<u>**Meeting Notes - LTER Executive Board**</u>

February 2, 2018

Approved at LTER Executive Board Meeting March 6, 2018

Attending:

Name	Present	Absent
Peter Groffman (chair)	x	
David Foster (HFR)	x	
Michael Gooseff (MCM)	x	
Sally Holbrook (MCR)	x	
Steve Pennings-GCE		
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: not yet prepared -- circulated for email approval

Current Discussion Items

1) "Affiliate" Site Status

the board continued the discussion from January on the possibility of creating an official "affiliate" site status, posed by Bradford Wilcox at Texas A&M University.

- One important question is: how sustained is the commitment from the university?
- Frank Davis has raised the issue with the NSF LTER Working group and they will discuss it at next week's meeting.
- Everyone is welcome to come to the All Scientists' Meeting and to contribute data to the information management system -- with or without any official status.
- Travel funds from the Network Communications Office are reserved for NSF-funded sites.
- Brad Wilcox, PI of the site in question, thinks that the formal Network "seal of approval," would help reassure university administrators of the value and support of the Network.

- This site is fairly straightforward, but others will not be as clear-cut. Levels of funding and quality of research will differ. Do we want to be in the position of having to review (and reject) sites?
- How would it work?
    - We would have to amend the bylaws, then, presumably, the Executive Board would have to review applications and renewal applications.
    - We could ask for a brief proposal or project description including information such as what they are doing, how they contribute to the Network, how their research informs the five core themes.
    - A (hypothetical) amendment to the bylaws would look something like: If sites would like to affiliate with the Network, we would welcome it and would require A-B-C. Approved sites would receive D-E-F.
- Is there a precedent?
- Are there specific requirements for being an LTER site? For example: publish your data, have a data manager, attend the science council meeting, etc. Could we go through a checklist?
- We don't know where this will lead. It could get very awkward. NSF will certainly be interested in having a say.
- We can't be seen as conferring NSF approval.
- Membership in the LTER Network always been defined as having NSF funding. Other sites can collaborate; they can say they are modeling their program based on the LTER program; but they aren't LTER sites unless they have NSF funding.
- ILTER is one place where you can say we have a set of associated sites. Except, they aren't associated with us, we (as a network) are associated with them. ILTER is actually an example of something a site can't do without affiliating with the LTER Network. ILTER is a network of country-based networks, so right now, sites can't join ILTER without being a U.S. LTER site.

2) NSF LTER Symposium Update
- The theme is Understanding our Ocean Connections through Long-Term Ecological Research.
- Date is April 19.
- Speakers are: Deron Burkepile (MCR), Kyle Cavanaugh (SBC), Evelyn Gaiser (FCE), Merryl Alber (GCE), Susanne Menden-Deuer (NES), Bill Fraser (PAL)
- A flyer is circulating and a web page is up. Please invite potentially interested colleagues, especially those in the Washington DC area.

3) Science Council Meeting Planning

Context: The Network has been working on introducing more science to the annual science council meeting and focusing on a different core themes each year.
- Based on earlier discussion we are finalizing a steering committee of people working on organic matter in different ecosystems.
- One output from the 2016 meeting is the LTER stories project which Peter Groffman is leading. Peter asked each site to write a short description of some exciting biological change that LTER research illuminates. An editorial team is

organizing them into 5 themes and assembling them into articles. Peter is expecting to have complete drafts submitted by May.

- As we charge the science council steering committee, does the Executive Board have any thoughts about what we want the sites to do? Should we ask them to bring data? Do homework?
  - The ideas come out of the discussion. It's hard to come in with too much prepared when we don't know what it is we want to bake yet.
- Have we ever done a poster session so that people could walk around and discuss what's happening? It would allow for more discussion and interaction.
  - It would be hard to do if everyone is standing at their poster.
  - There are ways to organize it.
- We could at least organize the presentations by kinds of sites or types of disturbance rather than alphabetical.
- The survey that was done earlier this year suggested that we should allocate some time for a "strategic planning" discussion. The steering committee will be made aware of this.

All Scientists' Meeting Update

- Planning Committee is meeting and has confirmed several plenary speakers.
- Does the Executive Board have any advice to offer the planning committee on:
  - priorities for workshops
  - how to generate the best workshop proposals
  - whether there are specific scientific themes we might want to jump start?
  - Do we want to require sites to include information managers and education and outreach managers? Yes.

Reports

- Environmental Data Initiative
  - EDI met with NSF Program Officers in January. Overall, NSF seemed fairly happy.
  - EDI also held an advisory board meeting in January. They received a long report back, which Corinna Gries is happy to share.
  - One significant issue came up. EDI is running two data portals into the data repository -- one branded as LTER and one as EDI It doesn't matter which one you use, the data goes to the same place. The advisory committee felt strongly that it wasn't necessary to maintain both portals. The EB and the IM committee needs to discuss this at a future meeting.
  - EDI did hear that they should apply to the Advances in Biological Informatics sustainability track for continuing funds.
  - Presumably, that wouldn't preclude going somewhere else for development funds.
  - EDI has gotten some feedback from NSF Division of Biological Infrastructure Program Officer Peter McCartney that he would like to see more of a train-the-trainer model, more like a research coordination network.

- Information Management Committee
    - The information managers have been working with Marty Downs on a review of the website publications library, looking at choices and possibilities for updating publications and providing site updates.
    - For sites that are submitting renewals, information managers shared approaches to providing the required data reports.
    - The Committee is discussing topics for the All Scientists' Meeting.

- Education/Outreach Committee
    - The Committee has focused a lot of attention on planning for the All Scientists' Meeting.
    - Alan Berkowitz initiated a conversation with Environmental Data Initiative staff about working together on making datasets useful for K-12 educators.
    - The Committee has been discussing how to allocate their governance funds, possibly by adding value to the All Scientists' Meeting by bringing in outside people.