

To: LTER Program Directors

May 29, 1986

From: Jerry Franklin

Subject: LTER CC Meeting

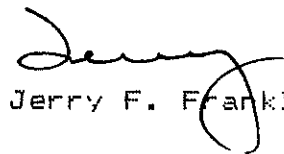
Enclosed is letter Pat Webber sent me following the Minnesota meeting. It expresses concern about the treatment of Conley's proposal and suggests that a more formal scheme for the meetings would be desirable and reduce the probability of problems in the future.

There is no question that our group was blindsided on this particular topic and that it was my fault. The background on why I invited Walt to be there is beside the point: I did not appreciate how controversial the topic was going to be primarily because I did not appreciate how much support Conley was going to be requesting. Had I realized the scale and complexity of the issue I would have approached it differently and not in a fishbowl. It was made more difficult by fact that we had quite a few visitors present.

In any case, I solicit your suggestions on (1) how to proceed on the Conley issue and (2) whether you would like to see more formality in the LTER CC meetings. Specifically, do you think that we should adopt Pat's proposals or do you have other suggestions to make on meeting procedures?

On another topic, I am going to be needing your input on material for a supplement to the existing grant if NSF buys our proposal. ~~What~~ do you want to see in the budget in the way of workshops and other activities? Please be thinking about this: the least I am going to have to do is to get on the phone with each of you and the most may be a one-day meeting at an airport somewhere.

Sincerely yours,


Jerry F. Franklin

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO, BOULDER

Institute of Arctic and Alpine Research
Campus Box 450 • Boulder, CO 80309-0450
(303) 492-6387



May 7, 1986

Dr. Jerry Franklin
Forestry Sciences Lab
3200 SW Jefferson Way
Corvallis, OR 97331

Dear Jerry:

Even after a week, I am still reeling from the unsatisfactory ending to the LTER/CC discussion on how to support and develop central data management. The course of the discussion caught me by surprise since I was largely unaware of the background to the issue until the discussion was over.

I believe we all realize that Walt Conley received unfair treatment at the meeting. I also believe that the underlying cause for this unfairness was the lack of information and background, and also the discomfort of having observers and guests present when frank discussions were needed.

It was clear at the Cedar Creek meeting that this tough issue had many sides and much of what was said was "thinking out loud" and, thus, easily misconstrued as opinion or commitment rather than the exploration or definition of the issue.

I suggest that we could go a long way to avoid these difficulties in the future if our coordination meetings were to have more formality and structure. This suggestion may become all the more valid as the network expands to include more sites.

I suggest that in future meetings at which more than the eleven P.I.'s or their representatives are present, we start with an executive session to review the agenda and to anticipate any likely controversial issues. Then we continue with an open meeting in which votes or consensus should only be sought if no P.I. wishes to delay a decision to executive session. Finally, we should end each coordination meeting with an executive session to review and finalize all decisions. This suggestion may all seem rather procrustean or even melodramatic, but it, in my opinion, would go a long way to avoiding a repeat of our last embarrassment and would lead to smoother decision making.

Dr. Jerry Franklin

-2-

May 7, 1986

Feel free to share this letter and its suggestions with our colleagues. Perhaps these suggestions should be an item for discussion at our next meeting.

None of the above is meant as a criticism of your leadership. On the contrary, you are doing an excellent job and I hope you will be able to continue for the next year until it is convenient for Walt Whitford to succeed you.

My best wishes for the balance of your sabbatical and with your metamorphosis to the new job at the University of Washington.

An outline of your synthesis volume would be much appreciated. Please keep me up to speed with the Rocky Mountain pulse plans.

My highest regards,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pat." with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Patrick J. Webber
Professor

PJW/ma



THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGY, ATHENS, GEORGIA 30602 PHONE (404) 542-3310

June 23, 1986

Dr. Jerry F. Franklin
Forest Resources Laboratory
Oregon State University
Corvallis, OR 97330

Dear Jerry:

This is in reply to your May 29 communication concerning our treatment of Walt Conley (pretty rough, considering the circumstances) and Pat Webber's suggestions arising from the incident. First, I don't fault you in any way; normal codes of courteous demeanor should prevail in all circumstances, surprising or not. Unfortunately, this is an ungentle age we live in, where normative good taste, deportment and consideration for others are often violated. We should have been able to discuss the issue with Conley present without becoming insulting to him, in my opinion. Rather than becoming overly formalized, however, I still prefer open, informal meetings. If ticklish issues arise with protagonists present, they and other visitors can be asked to leave; but I would still prefer never to have to do this. I suggest a short admonition to all to avoid profanity, banality and other courtesy-eroding practices in our interactions, and to be mindful of deportment and the feelings of others. I would reserve stronger approaches for the future.

You also queried us concerning the next CC proposal, or its deferral. I have communicated (copy enclosed) my ideas to Tom Callahan for introducing a stronger systems approach into LTER-2. In planning for the next coordinating grant, my suggestions should be taken into account. Opinions from you, Tom, and the other PI's and scientists would be welcome.

Sincerely,

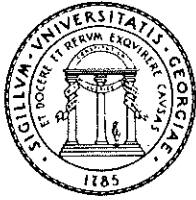
Bernie.

Bernard C. Patten
Regent's Professor of Zoology

BCP:td

Enclosure

Sent to CC 7-23-86 js



THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGY, ATHENS, GEORGIA 30602 PHONE (404) 542-3310

June 23, 1986

Dr. James T. Callahan
Ecosystem Studies Program
Division of Biotic Systems and
Resources
U.S. National Science Foundation
Washington, D.C. 20550

Dear Tom:

I am writing this during a relatively refractory week in Spain following six weeks of intense non LTER proposal preparation, following an earlier similar six weeks for the LTER proposal. The proposal efforts have immersed my brain in LTER-related considerations, which prompts this letter, a copy of which will go to Jerry Franklin for him to consider as he thinks about preparing the next LTER/CC proposal.

I have sounded off in past CC meetings about systems needs in LTER. My main points are: (1) the need for systems ecology perspectives, formalisms, etc. is great; (2) most PI's and scientists are "microscopic" in training, viewpoint and methods; and (3) the means to overcome (2) and begin to achieve (1) exists in systems theory, but this needs to be brought into the program. The time may be ripening to attempt this during LTER-2.

Therefore, by virtue of interest in furthering ecosystem science and being a good citizen in the LTER community, and with no need on my part for further work or obligations, I would like to suggest that a program something like the following be undertaken during LTER-2:

Phase 1. I and an assistant will present a one-week, intensive course in systems ecology (emphasizing principles, concepts, methodological imperatives, etc.) to each site over a 2-3 year period. This course will parallel one that I have given here (Spain) for five or six years, and last year at the University of Puerto Rico. It is very successful. All site scientists must attend. Provisions will be made to hear and possibly integrate other views (e.g., Dave Tilman has some inchoate systems perspectives in the Cedar Creek program).

Phase 2. Within 6-12 months of each short course, I and my modeling group, plus site modelers, will conduct site specific conceptual modeling workshops, two sessions of one week each, for the purpose of constructing working conceptual models in the general systems theory idiom of the ecosystem(s) at each site. To cover all present

Dr. James T. Callahan
June 23, 1986
Page Two

sites would take 33 weeks, which might be too intensive for a 48 month remaining LTER-2 period; adjustments can be made, obviously.

Phase 1 would be designed to yield a common intersite conceptual basis within which to view each site, beginning with my own perspectives as introduced in the course, but to become amalgamated with others through the workshop give-and-take of Phase 2. Products from Phase 2 would include the conceptual models produced, representing syntheses of workshop proceedings. These would be available to guide intra-and intersite research, and to assist in formatting data banks and other data management activities. Each site model would subsequently evolve as new results became available.

The main goals of this program would be (1) to achieve a working systems ecology overview of all sites that would promote consistency and meaningful cooperation, especially at upper hierarchical levels, but still enhance individualistic, site specific characteristics, viewpoints and operating modes; (2) prepare for explicit long term systems themes to be researched program-wide during LTER-3, (3) present an organized face to the outside world and potential critics, and (4) provide an explicit means to extend LTER leadership to lter's by making the same Phase 1 and Phase 2 program accessible to them.

A danger might be becoming too overorganized or narrowed in perspectives as a result of this program. I would have to be a magician to achieve this, however, given the breadth and strengths of personalities represented by the PI's and other scientists, and the natural diversity of the LTER sites and programs. In fact, the selective forces that exist mean that my material in Phase 1, and the Phase 2 workshops, will have to be pretty compelling to survive beyond the first few sites attempted. Subjecting myself to such natural selection I would consider to go with the territory, and I am willing to risk the consequences in the name of LTER's success and leadership as an innovative program.

If this idea (it is not yet a proposal) meets with yours, Jerry's and perhaps the other PI's approvals, I would be willing to prepare a proposal to the CC after receiving some feedback. If you (they, we) feel we don't want this, or are not yet ready for it, fine. I feel impelled to offer it at the present time, however, in response to my own opinion about what the program needs. Your response to the suggestion would be valued.

Sincerely,

Bernard C. Patten
Regent's Professor of Zoology

cc: Jerry Franklin

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY
Box 3AF/Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003
Telephone (505) 646-3611



July 23, 1986

Dr. Jerry Franklin
Forestry Sciences Lab
3200 SW Jefferson Way
Corvallis, OR 97331

Dear Jerry:

My apologies for not answering your letter and responding to the Weber letter earlier. As you undoubtedly know we had a site review that cost me a chunk of my vacation and I am only now getting through the pile of correspondence accumulated during June and early July.

As you probably know, I was placed in a very uncomfortable position at the Minnesota meeting. The Jornada advisory committee had just 3 weeks earlier told us that we had to resolve the personnel problems stemming from W. Conley's inflexibility and inability to work with the rest of the Jornada LTER. Over the first 4 years of our project, Conley had spent slightly more than 1/3 of the resources on data management and wanted more!! I had many things that should have been discussed at that meeting with reference to Conley's proposal to the LTER Coordinating Committee but was not in a position to do so. I like Pat Weber's suggestion that one P.I. or representative from each site meet in an executive session both before and after our meetings. That structure will allow us to better represent the feelings and sense of the coordinating committee without having the feeling of being overwhelmed by several reps from one site as sometimes happens. Anyhow, I would vote to have our deliberations a bit more formal.

With respect to a supplement to the current coordinating committee grant, I would suggest a request for the following: (a) one data managers workshop of 3 days duration, (b) three topic workshops with a specific focus on a conceptual paper or synthesis paper as a product - I think we must insist on a publishable product from future large workshops, (c) some funds for 1 or 2 investigator cross site comparisons, and (d) two executive coordinating committee meetings.

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY
Box 3AF/Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003
Telephone (505) 646-3611



Dr. Jerry Franklin
July 23, 1986
page 2

Finally, I think that the pressure from Callahan to fund Conley's workbench was and is inappropriate. As the Jornada P.I.'s try to sort out what he has done to our data management, the more we realize our project was mis-managed. If W. Conley were capable of interacting with a variety of people, his proposal might be worthy of more consideration. However, I know that this was not the case at the meteorological workshop in January and certainly not the case with his colleagues at NMSU. Successful workshops require personal interactions as well as computers and software.

I hope my comments are of use to you. I need to talk to you about dead wood and look forward to our session in Syracuse. We have some new ideas about dead wood in arid and semi-arid systems that may surprise you.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'W.G. Whitford'.

W.G. Whitford
Jornada P.I.

WGW/rrp



THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
DEPARTMENT OF ENTOMOLOGY
ATHENS, GEORGIA 30602
U.S.A.

July 31, 1986

404-542-2816

Dr. Jerry Franklin
Forest Resources Laboratory
Oregon State University
Corvallis, OR 97330

Dear Jerry:

Maybe I had better express an opinion regarding the Pat Webber letter and suggestion about coordinating committee meetings. I am not too crazy about committee meetings; I view them as a necessary evil in my life. I prefer that the chairman (you) do all the work and the rest of us just endorse it. With you this works fine; with Marzolf it didn't. Who is coming next?

So, as your style is open and informal, keep it that way. We can do business with Webber in his way, when he gets to be chairman.

Fitzgerald wasn't really clear about what was going on with Conley. Thus, I really don't have any comments about it.

I do have a comment about Bernie's offer. I am sure that it is made in the best of faith and in the spirit of LTER, but it is not a good idea. Most of us would benefit from three weeks with Bernie and his crew. However, I am sure that I couldn't pull it off. People at Coweeta either know Bernie's approach (Ragsdale, Waide, Webster) or don't especially value it (most of the rest). Bernie's abrasive personality doesn't help. I suspect that most sites are in the same shape. Most PI's are fairly mature scientists who have been funded on their research approaches. Those approaches aren't likely to change as a result of Bernie's workshops. His requirement that "all scientists must attend" is not enforceable. Those who would really benefit probably wouldn't show up. Three weeks out of your research or administration doesn't sound appealing to me.

As I recall there was a three-day workshop last year to pull together theoretical aspects from all sites. Has there been any publication or other result from that?

Perhaps a three-day workshop for modelers would be of value. Could we offer that to Bernie as a counter-offer?

Hey, is any of this helpful? See you in Syracuse?

Yours,

D. A. Crossley, Jr.
Research Professor

DAC/sls

cc: Wayne T. Swank

TO: LTER PROGRAM DIRECTORS

9/11/86

FROM: JERRY FRANKLIN

SUBJECT: LTER NEWSLETTER

I had no sooner completed preparation of the supplemental request for an additional year of support of the LTER/CC for \$60,000 than I got a phone call from John Brooks and Tom Callahan. Their purpose in calling was to urge us to consider initiating an LTER newsletter. The suggestion seems to be one with considerable merit so I would like to lay it out for you to think about prior to our meeting in Denver.

The basic concept is an 8 page newsletter with, perhaps, two issues during the first year (1987). NSF has had experience with a similar newsletter and found that a letter of this size can be produced under contract, from essentially draft material to ready for mailing, for about \$1500 for a run of 1000 copies. Editors would have to be selected but Tom would like to be a contributing editor. John suggested that we have a contest to select a name for the newsletter and logo.

A forum is the basic concept of the newsletter, i.e., any class of appropriate communication. The content would be flexible but might include the following: lead scientific article (publication in the newsletter should not create a problem in regular publication); LTER site news (every site contributing something to every issue); NSF column; short, speculative notes; a technical question-and-answer column; LTER/CC notes; a calendar of upcoming workshops or other LTER events; a positions wanted/positions available section; a list of recent LTER publications; short reviews of key publications (LTER or otherwise); and opinions.

It appears that we will have to cover the cost of the newsletter out of the supplemental money that we are going to be getting but Tom didn't ask that I redo either the proposal or the budget to reflect this. I suspect it will cost us at least \$5,000 plus a substantial amount of Judy Brennehan's time. When you see the supplemental proposal you should read it with that in mind. The proposal has been signed and should, incidentally, be going into NSF this week. With the time constraints that we had I went ahead and put it together on my own and hope that you will find it acceptable. The number and subject of the workshops are, incidentally, not locked in despite what the proposal says; with the newsletter I rather suspect that we are just going to have money for one major workshop in 1987 so it ought to be a good one. And it ought to be one that will produce an open-literature report.

You are all reminded about our plans for meetings in Denver on

November 8 and 9. We expect only one person per site excepting CSU who volunteered two for the briefing subcommittee. It has been sometime since we have seen a couple of you PI's. The November 8 daytime meeting will be to begin planning the next briefing in Washington, DC; WHITFORD is chairing that session and WOODMANSEE, LAUENROTH, PATTEN and FRANKLIN agreed to serve as his committee although any others with interest are encouraged to participate. The regular LTER/CC meeting will begin on Saturday evening so that we can complete our business by early afternoon on Sunday (November 9); this should allow the easterners to get back home that evening.

Please submit your agenda items for the November meeting and advise Judy of your travel plans as soon as possible so that she can arrange the accommodations.

Copies of the supplemental proposal will be sent you under separate cover.

cc: Callahan

Judy

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY
Box 3AF/Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003
Telephone (505) 646-3611



30 September 1986

Dr. Jerry Franklin
Forestry Sciences Lab.
3200 Jefferson
Corvallis, OR 97331

Dear Jerry:

Re: Agenda Items

I have one item for our November meeting, Subject: LTER Sponsored workshops. I have attended several workshops either as the primary participant or an additional site participant. These workshops have covered topics such as: soil biota, woody debris, taxonomic problems, and most recently a herbivory workshop.

The workshop formats have varied considerably as has the relative success. Workshops that were too informal failed for a lack of focus. Workshops that were too formal failed because they were like symposia with little in the way of synthesis other than that offered in the formal presentations. I think that it would be useful for the LTER CC to develop some helpful guidelines for organizing and conducting workshops. These guidelines would address everything from the nature of question(s) to be addressed, what is to be expected of participants, balance between formal presentations and discussion, how to maintain focus of a workshop, and mechanics of recording proceedings and developing a manuscript(s) based on the workshop.

In each workshop that I have attended I felt there was some worth but felt that for most there was no closure ie. no product or synthesis that really would be of use to the eleven LTER sites. I think a written summary must be the end product of any workshop if only for the use of the eleven or so LTER sites but could be useful to the lter sites as well. If the LTER is to continue to sponsor workshops, I really think that there should be a requirement that the workshop produce a written (preferably publishable) summary. In the most recent workshop that I attended the post-formal session discussion drifted. There was no charge given to the participant for the development of some summary synthesis or overview of the workshop. I fear that many of the excellent ideas discussed in that workshop will, by fragmentation, be lost except for some modification of the thinking of some of the participants in their own work. In that workshop in particular I was convinced that there were several ideas

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY

Box 3AF/Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003

Telephone (505) 646-3611



Page 2

W. G. Whitford

9/30/86

that were testable by data already in hand at several of the sites. If we had offered some firm guidelines and requirements for the organizers, the greater LTER might have a good synthesis paper and the potential for further collaborative work outlined and/or published.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'W. G. Whitford'.

W. G. Whitford

WGW/amj



Center for Limnology
University of Wisconsin

August 8, 1986

Dr. Jerry Franklin
Forest Resources Laboratory
Oregon State University
Corvallis, OR 97330

Dear Jerry:

Somewhat belatedly, we're writing you in response to your call for comments/suggestions following the LTER-CC meeting in Minneapolis last Spring. In the time since the meeting we've had opportunity to talk about the Conley proposal with Walt, and have seen the correspondence from Pat Weber and Bernie Patton. It strikes us that there are really two issues at stake, one being how to proceed during LTER-CC meetings over controversial matters such as arose over Conley's proposal, and the other being the proper response to the Conley proposal.

Regarding the procedural matter, we're sympathetic with the suggestions of Pat Weber in that the matter needed both advance distribution of materials, and a discussion of LTER laundry matters within the confines of a LTER (not "lter") group. Clearly some of the reaction to the situation involving Walt Conley could not have been anticipated, and judging from past experience with the meeting evoked different and unpredictable reactions from various members of the committee. One of us (Carl) was reminded of the infamous meeting at Hobcaw several years ago when the "new" LTER sites joined the original six for the first time.

Perhaps one way to reduce the difficulties that arose during the meeting is to follow Pat's suggestion and hold a pre-meeting session with one member from each LTER site, and to decide at that meeting how to proceed with any controversial matters. Another might be to decide to delay some critical decisions for a couple of weeks following the CC meetings, giving each site an opportunity to respond in letter following a chance to talk the issue over with each of their respective sites. In a way, that is the procedure you are using here. While not condoning the general principle of delaying decisions, some of these matters may require more review and might be more comfortable for individual site representatives if they were to have a chance to talk it over with their groups (or other sites). We strongly believe that the LTER-CC should proceed on a concensus basis. Binding votes that require home institutions to do certain things or make certain expenditures would in our view make the CC a very unfriendly and uncooperative group. We also believe the LTER-CC should behave in a permissive and supportive way rather than in a repressive or restrictive way.

J. Franklin
August 8, 1986
page 2


Regarding how to proceed with the Conley request, we're concerned along several lines. Walt definitely considers himself out of the LTER project at Jornada, and is proceeding along different lines to gain support for his Science Workbench project. One of us (Carl) has been communicating with Walt over future possible directions for supporting his work with the Science Workbench, but much of it is still being discussed, and, thus, it's too early to talk about where it is going. He definitely plans to continue with the concept, and the LTER project would stand to benefit greatly from what's accomplished. We support a close relation with LTER-CC and what Walt seems to be developing.

The future for intersite data management within LTER is much more of direct concern (somehow we should come up with a term that's less perjorative in people's minds). Walt has clearly been a leader among the data management group, and his loss will be sorely felt!! What future directions the data management group will take is conjectural at this point, but intersite exchange of data and convergence toward systems capable of data communication seem to be the most important. There is a divergence of opinion among the sites as to how acute such needs are, and whether data management activities of the sort Walt proposed are needed. We agree that some sort of capabilities along the lines Walt has outlined are needed, and would like to see some or most of the sites participate in such activities.

Certainly you should not feel responsible because of the way the meeting turned out at Minneapolis. Your efforts to support the data management have been vigorous, and we feel (as we believe you do) that the data management group has helped to provide LTER with some of it's greatest successes as well as visibility. We feel very committed to this active group, and wish to see it continue to receive strong CC support. We are also pleased with the positive and supportive remarks of NSF to the activities of the data management group.

It is not clear to us whether Walt has the resources to move forward with only modest help from LTER-CC. He may need to obtain funding of a major nature before any further work can proceed. The working model he has been developing will be useful to us in the future regardless.

Sincerely,


John Magnuson


Carl Bowser

P.S. - We assume that the next data management meeting will be postponed to meet with the altered schedule of the workshops on remote sensing now scheduled for January.

October 31, 1986

MEMO TO: LTER-Coordinating Committee

FROM: Jerry F. Franklin

SUBJECT: Denver Meeting

Just a short note to make sure that all of you are aware that NSF is sending three representatives to our November 8-9 meeting in Denver. Tom Callahan has indicated that there is no special significance to this, but we should all be prepared to jump through a few hoops.

See you next weekend.

jb