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### **Coordinating Committee Meeting, Santa Barbara, California, October, 1997**

Long Term Ecological Research Network

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## MINUTES

### LONG-TERM ECOLOGICAL RESEARCH PROGRAM Fall 1997 Coordinating Committee Meeting

The Upham Hotel  
Santa Barbara, California  
October 24-25, 1997

#### CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Jim Gosz called the meeting to order on Friday, October 24, 1997, at 8:00 a.m.

#### PRESENT

Bruce Hayden (NSF), Charles Redman (CAP), Nancy Grimm (CAP), James Brunt (NWO), Mike Willig (LUQ), Jeff Zimmerman (LUQ), Doug Schaffer (LUQ) Andrew Clark (PAL) Roberta Marinelli (NSF), Robin Ross (PAL), Louise Williams (NWO), Steward Pickett (BAL), Eric Taylor (Canada), Laura Huenneke (JRN), Patricia Sprott (NWO), Robert Parmenter (SEV), Robert Waide (NWO), Terry Chapin (BNZ), Glenn Juday (BNZ), John Hobbie (ARC), David Foster (HFR), Ray Smith (PAL), Karen Baker (PAL), John Porter (VCR), Gus Shaver (NSF), Phil Robertson (KBS), Dave Coleman (CWT), Morgan Grove (BAL), Art McKee (AND), Tim Kratz (NTL), Stuart Gage (KBS), David Greenland (AND), Scott Collins (NSF), John Briggs (KNZ), Alan Knapp (KNZ), Tim Seastedt (NWT), Tim Fahey (HBR), Johannes Knopps (CDR), Jerry Franklin (AND), Mark Harmon (AND), Bruce Wallace (CWT), Emma Rossi (CWT), Diane Hope (CAP), Bill Fraser (PAL), Andrew Fountain (MCM), Berry Lyons (MCM), John Magnuson (NTL), Jingo Woo (CAP), Dave Karl (PAL), Tim Foreman (BAL), Langdon Quetin (PAL), Maria Vernet (PAL).

**HOST:** Ray Smith (PAL)

**GUEST:** John Helly (SDSC)

#### I. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION REPORT

Bruce Hayden reported that we are coming out of a period of zero increments in funding. It is not clear that we will go back to a \$20,000 increment, so we must find alternate ways of incrementing ourselves. Bruce spoke about the responsibilities of the PIs for obtaining increments in funding.

The LTER Network has a strong presence at NSF with Bruce Hayden, Scott Collins, Gus Shaver and Tom Frost. If we wish to obtain continued funding for the ecological community, we must maintain that presence, which means somebody must be willing to go to Washington and make that happen. Bruce Hayden will be replaced in one year, and we are hoping it will be by another LTER person.

The FY 98 budget, which was put together before Bruce arrived in Washington, is already obligated. Some funds are obligated to KDI (Knowledge and Distributive Intelligence). There is money in KDI for LTER and ILTER. KDI is a big program, and if we can get funding

to the field biology community, it should stay there. There is also funding in the FY 98 budget for LEXEN (Life In Extreme Environments). The LTER FY98 budget includes support for new coastal sites. There is potential funding for cross-site work as well as international and biodiversity support.

## **II. DATA ACCESSIBILITY**

John Briggs led a discussion on data accessibility. This topic was discussed at the data managers' meeting in Albuquerque in August 1997 in an attempt to formulate a data accessibility policy for the LTER Network sites.

NSF has started to evaluate sites on the basis of data accessibility. Thus, the LTER Network has an opportunity to provide input as to how we want the data to be accessed. By becoming proactive in this process, LTER can assume a leadership role in the ecological and scientific communities.

We will implement the data policy that was established in 1990 with modifications. Four data types will be collapsed into two types: data that are freely available with little or no restrictions within two to three years after collection, and exceptional data that are available only with written permission from the Principal Investigator.

The floor was opened for discussion. It was moved and seconded that the data recommendations that were previously e-mailed to the lead PIs be adopted. Following discussion, the motion passed by a vote of eighteen to one. One PI was absent.

## **III. REPORT ON NETWORK OFFICE PRIORITIES**

Bob Waide reported on the progress that has been made in moving the Network Office from Seattle to Albuquerque. He introduced the Network Office personnel who were present and described their responsibilities. He reported on the status of current personnel searches and plans for future Network Office staff.

The network server has been transferred from Seattle to Albuquerque. Equipment purchases and installation of the new information and communication system is progressing well. After the new equipment has been installed, the first priority will be to update the network databases, i.e., the personnel directory, and transfer them to MS SQL.

The LTER website will be completely reconstructed to bring it up to current standards and ensure that all of the links are functional.

We want to devise an accounting system for the site contributions to the LTER Network to ensure that people receive credit for participating in Network activities.

Another major area of emphasis is working with the site information managers to develop a Network Information System, adopt metadata standards and even out technological expertise across sites, since some sites are more technologically advanced. Information managers will rotate through the Network Office on a short-term basis.

The Network Office will prepare a grant proposal for the KDI initiative. There will be a series of new initiatives for cross-site studies.

There will be "some scientists" meetings, as opposed to "all scientists" meetings, i.e., meetings based on core areas or particular research questions, which will hopefully lead to more cross-site studies.

The Network Office has been requested to develop a list of intersite research projects to assist in proposal preparation. It will also do a survey of population biology at LTER sites.

The Network Office wants to assist new sites in becoming integrated as quickly as possible, as well as develop interaction with and service to other agencies, i.e., OBFS.

#### **IV. SIZE OF LTER NETWORK**

Jim Gosz led a discussion on how the LTER Network should grow. There are presently 20 sites in the network, and there will soon be 22 sites. It was suggested that additional urban sites could be added.

Increasing the size of the LTER Network raises a variety of issues, from governance to communication and financial. An increase in size will affect the kinds of meetings we have, i.e., the number of people who attend meetings dictates where the meetings can be held. Becoming a large-scale network could also change the kinds of scientific goals we can accomplish. We need to think through the process of becoming large so that we will be able to manage the growth process.

The Executive Committee has recommended that we revisit the Risser Report regarding size and the manner in which the network grows. The Risser Report suggested that there could be a network of at least 50 sites, with perhaps satellite sites. We must decide what it is that we want to increase, and we must develop ideas on ways in which science can be done better at the network level. Do we add components to individual sites or do we add sites to the network?

The Executive Committee has also recommended that we charge the new national advisory board that will be chaired by Paul Risser with not only reviewing the Network Office, but also reviewing the network effort in LTER. This advisory board was designed to be an independent body that will provide guidance to NSF as well as to the Network Office.

The Network Office will create a web page for discussions on developing fundamental directions and visions for the LTER program. Suggestions will be compiled to give feedback to the PIs as to how the LTER program should grow. This issue will be revisited at the spring 1998 meeting.

#### **V. ALL SCIENTIST MEETING – 2000**

NSF has suggested that funds will be available to hold an All-Scientist meeting in 2000 with broad representation across the scientific community and not just the LTER community. Scott Collins suggested that the meeting be held at a location where other people can attend and that we consider conducting concurrent sessions.

The Y2K All Scientist meeting will be a major effort, and we need to start planning for it now. We need to choose a theme for the meeting. There was discussion about the Y2K meetings that ESA and the British Ecological Society are planning and the possibility of collaborating with one of those organizations.

Bob Parmenter will chair the planning committee for the LTER Y2K All Scientist meeting. Bob will give a progress report at the Spring 1998 Coordinating Committee meeting.

## **VI. PUBLICATIONS**

Dave Coleman, Chair of the Publications Committee, reported on the status of the Oxford University Press synthesis volumes. The other members of the Publications Committee are David Foster, Alan Knapp, Phil Robertson and John Magnuson. The Publications Committee met in Albuquerque on August 11, 1997, and spoke to Kurt Jensen, of Oxford University Press.

There was a discussion about the quality of the graphics in the Oxford volumes and that authors are responsible for their graphics. Patty Sprott, Publications Specialist at the Network Office, is prepared to assist authors with producing high-quality camera-ready graphics.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

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The meeting was reconvened on Saturday, October 25, 1997, at 12:00 noon

## **VII. INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS**

Christine French, of NSF, who is on a two-year sabbatical at the Network Office, reported on international long-term ecological research interactions.

NSF provided funding for 18 Asian students and young investigators from Japan, Mongolia and Taiwan to visit the U.S. in August 1997. They attended the annual ESA meeting in Albuquerque and visited the Sevilleta LTER site south of Albuquerque. Some of them also visited Andrews Experimental Forest in Oregon and North Temperate Lakes in Wisconsin.

A reciprocal trip for approximately twelve US graduate students and two faculty escorts to Taiwan, Japan and China is planned for June 1998.

The 1997 International LTER Network meeting will be held in Taiwan in November. Approximately 20 countries will be represented at that meeting.

The third Latin American LTER regional meeting was held in Brazil in June 1997. Their next meeting will be held in Venezuela in April 1998. A data managers' workshop will be held in conjunction with this meeting.

The next International LTER meeting and symposium will be held in conjunction with the INTECOL Congress in Florence, Italy, in July 1998.

Noon recess, 12:30-1:30 p.m.

### **VIII. GRADUATE STUDENTS COMMITTEE**

Emma Rossi reported that approximately 40 people attended the Graduate Student Committee meeting in August 1997 that was held in Albuquerque in conjunction with the ESA meeting. Representatives from seven LTER sites made presentations.

It was suggested that LTER sponsor Graduate Student Committee meetings in conjunction with the annual meetings of other organizations, i.e., NABS. It is important for graduate students to meet people from other sites because such interaction could result in future cross-site research initiatives.

### **IX. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS ECOLOGICAL EFFECTS**

Glen Juday volunteered to coordinate a work group to follow up on the theme of the 1997 LTER All Scientist meeting. This group will identify possible products, i.e., journal articles, and identify key contributors to produce publications.

There was discussion about the presenters submitting half-page abstracts for inclusion in a possible future web page about Climate Change and Its Ecological Effects. Jim Gosz commented that it is important for the LTER Network to demonstrate its achievements.

### **X. INTERNATIONAL ISSUES**

A motion made and seconded that the US LTER Network accept an invitation to join GTOS (Global Terrestrial Observance System). The motion passed unanimously.

There was discussion about whether the LTER Network should provide support for the GTOS Secretariat. It was moved and seconded that Jim Gosz be authorized to negotiate the possible support of GTOS Secretariat activities by the LTER Network Office. The motion passed unanimously.

### **XI. SPECIAL SESSIONS AT ESA**

The LTER Special Session that was held in Albuquerque in August 1997 in conjunction with the ESA meeting was very well received. LTER has been asked to sponsor another special session in conjunction with the 1998 ESA meeting to be held in Baltimore in August. The theme of this special session will be Urban Ecosystems.

### **XII. NATIONAL NETWORK OF INDEX SITES**

Jim Gosz and representatives from five LTER sites attended a meeting of the National Network of Index Sites October 16-17 in Laurel, Maryland. The focal point of the meeting was the research component of the National Network of Monitoring and Research Sites. This effort is supported by Vice President Gore and involves three layers: 1) survey and monitoring; 2) remote sensing; and 3) research. This group is working to identify potential index sites that will become part of the National Network.

### **XIII. EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

There was discussion about whether LTER should have a Standing Committee on Education. A motion was made and seconded that LTER establish a Standing Committee on Education. The motion carried unanimously. Jim Gosz will identify potential nominees to be members of this committee.

### **XIV. TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE**

LTER has a Standing Committee on Technology, but it has not been active in recent years. This committee needs to be rejuvenated because we may have opportunities to build technology into the LTER Network, i.e., a center that focuses on building technological solutions to ecological problems.

There was discussion about who should be on the Technology Committee. John Vande Castle, of the Network Office, was identified as a potential key member. Stewart Gage and John Porter volunteered to be on the committee. It was suggested that the Network Office develop a web page for the Technology Committee.

### **XV. DATA MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

John Porter reported on the annual LTER Data Managers' meeting that was held in Albuquerque in August. The meeting focused on developing a Network Information System and the evolution of cross-site research capabilities for datasets.

### **XVI. CLIMATE COMMITTEE**

David Greenland reported that URL has been created at [www.lternet.edu/im/climate/climdes](http://www.lternet.edu/im/climate/climdes) that contains comparable cross-site information on the LTER sites as well as a CLIMDES database that covers 1957-91.

The Climate Committee met at the Sevilleta LTER site October 2-5, 1997. The report of this meeting is posted at [www.geog.unc.edu/~greenland/CLIMSTAN.html/Default.htm](http://www.geog.unc.edu/~greenland/CLIMSTAN.html/Default.htm). Representatives from five sites attended an Archaeoclimatology workshop in Santa Barbara in August.

### **XVII. NEW DATASETS FOR THE NETWORK INFORMATION SYSTEM**

Jim Gosz led a discussion on suggestions for a dataset that will be the next major focus of intersite activity. A consensus was reached that nitrogen dynamics would be an important area to focus on. Jim Gosz will work with the Network Office data manager and other data managers to determine the accessibility of nitrogen deposition/dynamics data across sites.

### **XVIII. RECRUITING MINORITIES, 50/50 BY 2020**

Jim Gosz mentioned that NSF sponsored a recent workshop on the goal of attaining a 50/50 male/female ratio within the scientific community at the PI level by the year 2020. There was discussion of ways of tracking LTER's progress in reaching this goal, i.e., counting the number of males and females in past and current personnel directories. It was suggested that the Network Office could perform a clearinghouse function on the availability of positions to assist in recruiting more female and minority applicants.

## **IXX. FUTURE COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

There was a discussion about when the new sites will begin to host meetings. Representatives from Phoenix and Baltimore stated that they will host meetings at their sites after 2000.

The Spring 1998 Coordinating Committee meeting will be held in Fort Collins, Colorado, April 23-24, 1998. The next All Scientist meeting will be held October 16-17, 1998, in Madison, Wisconsin. The theme is "Interactions Between Ecological Systems and Society."

It was moved and seconded that the October 1999 meeting be changed from Puerto Rico to Hubbard Brooke, New Hampshire. The motion was amended to change the April 1999 meeting from Sevilleta, New Mexico, to Puerto Rico. The amendment was seconded and passed unanimously, and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.