The SNR Administrative Team has completed the schedule for the unit’s five-year review, September 21-25, 2009. The schedule has been shared with IANR and the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) administration and with the review team leader, Dr. Louis Tupa, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Louie and I are currently in the process of arranging a conference call with members of the review team. I plan to visit with Louie again in early April while I am in Washington, D.C., to participate in a workshop organized by the U.S. Climate Change Science Program.

The kick-off session for the review will begin on Tuesday morning, September 22, in Hardin Hall, with my overview presentation of SNR programs and activities and the most salient points from the review document. All SNR faculty, staff, and students are invited to this opening session. As the week progresses, sessions have been organized to discuss each of the five current and emerging issues in natural resources and environmental science. These issues form the organizational basis for our review document. Review team members will also meet with faculty and staff on research, teaching, and extension issues, and with staff, undergraduate and graduate students, collaborating UNL departments and state and federal agencies, and IANR and CAS administration. The review team will also meet with the leadership and staff associated with the Center for Advanced Land Management Information Technologies, the High Plains Regional Climate Center, the National Drought Mitigation Center, and the Water Center. IANR administration requested that we include a review of these centers as part of the review process. The review will conclude on Friday morning, September 25, with the review team reporting key findings and recommendations to faculty, staff, and students.

Once again, the focus of this review is to document SNR’s progress toward our goals since...
the last review in 2003, to identify our goals for the next five years, and to shape our strategic plan for achieving those goals. This spring, listening sessions have been held to discuss the early drafts of the chapters that will be included in the review document. These drafts are the direct product of last fall’s listening sessions. From now until the end of the semester, we will continue to refine these chapters. On May 12, a retreat will be held in Hardin Hall for faculty, staff, and students to discuss and come to consensus on the key points, findings, and recommendations to be included in the report. The review document will be completed during the summer months and delivered to the review team in August.

**SNR’s Annual Unit Planning Session**

I meet annually with IANR and CAS administration to review SNR’s accomplishments and our goals for the current year and beyond. The SNR planning session was February 24. I enjoyed the opportunity to promote the accomplishments of SNR and its faculty and staff. I had another very positive session with Vice Chancellor Owens, the IANR deans, CAS Associate Dean Amy Goodburn, Associate Vice-Chancellor for Research Kim Espy, and IANR Assistant Vice Chancellor Alan Moeller. SNR is clearly making significant progress in research, teaching, and extension/outreach programs and activities. The upcoming five-year review in September will provide us with another valuable opportunity to articulate our vision and our progress.

**SNR Faculty Positions: Update**

The search committee for the GIS faculty position finalized its review of applicants in February and we have invited three candidates to interview for this position. The interview schedule for each of these candidates has been provided to SNR employees by Jim Merchant, search committee chair. The candidates and interview dates are:

- Dr. Qingfeng Guan, March 11-12
- Dr. Yanfen Le, March 30-31
- Dr. Wenwu Tang, April 2-3

Each candidate will be presenting two seminars as part of the interview process; one pertaining to their research interests and one simulating a classroom teaching situation. Please try to attend these seminars. Also plan to complete the evaluation form for each candidate and submit it to Jim Merchant immediately following the interview.

March 13-19
Istanbul, Turkey
To participate in the 5th World Water Forum and a special session on drought management

April 5-8
Washington, D.C.
To participate in a U.S. Climate Change Science Program Workshop on Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability

June 12-20
Amsterdam, The Netherlands, and Geneva, Switzerland
To participate in a European Commission Xerochore drought project and chair a meeting of the World Meteorological Organization’s Forum on the Socio-Economic Benefits of Weather, Climate, and Water Services
Applications for an Applied Climate Scientist and Director of the High Plains Regional Climate Center are still being accepted. The search committee, chaired by Al Weiss, will begin reviewing applications after March 15.

**SNR Faculty Leaders Selected**

As reported last month, SNR faculty have been organized into Faculties for the purpose of facilitating communication on research, teaching, and outreach issues within each area and with SNR administration. During February, each of these Faculties met and selected leaders. These faculties will meet regularly, and the leaders of these areas now form a Faculty Leadership Committee. This committee will also meet regularly with me and SNR’s Associate Director, Ed Harvey. Faculties and leaders are as follows:

- **Applied Climate Science**
  - Shashi Verma

- **Geology & Soils**
  - Matt Joeckel

- **Geography/GIScience**
  - Sunil Narumalani

- **Water**
  - Dan Snow

- **Human Dimensions**

- **Applied Ecology**
World Water Forum: Istanbul, Turkey

I have been invited to participate in the 5th World Water Forum, to be held in Istanbul, Turkey, the week of March 16. I will participate in a session on drought management organized by the Spanish Water Directorate. My presentation will highlight the experiences of the U.S. in drought management. The Forum is organized by the World Water Council every three years. These meetings attract more than 15,000 scientists, policy makers, water managers, exhibitors, and the public. I participated in the 4th Forum in Mexico City in 2006 at the invitation of the World Meteorological Organization and gave the keynote presentation for a session on drought risk reduction. My participation in the 5th World Water Forum is sponsored by SNR, the IANR Agricultural Research Division, and the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research. I will be interacting with representatives of foreign governments and international organizations on many water-related issues during the Forum. Stay tuned for a follow-up discussion of the Forum in the April edition of the Director’s report.

Digital Signage for Hardin Hall

I am sure most of you have noticed the four large flat screen TV monitors that have been installed in the lobby areas in Hardin Hall. These monitors will soon become active as SNR’s Digital Design Committee finalizes its programming plans. As part of our programming, we will be installing a satellite dish to provide a television feed for the monitors. Our digital signage system will be similar to the ones in the East Campus Dairy Store and in the city campus Student Union. We will highlight SNR’s programs and activities to our audience, which includes SNR employees and students, as well as visitors to Hardin Hall. We will also plan to install an automated weather station in proximity to
Hardin Hall to display current weather information. Other programming for the monitors will include Powerpoint presentations to illustrate program activities in SNR and videos illustrating research, teaching, and extension activities of SNR faculty, staff, and students. Look for this exciting new feature in Hardin Hall! If you have questions or suggestions regarding the programming to be included on the monitors, please contact Kelly Smith, SNR Science Communicator, or Jim Hines, IT manager.

**Kudos to Stephen Vantassel, Jim Brandle, and Carol Cartwright**

I was pleased to learn that Stephen Vantassel received the 2008 Wildlife Damage Management Educator of the Year Award from the National Wildlife Control Operators Association (NWCOA). Recipients of this award are chosen for their outstanding efforts in wildlife damage education that further industry interests, such as improved control methods, standards, policies, practices, or techniques. Stephen was also the recipient of SNR’s staff recognition award in fall 2008. Congratulations to Stephen for his contributions to the wildlife damage program in SNR. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.

Congratulations are also in order for Jim Brandle, who will receive a 2009 College Distinguished Teaching Award during the University Honors Convocation April 26. The award recognizes his “outstanding teaching ability and dedication to student learning.” I sincerely appreciate Jim’s commitment to teaching as well as his concern for the well-being of graduate students in SNR.

Carol Cartwright was nominated for the 2009 Carol A. Donaldson Award for her accomplishments as Business Manager for the Natural Resources Business Center. It is an honor to be nominated for this award as it represents recognition by peers for the excellent work of the nominee. SNR is very lucky to have Carol and her team of professionals working on our behalf.

**Grants Awarded and Proposals Submitted**

SNR faculty were awarded grants totaling more than $3.3 million in February.
Congratulations to Kevin Pope, Larkin Powell, Scott Hygnstrom, Kyle Hoagland, Jim Goeke, and Don Rundquist. A standing ovation should be given to Kevin who received a $3.1 million grant award from the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. The total for grants awarded in 2009 to date is $3.635 million.

Faculty submitting proposals in February included Ayse Irmak (with Kyle Hoagland), Mike Hayes (with Mark Svoboda), Mark Burbach (with Cody Knutson), Craig Allen, Mary Spalding (with Roy Spalding), Don Rundquist, Dan Snow, and Jim Merchant. The total amount for grant proposals submitted in February was $1.8 million. The total for grant proposals submitted in January and February 2009 is $2.2 million.