LTER

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IM Exec Winter meeting 2009-01-26/27

Fri, 01/09/2009 - 1:10pm — mobrien [1]

Monday Jan 26 0800 - 1700, Tue Jan 27 0800-1400 @ UNM Albuquerque
logistics: lodging: Hyatt Uptown

Monday, 1/26 - CERIA Bldg Room 360
7:25 Rapid Ride from uptown Hyatt to UNM

8:00-8:30 Breakfast and Agenda Review CERIA Bldg Room 360
bagels with egg, ham and chilis

8:30 – 10:00 short Reports from Working Group and on Network Activities

(1) Report on Genomics metadata standards (San Gil)
See 1 page handout. Outlines 3 points.
No metadata standard used by this community (metadata structure). They don't need CV or defined tags. Genomically centered tags; no environmental tags. Each experiment is very specific and uses it's own standard.
Scientist from MBL working with LTER sites sequencing water samples (Microbial Inventory Research Across Diverse Aquatic Long Term Ecological Research -- MIRADA). She has not yet interacted with LTER IM; it would be good for the participating sites to interact with this project IM. Should this genomics project incorporate EML? Should they have an LTER identity? How should the LTER IMs become involved in this project. They are using LTER water sampling data in conjunction with their sequences; are they really considered LTER? No LTER funding, directly. What will happen with these sequences once they are developed?
What are their LTER needs? To connect genomic data to environmental data and to connect genomic data to current taxonomic scheme. Can we use an EML cross-walk to connect data from various communities. We need to identify what they need to connect together. Who in the LTER is working with genomic data. Maybe develop a use-case or pilot study.

(2) Report on EcoTRENDS (Servilla)

Nothing to report. No change since 2008. The site is still being withheld from public viewing. It's being maintained in its current state.

(3) Report on GIS Server (Kaplan)

See Nicole's report. There is work going on in the GIS area and there's a community working on this (Theresa V, Nicole, John C (new CWT IM), Barry).
There was a remote sensing group called by the EB and they had no idea that the GIS

community or data existed.

Workshop at CAP to happen regarding GIS/remote sensing data; object oriented classification system; image analysis system. Non-pixel based results.

There are lots of GIS/remote sensing projects going on within LTER and they seem to be very disjunct. We need to let all these groups know that the other groups exist.

(4) Unit Dictionary (Ackerman)

Met via VTC last Thursday. Status is that things are moving along. Tasks are being checked off. Still need to review draft document of "Best Practices". By April, they will pass this doc on to the 9 sites who agreed to review. All units are in the unit dictionary and searchable. These sites will review their units.

Still one main question about "BP" doc; will it be stand alone or how will it exist? This still needs to get flushed out. Design of unit registry schema (PAL, CCE) in parallel with UD development. Goal is to have a demo of the UD query application and web service by ASM. It would probably be harder to get PIs involved in a workshop about "UD". We do need more input from a wider and more knowledgeable group.

Is it possible to develop an interface that scientists could use to map from their unit, their abbreviation, their representation to accepted standard EML. This is a way to get PIs more interested.

(5) EML best practices (Margaret)

We need to have a citable document rather than a Drupal (editable) document. Therefore, we need to maintain a version. There are plans to put an HTML version on the Drupal page. This will be non-editable, but will allow comments.

(6) Report on LNO activities (Brunt)

Still waiting to hear about funding. The new proposal included 15% increase, but may need to be recalculated for year 1 budget cuts.

Mark Servilla is currently working on three different projects and budgeted 1 month a year on each project. Duane is funded more highly on these projects. This commitment will remain for a couple of years. If LNOs funding looks better, they may be able to buy back some of that time. Personnel database is still in migration. Drupal being moved to LDAP. Marsh has other projects to work on so his time is limited on LNO activities. Some change in NBII scope of work. They want fewer site visits. Ingio will decrease his time for site activities. If there are cross scope projects for LNO and NBII, then Ingio may be able to contribute some time. Drupal work is till continuing. Some funding being scraped for video technology; short clips for training, technology, etc. IMs should give some feedback about the utility of this type of technology.

(7) Migration of ClimDB/HydroDB (Brunt, Servilla, Remillard)

Trying to mirror the system at the Andrews at LNO. Once set up, we will test and run from LNO servers.

(8) Report on EB (Gries)

Met on Jan 22. John Briggs (KNZ) and Barbara Bond (AND) are new elected NISAC scientists members (replacing Deb Peters and Alan Knapp).

Updates:

NSF budget will come out next week or so. Hopefully the full funding will be restored to the sites that got renewed. Hopeful for increases in DEB. Hoping for stimulus package. Therefore, it's time to be prepared for this on slot of funding. Flat funding for LTER budget is still around in spite all of this.

ASM: Plenary have been decided and guests invited. Still no request for proposal. Perhaps it will be coming out soon.

LTAR (long-term agriculture research), USDA: Planning grant proposal requests. May mirror LTER.

Three key NSF position being recruited; if sites have any recommendations, send them on.

Ad-hoc committee to review LTER remote sensing archive. They are proposing a standing committee to pursue this. They don't think that all data should be at LNO. But rather, there should be a clearing house at LNO on what is available, its format, how to obtain it, and any historic information. Also recommend collecting good LANSAT 5 images for every site; an annotated subset of what is available. This will take a person to go through and catalog what is out there.

NEON will fly every year and get high spectral data. Maybe they can cover all LTER sites. This all needs to be incorporated into the CI strategic plan. NEON will work with LTER and will actively solicit input. They will need to develop a new design document. This will go out for comment once completed.

NEON is talking to LTER about EML (although no one from LTER is aware of this).

SC meeting in San Diego (CCE) in mid-May. Subject should include climate change. Looking for new chairperson (so far, no volunteers).

Next meeting will be at mini-symposium at NSF at end of February; Connectivity theme.

(9) Report on NISAC activities (Sheldon)

Two IMs rotated off (new: Kristin & John P). Deb Peters & Alan Knapp rotated off. Discussion of process; EB would be incharge of selecting, but NISAC would send recommendations. They selected John Briggs & Barbara Bond. They were approved by EB in December.

Roles of IM and Science co-chairs were defined (this all changed in 2007). Wade is laison between IMs and EB. Big turn-over in membership and leadership.

Other main projects include:

Provide guidance to LNO to site review data access server

EML production by site. There's a need for better metrics for site EML progress. How to represent productivity of sites to EML standards.

EcoTrends work is status quo, but there is potential interest in developing new capabilities. Proposals in development to pursue this interest.

ChemDB development in conjunction with ClimDB/HydroDB. NISAC is still in the information gathering stage on this project. Is it suited for ClimDB/HydroDB or better suited for EcoTrends.

Data Access Issues - as already heavily discussed.

LTER Core Areas was discussed.

CI Implementation Plan - not much has happened this fall, but there are plans to move ahead. Identified specific tasks and components. Meeting at LNO on March 3rd. It's been hard to engage domain scientists because they don't feel that CI is within their realm of knowledge. Need to discover new innovated ways to get PI input. Will try to engage people with structure and function rather than CI.

Committee includes 4 IMs (Wade, Linda, Kristin, John), 5 scientists, and a group from LNO.

(10) CI Survey (Vande Castle)

No report at this time.

10:00 Break

10:15-11:45 Data Access

(11) Server/Module Demo (Servilla and Sheldon)

See Mark's PowerPoint presentation.

Data access server concept started about 2 years ago. To help IM and sites to comply with LTER

data access policy (CC 2005).

(12) Discussion of Data Access Issues at the sites and Network, and in existing review criteria
Communication with EB and NSF on Data Access Issues (Gries) & Update IM review criteria
(Corinna)
See http://intranet.lternet.edu/im/im_requirements/webdesing_recommendations... [2]
John Campbell will incorporate the new criteria into a PDF, Corinna will send this back to EB, then
it should be sent out to IM group.

11:45 – 1:00 Lunch out
Frontier Restaurant. And Todd ate 3 tacos!

1:00 – 2:00 conference call with Peter McCartney
Update from Peter:
Re-evaluation of strategies to improve long-term infrastructure.
New division director for DBI in early Spring. Nobody has been named yet, but they will likely be
sensitive to these issues.
New Informatics position, similar to Peter's, open. It's been realized that this position is so diverse
that there's a need. This will be a more molecular/cellular person to compliment Peter's
ecosystem scale perspective.
New assistant director at OCI. Sensitive to diversity that OCI needs to undertake. Peter is on the
coordinating committee for this group. This group has been involved with the observing networks.
Identify opportunities that will benefit the whole community so that if a stimulus package is
released, multiple programs can be accommodated. Stimulus news has mentioned
"infrastructure". How can OCI facilitate the development of infrastructure?
Program level updates:
ABI is the new DBI. removes the emphasis on databases. Thinking more about sustainability,
interoperability, and renewable. Will invest in grants that take ideas to a new level, a new
direction, or reach a new community; rather than renewals and continued support. Large increase
in proposals this past year and no increase in program funds.
Field Stations receive the same flat funding. There will be some changes to field station funding in
the coming year; these changes are currently being described by NSF. Would like more thinking
in how FS can inter operate. For example, can wireless systems accommodate radio collar
transmitted? As science moves to a more regional direction, isolated FS can move to more
interoperability in collecting data. This is one way in which FS can grow, since facility growth is
out of the question.
Marshal Peterson is leaving NEON and a new director of computing (Robert Tawa) has been
hired this week. Dave Schimel is the science lead. NEON still working through preliminary
reviews. It's still far off.

Q: Is there a NEON review document timeline?
A: They're working on a schedule that will have preliminary design ready by summer or fall next
year. There are other non-public scheduled reviews outside of the NSF review. However, there's
no CI posted on the NEON web page; this would help the LTER coordinate with the NEON sites.

Peter mentioned an NSF award 1.5 years ago about genome data that cross-walks with
biodiversity. Interested parties should try to contact this group.

2:00 - 3:00 Finish morning tasks

3:00 Break

3:00 – 4:00 Planning ASM workshops and IMC09 Agenda
These ideas were distilled from the VTC notes, as ones that could be pursued by the IMC. Some have already been proposed by IMC members, and possible (but unconfirmed) sponsors are included in parenthesis.

1. GIS (Theresa)
2. Data processing user groups? (margaret to investigate interest in):
    1. matlab (margaret, wade)
    2. SAS (??)
    3. R (??)
3. Data ownership|authorship|access|provenance (Corinna)
4. Lessons from data synthesis projects (Karen?, Nicole?)
5. QC and Sensor networks (Barbara Benson?, Barbara Bond? Suzanne)
6. Dictionary process for keywords and units?? (Todd, John Porter)

See VTC notes: http://intranet.lternet.edu/im/node/388 [3]

IMC Specific Workshops

1. Controlled Vocabulary
2. Unit Dictionary
3. IMC governance

4:00 – 5:00 writing of workshop proposals

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7:25 Rapid Ride from Uptown Hyatt to UNM

8:00-8:30 Breakfast and Agenda Review
croissants like pastry filled with sausage, potatoes, and chilis.

8:30 – 10:00 Governance practices and organizational structure (Kaplan)
Report on Progress
Development of community decision-making and membership resources to be presented at IMC09
See PowerPoint with governance working group charge and proposed information we are coordinating for the committee and a DRAFT Spreadsheet that will help the community to inventory important milestones through time from. This inventory is in a spreadsheet where records are categozied in a hierarchy to describe an event or meeting, the entities involved and the attributes of the event or meeting. We hope this format will serve as a foundation for an IM History Database or searchable record of how IM efforts have evolved, and as a log for for the future. Some IMs have already contributed information in different forms and each with their own expertise and memory of events. However we will be soliciting more review and information from the entire community in the coming weeks.
We reviewed the documents proposed to help guide roles and responsibilites of committee members, and discussed past issues that we would like to address in our handbook. We discussed the need to define how we come to consensus and avenues of how people can get their voices heard. Nicole would like to have a document/handbook by ASM in September for review by IMC.

10:00 Break

10:15 - 11:00 Prepare for VTC with Henry Gholz

11:00 – 11:45 VTC with Henry & Todd
*Note: Hap and John had to leave early, due to canceled and rescheduled flights, and could not participate in the conference call. However, they did provide input in the preparation session.

Update from Henry & Todd:
No budget yet; still on FY09 continuing resolution. Still operating under all constraints from previous FY08 reductions. FY10 budget is in discussion on the hill. Economic stimulus package is being discussed in the house. Hoping to see something by mid-February.
IMEXEC is concerned about the funding situation and how it affects the LNO and the staff responsibilities and projects toward network wide projects. NSF understands this concern. If money is restored on FY09 budget, then top priority would be to restore funding to the 5 renewed sites and LNO.

ULTRAS -- in the planning phase. IMEXEC was wondering what the effect on the increased number of IMs would be on the LTER IMC. Will our annual meetings increase in size? It's too early to know the impact of the IM development in the ULTRAS. These are exploratory grants to see a larger potential community. There is no connection between these exploratory grants and actual projects.

LTAR (now called LTAP) -- Long term agricultural program (USDA). They have an exploratory grant in progress. They would like to follow the LTER model of a network. They would like to be integrative with LTER. The scope of vision is very similar to LTER. It is exciting that the LTER is so successful that these other groups want to emulate it.

NEON is talking about using and extending EML. Things will be moving quickly within the next few months. Their website has been recently updated. NEON has a lot of resources. Large collaboration workshop in Tucson in April and will discuss data sharing. If LTER is interested in going, it is encouraged.

2009 Review Schedule (early June - late November) - James has the schedule and will share it with the IMEXEC.

IMEXEC report:
Data Access -- we've edited web criteria and web site guidelines; Henry will be able to review this as soon as it goes through EB. Henry stated that the emphasis should be on functionality, not necessarily on looks. However, he did imply the similarity across sites would be important in the next review cycle where 9 sites would be reviewed in unison. These are short-term solutions. There are still long-term solutions like data access server, unit dictionary, controlled vocabulary.

All of this data access issues came from the review committees. It's been eye-opening for both site scientists, site IMs, and across the network. However, there is still a chain of responsibility issue. We've been thinking about an ASM workshop on this issue; perhaps a panel discussion. We would like to include Henry. Todd encouraged that we include other folks doing similar things and get a broader perspective. We had been thinking about this but weren't sure what our limitations were on inviting folks outside of LTER. Henry encouraged passing ideas through Bob Waide, especially if we felt that an outside person would benefit the discussion.

Governance -- We're moving forward on describing the governance of our IMC.

EML 2.1 is soon to be released. Major changes were to improve function to the authors. There were some structure and schema modifications. It's become more modular. Includes transformation tools to convert from previous version.

Network wide activities -- monthly VTCs within IMC community. This seems to be successful in disseminating knowledge and it makes our annual meeting more focused. It encourages collaboration between IMs. The main focus has been to move the network wide projects forward (working groups).

ProjectDB -- development of a network wide database to describes projects that are occurring at the sites. Includes extension of EML to accommodate this. We had a workshop to develop use-cases and will have another workshop to do the actual programming.

Henry asked about the Interopt and Data Net projects and how they collaborate with LTER. Margaret and Corinna are both involved in projects that are just getting off the ground.

Henry and Todd support the activities that the IMC is doing. They will assist in what way they can.

12:00 – 1:00 Lunch out
Kai's Chinese restaurant

1:00 – 3:00 Draft Outline for Annual IMC report to EB

Meeting Notes [4]

Please contact us with questions, comments, or for technical assistance regarding this web site.

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