LTER
Network News
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2005 LTER Mini-Symposium a Big Success

Washington's scientific community was all ears recently as the national Long Term Ecological Research (LTER) network held its 5th Annual LTER Mini-symposium at the National Science Foundation (NSF) in Arlington, VA, on March 3, 2005. The purpose of the annual mini-symposium is to showcase to Washington the relevance and broader impacts of the scientific research undertaken by the LTER network.

The symposium has earned a reputation in D.C. as a "must attend" event for people from federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, professional societies, private organizations, and others who are interested in learning what LTER scientists and educators are doing and planning.

Each year the LTER coordinating committee announces the following year's theme in the fall and solicits nominations for topics and speakers from within the Network. This year's theme was "*Long-Term Marine Research and the Grand Challenges in Ecology*." This theme provided opportunities for scientists and educators from the LTER's two newest sites, California Current Ecosystem (CCE) and Moorea Coral Reef (MCR) in French Polynesia, as well as scientists from other marine sites, to present their work to a diverse public audience of scientists, policy makers, educators, members of the media, and the general public (see Table 1, p. 2).

The event was hosted by NSF's Division of Environmental Biology (DEB) and Division of Ocean Sciences (OCE) and attracted over 120 people from across the nation's capital and beyond. Participants included representatives from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), National Academies of Science (NAS), Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC), Capitol Hill (Knauss Fellows), American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS), Ecological Society of America (ESA), U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP), Joint Oceanographic Institutions Ocean-Research Interactive Observatory Networks (JOI-ORION), American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON), and Nature. Several LTER Principal Investigators, scientists, and educators, as well program officers, senior management, and staff from NSF also attended.

The topics were organized around the broader "Grand Challenge" themes of Altered Biodiversity, Coupled Human/Natural Systems, Educating the Public, Climate Change, and Altered Biogeochemical Cycles.

To add your (or someone else's) name to the invitation announcement list, please email name, organization, and email address to Henry Gholz at *hgholz@nsf.gov*.

Michelle Kelleher
Science Assistant, BIO/DEB, NSF

You can access and download the Powerpoint presentations online at http://lternet-183.lternet.edu/doc_archive/presentations/

Table 1: List of Mini-Symposium presenters, topics, and brief descriptions of their presentations.

Grand Challenge	Presenter(s)	Topic	Abstract/Description
Altered Biodiversity	Sally Holbrook (SBC/MCR) & Dan Reed (SBC)	Change in Habitat-forming Species on Temperate and Tropical Reefs: Consequences to Biodiversity and Community Structure	This topic used data from the Santa Barbara Coastal Ecosystem (SBC) and MCR LTER sites to explore patterns of resistance of biodiversity and community structure of reef fishes to variation in abundance of giant kelp and corals, the major structure-forming organisms on temperate and tropical reefs. It also discussed the similarities and differences in likely responses of fish assemblages in these ecosystems to different types of disturbances (including climate variation).
Coupled Human/Natural Systems	Wilfred Wollheim (Grad student/Plum Island Ecosystem (PIE) LTER	Hydrological and Biogeochemical Impacts of Land Use Change in a Suburbanizing Watershed	This topic is an overview of the hydrological and biogeochemical changes in the suburbanizing watersheds of the Plum Island Estuary. These watersheds are close to Boston MA and are experiencing widespread residential development. Major changes include increased urban runoff, increased nitrogen (N) loading, and large exports of water and N via net interbasin transfers of drinking water.
Educating the Public	Ali Whitmer (SBC/MCR)	A Role for LTER in Marine Science Education	
Climate Change	Mark D. Ohman (CCE)	Nonlinear Ecosystem Responses to Climate Forcing in the California Current System	Over 55 years of research in the California Current System has uncovered multiple, interacting time scales of climate forcing, including a secular warming trend, the Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO), and El Niño. The nonlinear responses of pelagic ecosystems to these climate drivers create particular challenges to forecasting future trajectories of marine ecosystems.
	Sharon Stammerjohn (Graduate student/Palmer)	Regional Rapid Warming and Changes in the Physical Environment: The Palmer LTER Study Region West of the Antarctic Peninsula	The Antarctic Peninsula (AP) region is warming faster (in winter) than any other region on earth. This presentation will show how the physical environment of the western AP region has changed, and how the ice-dominated marine ecosystem has been impacted.
Altered Biogeochemical Cycles	Karen McGlathery (Virginia Coast Reserve)	LTER Contributions to Understanding the Coastal Eutrophication Problem	

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