Yes, that might be feasible, but how would we choose them?

- Do we need to revisit what our expectations are for synthesis? Many products so far have been fairly general. Is that the most we can hope for? Is an annual cycle too quick? Should we allow more time?
- Did we do a post-meeting evaluation last year? No. That would be valuable.
- If the theme is Movement of Organic Matter, it would be great to get someone who was involved in some of the long-term organic matter-related experiments (DIRT, LIDET) to take a role on the organizing committee. Peter Groffman will reach out to Kate Lajtha.
- Could we ask people to bring data? Possibly ask people from different domains, e.g. Emily Stanley could recommend someone working on carbon manipulation in lakes; Chris Craft is doing lots of coastal carbon work; Jim McClelland from BLE is doing marine carbon cycling.
- What about coupling between the Science Council meeting and the and the All Scientists' Meeting?
- The history of our current structure goes back to a statement that Steve Carpenter made at one of the Science Council meetings, that "all we do at these meetings is business." The current approach gives us a chance to share and discuss science. So the question really is: is the current approach serving the purpose?
- We can also ask -- are we giving short shrift to the business in this model?
- Do we need more or less time in the program for interactions with the NSF Program Officers?
- Do we need to allow more time for PI discussions, e.g., how we really run our sites? This would likely be particularly useful for the new sites.

Outcome: Let's do a (very short) PI survey the next discussion.

Nominating Committee for Executive Board Chair

The ideal makeup will be senior people who have been substantial contributors to the the community, since they are harder to refuse. Several names came up, Peter Groffman will approach them.

Committee updates:

Environmental Data Initiative (Corinna Gries):

- EDI had a big presence at the American Geophysical Union meeting, including participating in 2 symposia, staffing an exhibition booth and volunteering at ESIP data help desk.
- EDI proposed a lightning session at Ecological Society of America meeting on "What's keeping you from archiving your data?"
- Having discussions with journal publishers on how they can help people get credit for publishing data.
- EDI has been told that we should apply for refunding through the maintenance track at Biological Infrastructure.
 - Do you know if it's a new competition or a renewal? It's not 100% clear but seems like a renewal.

- Maybe the Network Communications Office can get some information at the upcoming site review.
- EDI is offering three summer internships -- based at sites but coordinated through EDI. EDI received 19 project proposals from sites who want to host an intern.

Network Communications Office (Marty Downs and Frank Davis):

Informational updates

- [Synthesis Working group webinars](#) launch January 11
- International DCL submitted, [link to final document](#)
- Web site review (1 minutes)
 - View the new site (in progress) at lter.ndic.com
 - user login: dev
 - pass: ndicdev
 - Feedback - email to downs@nceas.ucsb.edu or (preferred) via [googledoc](#)
- Mid-term site review January 16 and 17

Discussion:

- Has the NCO heard anything about their plans for a renewal?
 - We think they will go with an open call for proposals. We'll let you know when we know.
- If the NCO gets on a routine where it's a competitive proposal every 5 years -- is that a good idea?
 - There's a lot of effort that goes into transition. The NCO will share our 2-year assessment with the Executive Board.
- At least the renewing grant process would work OK for for the NCO (as opposed to EDI).
- In the past, the network office proposal was always open to other competition; there just wasn't much.
- Clarification: it was cooperative agreement.

Information Management Committee (Wade Sheldon):

- Working with EDI on plans to fine tune data metrics
- Working on common approaches for meeting the NSF mandates for renewal data reporting.
- There was some concern about lack of information on bibliography, personnel updates, climDB

Education and Outreach Committee (Kari O'Connell)

- The Committee meets monthly and is starting to have lots of conversations about the All Scientists' Meeting, including some discussion of art-science collaboration
- Undergraduate REU working group has been active, looking at the possibility of a cross-site REU
- Committee is reaching out to data management people about bringing data to the K-12 classroom.

To hold for next month:

A group at Texas A&M, led by Brad Wilcox, applied in the recent competition and was not successful there, but ultimately raised its own funding. They would like to know, could they have some affiliation with the LTER Network?

First question, what does NSF think about this? Frank Davis and Marty Downs will inquire at upcoming reverse site visit.