Virtual Update Notes August 3 & 4, 2009 - LNO Update

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Fri, 07/31/2009 - 5:29pm — sremillard

Participants:
Monday (8/3): James Brunt (moderator, LNO), Corinna Gries (CAP), Barbara Benson (NTL), Dave Balsiger (NTL), Don Henshaw (AND), Duane Costa (LNO), Gastil-Buhl (MCR), Jason Downing (BNZ), Suzanne Remillard (AND), John Campbell (HBR), Eda Melendez (LUQ), Emery Boose (HFR), Hap Garritt (PIE), Mark Servilla (LNO)

Tuesday(8/4): James Brunt (moderator, LNO), Ken Ramsey (JRN), Wade Sheldon (GCE), Margaret O'Brien (SBC)Nicole Kaplan (SGS), Sven Bohm (KBS), Duane Costa (LNO), Karen Baker (PAL, CCE), Dan Bahauddin (CDR)

Monday Notes:
by Emery Boose

See power point on IM website for additional details.

Update on LNO activities. Recent discussion in EB on how to evaluate LNO. This presentation will be organized around LNO review milestones.

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LNO evaluations will now be based on calendar year. LNO activities in future will be reported by calendar year.

Five major activities: (1) synthesis, (2) CI goals, (3) network governance & operations, (4) information flow, and (5) collaborations with other networks.

(1) Synthesis. Develop and populate a database of synthesis projects and products. How will synthetic data products be handled? To be determined.

(2) CI goals. Off to a partial start this year. Revise Intranet content management system. See prototype website for next version of Intranet (http://intranet2. lternet.edu [1]). Comments welcome.

Management and operations decision on ClimDB/HydroDB. Functional copy at LNO now. Need to complete mirror function and decide on final plan.

Conduct a web-based informational activity on LNO CI services. Probably a biannual event, using new equipment for web casting.

Complete a schedule for biannual cybersecurity webcasts for scientists. Start with the list of topics from the workshop last year.

Purchase rich-media recorders with ARRA funds for live or on-demand webcasts.

NIS development. Complete operational plan for NIS development using ARRA funds. Test & evaluate three major PASTA components (see below). Who will contribute to the operational plan? Not certain, but probably develop at LNO with review by EB, NISAC, and IMC. Plan will include all activities in current proposal plus additional details.

How does this plan relate to the CI implementation plan that NISAC is developing? LNO activities are a subset of the NISAC plan. NISAC plan has not been issued (still a work in progress, lots to be done).

Governance issues need to be considered. How will NIS issues be vetted by NISAC? Ideally such issues should be vetted on an annual basis. NISAC developed a procedure for approving NIS modules in 2004, but this procedure was not followed for EcoTrends.

A better governance structure would help. NSF could have funded LNO without requesting an operational plan. Projects should have an operational plan to be vetted by NISAC. But operational plans are difficult in the absence of adequate funding and clear science goals.

Three Pasta components will be tested and evaluated: data identification & loading, data caching, and testing & integration of workflow engines. Includes data manager library.

Implement operational redundancy for EcoTrends and Data Catalog web applications. Backup systems that can be called up in less than an hour.

Decouple LTER data catalog from Metacat skins. This coupling currently limits development.

Virtualization at LNO. Assign services to individual machines. Then virtualize machines and (to some extent) reassemble. A full virtual system may be realizable. However Metacat and its search components are resource hogs and may be better served with dedicated systems.

Fill new staff positions to support NIS. Junior programmer and interns. Coordinating with UNM on what interns are. Data manager for curation and management of NIS databases as they are built. Junior web designer to work on NIS front end, etc. In process of developing job descriptions and postings. Suggestions welcome.

Inigo will continue cooperative work with NBII. Productive cooperation to date.

Assess current and future LTER CI needs to support ISSE. Network survey by John Vande Castle. Should survey remain the same over time to facilitate comparisons? Discuss at ASM.

(3) Network governance & operations. EB meets in person 2-3 times per year, NISAC 2 times per year.

Provide NSF with requested materials for 30-year review. Complete cooperative agreement, annual report, annual reports to EB (ideally, with new Intranet).

(4) Improve information flow within LTER and between LTER and others. Schedule meetings for strategic communication plan (Michener, McOwiti).

Redesign of LTER network display has been completed.

Develop schedule of training activities for 2010. IMC has much to contribute. Funding for two training activities per year. Includes pay for instructors. LNO will provide place and travel funds. Might be located elsewhere if needed. LNO needs prioritized list from IMC ASAP.

(5) Collaborations with other networks. Advise EB of promising opportunities with other networks (e.g. ULTRA). Organize workshop to provide information to Ultra-X projects for science and CI coordination. Ultra sites may become LTER sites or constitute a co-network.

Does IMC want to take initiative on the CI component? Perhaps led by IMs also associated with Ultra sites?

Exploratory Ultra grants are only 2 years. Proposals required 1-page IM plan. Not clear how much could be achieved in this time frame. Ultra IM plans were reportedly rather weak.

James to share a new list of milestones for 2010 in January. The activities discussed today will be used to evaluate LNO this year. Some items are already completed.

This list arose from an EB need to evaluate LNO performance. Milestones were based on proposals. Shifted to calendar year because of different grant periods. LNO hopes that the milestones will prove useful and reusable.

LNO site reviews scheduled for years 2, 3, 4 over the 6-year grant.

ARRA = American reinvestment and recovery act. Economic stimulus act. UNM will handle reporting requirements.

ARRA funded the part of the LNO proposal not otherwise covered by NSF. Earlier funding covered basic operations without COL increase. Second proposal focused on the non-funded items and was funded through ARRA.

ClimDB/HydroDB metadata is not currently in EML format. On wish list for future, plus other items. Maybe implement ChemDB with ARRA funds? Discuss at ASM.

Increased funding at LNO may lead to greater scrutiny. Additional highly visible and successful activities will help. Need to actively promote transparency.

Different agencies handled ARRA funding differently. LNO had a submitted and partially funded proposal. NSF was looking to spend the money. This was not a new proposal. It had received good reviews at NSF but NSF was unable to fund at the time of submission. The LNO proposal was not revised, only minor wording changes required for the ARRA program.

Tuesday Notes (by Duane Costa)
In attendance:Karen Baker, Dan Bahauddin, James Brunt, Duane Costa, Nicole Kaplan, Margaret O'Brien, Wade Sheldon

James: The working performance criteria covered here are for calendar year 2009.

James: A draft version of the new LTER content management framework is available at http://intranet2.lternet.edu [1].

Wade: With regard to "Conduct and evaluate a web-based informational activity on LNO CI services", who will the audience be? It may not really be suitable for an IM audience.

James: I see it as a scaled-down version of Databits, limited to a page of highlights intended for graduate students and researchers.

Wade: We do need to make scientists aware of the depth of LNO activity beyond just scheduling meetings. You may want to solicit input from the IM community about what issues to focus on.

Wade: With regard to cybersecurity webcasts, what would the average LTER participant gain from that discussion?

James: It would provide an awareness of the type of security information that we collect; also, information about security at meetings.

Nicole: There should be IM involvement in the evaluation and testing of PASTA components. IMs have a lot of experience with that, particularly with the back-end PASTA components, through their involvement in cross-site work and Ecotrends. Are you planning to bring a working group together to involve the

IMs, at the IM meeting are some other venue? The involvement should be hands-on and in-person.

James: IM review is included as a milestone in the implementation plan. We see this starting out as an in-house evaluation. For this first step we are very limited on time. We are looking at how the pieces will fit together; whether to use a Java framework, for example. This will be used to inform the implementation plan. We will get input from the IMs at the ASM. The implementation itself will include a lot more IM involvement.

Karen: What is the distinction between PASTA readiness and EML readiness?

James: PASTA readiness is another stage of EML readiness. PASTA readiness involves finding problems with the data – can it be successfully ingested into the data cache? Is the data consistent with the EML metadata that describes it? Completeness, number of records, number of variables.

Nicole: Should PASTA readiness lead to the development of an "EML Practices Version 2" document?

James: Once we know what the problems are, that might be possible.

Nicole: Have you begun to identify appropriate metadata/data to start with for testing PASTA components?

Duane: It's something we'll need to think about early on, but work on this hasn't started yet.

Karen: It would be useful to think about categories of readiness. Focus on groups of readiness factors.

James: I agree. There are dozens of categories used in the QA/QC literature, e.g. 'completeness'. I'd like to see us draw from this work.

Wade: This will bring us to the point where we can inform better data management practices. This should have been part of the EcoTrends data management practice but it wasn't. Make data at the sites more compliant with the synthesis tasks we want to perform. I would like to see more emphasis placed on planning for better data architectures at the sites.

James: I agree. Perhaps this could be an extension to the work of the data quality committee.

Karen: Should we be generalizing this topic to "data sharing readiness"? In other words, it is not specific to a particular system.

James: Data quality assessment is how I think of it.

Karen: There's a distinction between quality assessment for use versus quality assessment for sharing.

Margaret: With regard to Metacat skins – I've been working with Metacat, and I agree that there's an advantage to decoupling a web application from the

Metacat skins.

Nicole: It's important that we continue to broaden the CI survey to include socio-technical requirements. There's more than just the hardware and software needs, there's also the people that are working there. A better understanding of the working teams at the sites will lead to a better understanding of how to implement the technology.

James: IMExec and IMC could contribute to this.

Karen: The term 'cyberinfrastructure' is often used in just a technical framework. Another term is 'information environment', which addresses the idea of a web of different levels – site level, network level, archive level, etc. Knowing where the data comes from is often a determining factor.

James: It would be great if you could furnish us with sample survey questions to develop this further.

Nicole: What's the timeframe for the Ultra-X workshop?

James: We don't have one yet; this will be determined at the ASM.

Nicole: IMC might want to help in the development of the LTER Strategic Communication Plan.

James: Bill and McOwiti are doing the initial footwork. Most of the meetings will take place next year. I'll check to see whether the final list of committee members is done.

Nicole: From a governance perspective, it's interesting that you're responding to an NSF directive.

James: We're responding to an EB directive, and we're using the communication plan to assist us with our reporting to NSF.

Attachment	Size
WaterCooler.pdf [2]	111.07 KB

- Virtual Updates [3]

Source URL: http://im.lternet.edu/node/474

Links:

[1] http://intranet2.lternet.edu
[2] http://im.lternet.edu/sites/im.lternet.edu/files/WaterCooler.pdf
[3] http://im.lternet.edu/taxonomy/term/169