

SOC Meeting Minutes

January 30, 2007

Attendees:

SOC members participating included Eberhard, Shing, Kuchma, Sanders, Rix, Aiken, Ricles, Wight, and Simpson. Board of Director members participating included Ramirez and Leon. NEESinc Staff participating included Berger, Heiser, Roblee and Whitmer.

Agenda:

- 1) Discuss and approve, disapprove or modify the part of the FY07 AWP Board Report that deals with the AWP review process and recommendations.
- 2) Discuss recommendations to the Board on reallocation of budget that is not approved as a result of the AWP reviews and recommendations above.

Meeting:

- 1) Discussion began by requesting comments on the AWP review process. It was desired to streamline the process by having only one round of SOC review for the FY08 AWP. The feeling was next fiscal year's review would go smoother and require less SOC effort.
- 2) It was decided to vote on the approval of the final FY07 AWP Board Report recommendations via email. Response within one day was requested so the Report could be presented to the Board on Friday, February 2.
- 3) A question was raised about whether late EOT information from UCSD should be considered before finalizing the Report. It was preferred to maintain a level playing field for all. The option for UCSD to take their case to the Board was suggested and approved with no objections.
- 4) The proposed UCSD fixed scope project for the Port of Los Angeles / Caltrans / NSF SFSI was discussed. There followed a discussion on allowing Sites to plan for up to \$30k to capture more information into the NEES database.
- 5) There was a discussion on recommendations to the Board on reallocation of funds made available through the FY07 AWP review process. The following 7 recommendations were discussed and a consensus developed:
 1. Requests by sites to use MOM funds to support projects using non-NEES equipment provide the opportunity for NEES to capture valuable additional data for the database at minimal cost. As part of a pilot program, we recommend that NEES allow sites (with staff approval) to reallocate minor amounts of MOM funds (up to \$30k per site) to support other experiments as long as: (1) the site can fully meet its MOM obligations with the remaining funds; (2) NEES be credited for the project support; and (3) the data collected is uploaded to the database. (No cost)

2. In the future, NEES should consider developing a program within which non-NEES sites can apply for small grants (four grants of \$40k-50k each) to serve as NEES Affiliates. The sites would be selected based on proposals solicited by NEESinc. The selected sites would be required to: (1) upload at least one significant dataset to the NEES database: (2) provide credit to NEES for the project support: (3) provide a limited remote-viewing capability: (4) develop a laboratory website to which the NEES website would link: (5) feature NEES as part of their EOT activities: (6) meet NEES established minimum standards for metrology: and (7) provide \$15k of matching funds. The constraints on the available amount of NEES HQ staff support make it difficult to implement this year, but planning should begin to consider the benefits, concerns, administrative procedures and consequences of having such a program. (Cost: none this year).
3. Network-wide community EOT initiatives should be supported, with an emphasis on activities likely to have high-visibility and long-term impact. If the BOD supports this direction, the staff should develop detailed proposals for consideration by NSF (Cost: \$100-150k).
4. A network-wide marketing effort (e.g., promotional video, industry visits) should be provided to support non-shared use activities. The details of the effort would be developed by a team of 3 site representatives representing site diversity and a staff member. (Cost \$50-100k)
5. Limited support (2-4 contracts of \$25-50k each) should be provided to researchers to reclaim (and submit to the data repository) data from previously conducted experiments. These projects will have the benefit of real "user scenarios," thus benefiting the repository development. (Cost: \$100-150k)
6. Support should be provided for supplements or outsourced IT initiatives that are centrally coordinated and provide products benefiting the entire community. Priority will be given to advancing the NEEShybrid framework. (Cost: \$100k).
7. Remaining funds should be used to support site safety and metrology efforts; if not used, added to the Capital Replacement Budget at year end.

An email from Jim Ricles was discussed, which had 4 suggestions for potential uses of the funds withheld from sites.

1. Increasing REU opportunities: It was reported that NSF is divided over using MOM funds for REU activities, which would make it difficult to allocate funds. There are currently 20 students supported at 5 sites in the REU program.
2. Marketing for NEESinc and equipment sites: It is desired to have more centralized marketing to enhance awareness of the NEES mission. A Network promotional video was suggested.
3. Enhancing safety and metrology of sites: Sites were offered \$25k supplements for safety and metrology in FY06. A suggestion was raised to hire a safety consultant to assess network safety policies, with no firm agreement by the group.

4. Purchase EOT equipment for hands-on demonstrations: Training equipment for students and prospective researchers was discussed. Material's which are re-useable is a high-priority which would allow multiple sites to share equipment.

The meeting concluded with a request for SOC members to vote on the final Report by email within one day.