



<http://www.ecosystemresearch.org>

August 15, 2012

Hello AERC Institutional Member:

As President of the Association of Ecosystem Research Centers (AERC), I would like to invite our member institutions and their AERC representatives to our Annual Research Symposium this coming October in Washington DC. This year AERC has joined with NEON, the National Ecological Observatory Network, to plan our groups' annual member meetings back-to-back allowing members to participate in both meetings, which will broaden the exposure of both organization's members to the material presented at each meeting.

AERC has invited NEON members to the AERC Research Symposium beginning the afternoon of Thursday, Oct 18th, and to our Annual Business Meeting the morning of the 19th, Friday. Similarly, NEON has invited all AERC members to attend their annual members meeting, scheduled for all day Wednesday, October 17th. NEON's meeting theme is *Continental Scale Ecology: Informing National Priorities*.

The theme of this year's AERC meeting is *The Role of Ecosystem Science in National Security*. We are arranging for speakers to present papers on the role and importance of ecosystem science to 1) water security, 2) food security, 3) energy security, and 4) disease transmission. We are also working hard to arrange a presentation by one of the military/intelligence agencies that deal with environmental issues and national security. The AERC symposium will be held in the Smithsonian's Ripley Center Theater beginning at 1300, October, 18th. The Ripley Center is immediately adjacent to the Smithsonian Metro stop on the Mall. AERC is arranging lunch for our membership in the Theater from 1200 – 1300 prior to the start of the Symposium. A reception will follow immediately after the Symposium. On October 19th, beginning at 0900 our Association will host our annual business meeting in a room adjacent to the Ripley Theater. Our Research Symposium agenda can be found at our AERC web site, www.ecosystemresearch.org/, and is also attached to this email, along with a copy of this letter in PDF format.

On the morning of the 18th, our symposium speakers will meet with Congressional members and staff and selected NGO guests as part of our annual Congressional Hill Briefing dealing with the same theme.

I would like to remind each AERC member representative that AERC is also an affiliate member of the American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS). At our Annual Meeting the Director of AIBS's Public Policy Office will provide an update of the past year's science legislation and action, and a crystal-ball view of what might be expected next year in Congress. Additionally, if any of our members would like to schedule a meeting with members of their Congressional delegation, AERC and AIBS can help arrange the visit and provide some assistance to make the meeting productive. If this is something that you would like to do, I would ask that you contact AERC Board Member Jay Arnone of the Desert Research Institute (Jay.Arnone@dri.edu), who will help to arrange this through the AIBS Public Policy Office.

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In order to better plan for attendance at both the NEON and AERC events (beginning August 15th, there will be an RSVP site set up at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/AERC-RSVP>) I would ask that you register for the events you would like to attend. AERC has also arranged with a local hotel in Washington, the Doubletree Guest Suites, for a block of rooms at a reduced rate. The Doubletree Guest Suites is located at 801 New Hampshire Ave. NW and is a block from the Foggy Bottom Metro stop. The reduced lodging rate is \$226 per night (plus the DC Hotel tax) for the nights of October 17th and 18th. There are a limited number of rooms available at this rate, so I suggest that you make your reservations quickly; please reference AERC-UVA when contacting the hotel.

Finally, realizing current fiscal realities, AERC is planning to broadcast the Research Symposium over the Web this year. This is a new experimental initiative of the Association and it will make it possible for those members that cannot attend to reap the benefits of the AERC Symposium. The plan is for this real-time broadcast to be recorded and made available for viewing at any time after the symposium on our AERC web site. The Association is continuing to look for ways to meet our members' expectations in a timely and financially responsible manner. Please keep your eyes open for additional emails/broadcasts from me with information about these activities and others this year.

Let me pass on one suggestion I received from one of our long-time members. If you, as the designated institutional representative, are unable to attend this Symposium and Annual Meeting, might consider delegating this opportunity to a junior colleague such as a Post Doc. This would provide a chance for your colleague to come to Washington and begin interacting with national organization

I look forward to seeing you all in Washington in October. Thank you!!

David E. Smith