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John (Jay) A. Arnone III
Division of Earth & Ecosystem Sciences
Desert Research Institute (DRI)
2215 Raggio Parkway
Reno, NV 89512
(775) 673-7445
Jay.Arnone@dri.edu

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Natural Resources Research Institute
University of Minnesota
5013 Miller Trunk Hwy.
Duluth, MN 55811-1442
(218) 720-4251
ljohnson@d.umn.edu

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award@biology.as.ua.edu

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Department of Biology
Oxford, OH 45056
(513) 785-3238
rypstral@miamioh.edu

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Flathead Lake Biological Station
The University of Montana
32125 Bio Station Lane
Polson, MT 59860-6815
(406) 982-3301
art.mckee@flbs.umt.edu

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561 Emma Drive
Murray, KY 42071
(270) 474-2272
shendricks@murraystate.edu

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University of Virginia, Clark Hall
291 McCormick Road
PO Box 400123
Charlottesville, VA 22904-4123
(434) 924-0561
des3e@virginia.edu

September 12, 2014

Dear Fellow AERC Colleague,

The Board of Directors of the Association of Ecosystem Research Centers (AERC) and I are very pleased to invite you to come to Washington DC to take part in the annual events that AERC is sponsoring, together with the AIBS' Public Policy Office. This year's activities will be held on October 8th and 9th.

In light of the success and enthusiasm expressed by attendees of last year's events, we have decided to follow the same format this year.

The first will be a hands-on workshop conducted by the American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS) Public Policy Office that focuses on how to communicate with the media and face-to-face with congressional public policy makers (e.g., staff personnel). The workshop is open to all AERC members and invited guests and is primarily aimed at graduate students, postdocs, and early career researchers, although a number of senior researchers attend, as well. This workshop will be held at AIBS' Offices in DC from 8:30 am – 12:30 pm on the morning of October 8th (1444 I St., NW, Ste. 200, Washington, DC).

The second event is AERC's annual business meeting that also will be held at the AIBS offices in the afternoon of October 8th (13:30 – ca. 17:30 pm). All AERC members or designees, as well as briefing speakers and prospective AERC members, are invited to attend.

The third event will be our annual AERC-Sponsored Congressional Briefing held on Capitol Hill on the morning of October 9th (exact times and place to follow). As you know, the topic of this year's briefing is "The Role of Ecosystem Science in Developing Adaptation and Mitigation Strategies to Climate and Global Change". We are fortunate again this year to have an excellent panel of speakers to talk on this topic. They are:

- Dr. Jerry Hatfield, National Laboratory for Agriculture and the Environment (USDA-ARS) & Iowa State University
Implications of Climate Change on Agricultural Ecosystems
- Dr. Julia Cherry, New College and Biological Sciences, University of Alabama
Rising Tides: Sustaining Coastal Wetlands in a Changing World
- Dr. G. Darrel Jenerette, Department of Botany and Plant Sciences, University of California Riverside
Cities, Agriculture, and Wildlands: Ensuring Continued Ecosystem Services from Our Rapidly Changing Landscapes

After the briefing, speakers are invited to accompany attending grad students and postdocs (and AERC members attended the briefing) to lunch at a nearby restaurant on Capitol Hill.

The fourth event will be our annual AERC-Sponsored Capitol Hill Congressional Office Visits that will take place during the afternoon of October

9th. The AIBS Public Policy Office arranges these personalized office visits for each AERC member, or invited guest, who would like to meet with her/his own congressional delegation.

A key goal of the workshop, congressional briefing, and congressional office visits is to teach early career researchers in the ecosystem, ecological, and environmental sciences how to link research to public policy making. The Board of the AERC communicated this message to the broader ecological research community in a poster presented at this year's ESA meetings in Sacramento (please go to www.ecosystemresearch.org and click on the "ESA Annual Meeting 2014 Poster (PDF)" link to view the poster).

If you or one of your associates would like to attend the annual AERC events in DC, I would very much appreciate your going to AERC's Web site (www.ecosystemresearch.org) to "Register Online". The AERC has reserved a block of rooms at the Holiday Inn Washington-Capitol (550 C St SW, Washington, DC) that can be booked through Business Travel & Tours by contacting Angie Klinke at (775) 324-1777.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have. I very much look forward to meeting you in Washington.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John A. Arnone III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being the most prominent.

John ("Jay") A. Arnone III
AERC President