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Data Access Policy

Revised on 25 February 2014

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Introduction

The Andrews LTER data access policy includes three sections regarding the release and use of Andrews LTER data products. They include the release policy for data products, user registration requirements for accessing data, and the licensing agreement specifying conditions for data use. This policy is written in compliance with the LTER Network Data Access Policy (<http://www.lternet.edu/policies/data-access>).

It is considered a matter of professional ethics to acknowledge the work of other scientists. With this in mind, Andrews Experimental Forest researchers and data providers request appropriate citation and acknowledgement for subsequent distribution or publication of any work derived from these data sets. Data users are strongly encouraged to consider consultation, collaboration and/or co-authorship with original investigators.



1. Data Release Policy

Data and information derived from publicly funded research in the Andrews Experimental Forest, totally or partially from National Science Foundation LTER funds, or Partner Agency or Institution funds where a formal memorandum of understanding with LTER has been established, are made available online with as few restrictions as possible on a nondiscriminatory basis. Andrews LTER scientists make every effort to release data in a timely fashion and with attention to accurate and complete metadata.

Part A. Data.

There are two data types:

Type 1 - data are to be released to the general public including access through the LTER Network Information System within two years from collection and,

Type 2 - data are to be released to restricted audiences according to terms specified by the owners of the data. Type 2 data are considered to be exceptional and should be rare in occurrence. The justification for restricting or delaying release of Type 2 exceptions must be well documented and approved by the Andrews Executive Committee. Some examples of Type 2 data restrictions include legal or privacy issues such as locations of rare or endangered species, data that are covered under prior licensing or copyright, or data covered by the Human Subjects Act. Researchers that make use of Type 2 data may be subject to additional restrictions to protect any applicable commercial or confidentiality interests. Legacy data with known quality issues may also be considered Type 2 with justification. These data sets may be elevated to Type 1 dependent on available funding to solve pending issues. Additionally, graduate student data may be restricted until the time of publication to protect their professional development.

Data Prioritization: While the intention of the Andrews LTER policy is to promote maximum availability for ecological data, resource constraints have led to establishing criteria for prioritizing data for release. Primary observations collected for core research activities directly supported by LTER funding receive the highest priority for data release. Data collected with partial LTER support or where the LTER program has added value to resulting data products will also receive high priority for release. Other types of data including student thesis data, schoolyard LTER data, or non-LTER data that was acquired for LTER research may be ranked at a lower priority. Legacy data will be released as resources become available. Interim data such as data created during stages within an analytic workflow, raw or replicate data values that were subsequently aggregated or processed for release, or individual outputs from stochastic models will only be released if additional scientific value is present beyond which the final data products already provide.

Conditions Justifying Type 2 Status

1. Legal Issues

- a. The data includes the location of sensitive resources that might be endangered by revealing the location. This would include locations of artifacts, threatened or endangered species, and certain permanent plots.
 - b. Data will not be released that may compromise one's personal privacy. This might include types of census data involving human subjects.
 - c. Data that are covered by copyright laws.
- 2. Data Quality Assurance and Control Issues
 - a. The quality of the data is currently unknown or too low to be released. These restricted data typically refer to legacy data that have significant problems in metadata, measurements or other issues that make the value of the data questionable without significant investment of resources. While the potential value of this legacy data may be high, additional resources are required to support the development and validation of these data before they can be released.
 - b. The data include measurements using new techniques that require further research before their value/limitations are understood.
- 3. Publication Issues
 - a. The protection of a graduate student may prevent the release of data where their professional development might be compromised by releasing the data too early.

Part B. Metadata.

1. Metadata documenting archived and/or online data sets of all types listed above will be made available within two years of data collection.
2. All metadata will be publicly available regardless of any restrictions on access to the data.
3. All metadata will follow LTER recommended standards and will minimally contain adequate contact information and description to allow proper discovery, access, and citation. Complete information including methods, data structure, semantics, and level of quality assurance is expected for most datasets and is strongly encouraged.

2. Data Access Registration

Access to all LTER data is subject to requirements set forth by this policy document to enable data providers to track usage, evaluate its impact within the community, and confirm users' acceptance of the terms of acceptable use. These requirements are standardized across the LTER Network to provide contractual exchange of data between Site Data Providers, Network Data Providers, and Data Users that can be encoded into electronic form and exchanged between computers. This will allow direct access to data via a common portal once these requirements have been fulfilled. Users will be required to agree to the terms of data use prior to the transference of any data object.

Data Users will:

- Provide Name, Email Address, Affiliation, and Proposed Use
- Agree to terms specified in the General Public Use Agreement or Restricted Data Use Agreement, as applicable

Data providers wishing to impose further requirements beyond the General Public Use Agreement will include them in any Restricted Data Use Agreement accompanying the datasets.

3. Andrews LTER Data Use Agreement

The following General Data Use Agreement specifies the conditions for the use of most Andrews datasets released for general public use. Restricted data may be provided upon request and include a separate Restricted Data Use Agreement identifying specific restrictions on the use of the data. Grounds for restricting data are described above in the Data Release Policy, Type 2 Data.

Conditions of Use

The re-use of scientific data has the potential to greatly increase communication, collaboration and synthesis within and among disciplines, and thus is fostered, supported and encouraged. Permission to use this dataset is granted to the Data User free of charge subject to the following terms:

1) Acceptable use. Use of the dataset will be restricted to academic, research, educational, government, recreational, or other not-for-profit professional purposes. The Data User is permitted to produce and distribute derived works from this dataset provided that they are released under the same license terms as those accompanying this Data Set. Any other uses for the Data Set or its derived products will require explicit permission from the Data Set Owner.

2) Redistribution. The data are provided for use by the Data User. The metadata and this license must accompany all copies made and be available to all users of this Data Set. The Data User will not redistribute the original Data Set beyond this collaboration sphere.

3) Citation. It is considered a matter of professional ethics to acknowledge the work of other scientists. Thus, the Data User will properly cite the Data Set in any publications or in the metadata of any derived data products that were produced using the Data Set. Citation should take the following general form: Creator, Year of Data Publication, Title of Dataset, Publisher, and Dataset identifier. A recommended citation is provided for each data set in the Andrews LTER data catalog. For example:

Halpern, C.; McKee, W. 2001. Vascular plant list on the Andrews Experimental Forest and nearby Research Natural Areas. Long-Term Ecological Research. Forest Science Data Bank, Corvallis, OR. [Database]. Available: <http://andrewsforest.oregonstate.edu/data/abstract.cfm?dbcode=SA002> (3 May 2011).

4) Acknowledgement. The Data User should acknowledge any institutional support or specific funding awards referenced in the metadata accompanying this dataset in any publications where the Data Set contributed significantly to its content.

the metadata accompanying this dataset in any publications where the Data Set contributed significantly to its content. Acknowledgements should identify the supporting party, the party that received the support, and any identifying information such as grant numbers. For example:

Data sets were provided by the HJ Andrews Experimental Forest research program, funded by the National Science Foundation's Long-Term Ecological Research Program (DEB 0823380), US Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station, and Oregon State University.

5) Notification. The Data User will notify the Data Set Contact when any derivative work or publication based on or derived from the Data Set is distributed. The Data User will provide notification to the data contact of any publications resulting from use of the Data Set and will include an explanation of how the Data Set was used to produce the derived work.

Please send any resulting publications in .pdf format to the Andrews Experimental Forest LTER Program
Email: hjapubs@fsl.orst.edu

6) Collaboration. The Data Set has been released in the spirit of open scientific collaboration. Data Users are thus strongly encouraged to consider consultation, collaboration and/or co-authorship with the Data Set Creator.

By accepting this Data Set, the Data User agrees to abide by the terms of this agreement. The Andrews LTER shall have the right to terminate this agreement immediately by written notice upon the Data User's breach of, or non-compliance with, any of its terms. The Data User may be held responsible for any misuse that is caused or encouraged by the Data User's failure to abide by the terms of this agreement.

Disclaimer:

While substantial efforts are made to ensure the accuracy of data and documentation contained in this Data Set, complete accuracy of data and metadata cannot be guaranteed. All data and metadata are made available "as is". The Data User holds all parties involved in the production or distribution of the Data Set harmless for damages resulting from its use or interpretation.

Definitions used in the Andrews LTER Data Use Agreement

Data Set: Digital data and its metadata derived from any research activity such as field observations, collections, laboratory analysis, experiments, or the post-processing of existing data and identified by a unique identifier issued by a recognized cataloging authority such as a site, university, agency, or other organization.

Data User: Individual to whom access has been granted to this Data Set, including his or her immediate collaboration sphere, defined here as the institutions, partners, students and staff with whom the Data User collaborates, and with whom access must be granted, in order to fulfill the Data User's intended use of the Data Set.

Data Set Creator: Individual or institution that produced the Data Set.

Data Set Owner: Individual or institution that holds intellectual property rights to the dataset. Note that this may or may not be defined as a legal copyright. If no other party is designated in the metadata as Data Set Owner, it may be presumed that these rights are held by the Data Set Creator.

Data Set Contact: Party designated in the accompanying metadata of the Data Set as the primary contact for the Data Set.

Thank you for your cooperation. We hope your collaboration with our site is a productive one!

The Andrews Data Access Policy was revised on 25 February 2014 to be compliant with the [LTER Network policy](#) (April 6, 2005). Specific sections of the Network policy are reproduced here. This Andrews Data Access Policy may be revised by the Andrews LTER Executive Board, or at the request of the same body.



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