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To Whom It May Concern:

Re: The community-driven BiG CZ software system for integration and analysis of bio- and geoscience data in the critical zone

I am writing to express my strong support for the above-mentioned Scientific Software Integration program proposal by Aufdenkampe et al. Software is as important to 21st Century science as telescopes were in the 19th Century and particle accelerators in the 20th. However, most scientists are still never taught how to design, build, maintain, validate, and share software productively. In our experience, the mixed delivery model included in this proposal, which combines an introduction to common-core skills with more targeted training in domain-specific material, is the most effective way for researchers to learn what they need to know as efficiently as possible.

Software Carpentry will therefore work with the proposers to deliver a series of intensive workshops on software skills for research scientists throughout the lifetime of the project. More specifically, we commit to teaching the “common core” of task automation, version control, structured program development, and software testing over two days, four times or more during two years, and to accommodate 20 or more learners per workshop. We will arrange the instructors and supply all the open source software and open license learning materials required; the only cost to the project will be the instructors' travel and accommodation.

I believe that projects like this one will not only advance our understanding of the Earth's Critical Zone, but also serve as an exemplar for scientists in other domains. I look forward to helping them accomplish their goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gregory V. Wilson".

Dr. Gregory V. Wilson

Project Lead, Software Carpentry