



The Network News

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Children's Books and Ecological Studies: Long-Term Processes


My Water Comes From The Mountains has captured LTER imagination and prompted reflection on the many ways sites could get involved in book series projects

The writing and publication of a book is a long-term process that becomes more complex when a book project involves capturing the stories of ecological science in remote sites or the research activities of an LTER site. Superintended by an author with a vision, the book process involves multiple steps such as identifying resources and themes, gathering contacts and materials as well as coordinating staff including photographers, artists, educators, and editors.

Books provide a unique avenue for an LTER site to share elements of ecological research with children and young adults. Participation in the design and production of books for primary and secondary aged readers evolves over an extended time period and may be done in synergy with other programs supporting writers. One ex-

ample is the opportunity afforded the Palmer LTER Education Outreach Program to work with the Artist's and Writer's Program of the NSF Office of Polar Programs. This program annually selects participants who are deployed to polar regions to experience the environment they have chosen as a project topic. Those deployed to Palmer Station, Antarctica, often interface with Palmer LTER field participants who share their field experiences and provide material about the study of a polar marine ecosystem, local factors such as the warning signs of global change, and life cycles such as of the Adelie penguin. Books such as *Science on Ice: Research in the Antarctic* by Michael Woods (1995) for grade levels 9-12 and *Antarctic Journal* by Meredith Hooper (2000) for grade levels 3-6 have benefited from such interactions.

Palmer Station LTER participants have contributed to other steps of the book production process such as editing on topics related to the Antarctic environment (*Life Under Ice* by Mary Cerullo, 2003) for grade levels 9-12 and creating discussion forms for authors going into the field as with Lucy Bledsoe (*Antarctic Scoop*, 2003; see Fall 2003 Network Newsletter) for grade levels 4-8.

A book author's writing project is often a long-term collaborative process. As Niwot Ridge's and Palmer's experiences illustrate, LTER sites may be able to engage in some of the multiple phases of design and development of books for children and young adults as part of their education outreach programs. 

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PAL LTER