UNL’s spring semester is moving swiftly forward. The key word here is "spring," as we are all anxious for warmer temperatures and for the snow banks that outline Lincoln’s streets to melt. This has been an especially harsh winter by recent standards but spring is on its way. One sure sign is that we will soon announce plans for our spring retreat, or pep rally.

**SNR's Response to the Review Team Report: Status**

In late February, I met with IANR deans Susan Fritz, Steve Waller and Elbert Dickey, Associate Dean David Jackson, and College of Arts and Sciences Dean David Manderscheid and Associate Dean Greg Snow to discuss SNR’s response to the review team's report from last fall. I felt we had very positive discussions during our meeting on our response document and once I receive a summary of the meeting in writing from Susan Fritz, I will be finalizing our response document. Our review document and our response to the review team’s report will serve as a roadmap for SNR. During my annual unit planning sessions beginning next year, I will be reporting on our progress towards reaching the milestones identified in these documents.

**Prioritizing Faculty Positions in SNR: Update**

The first step in the prioritization of faculty positions for SNR began with the faculty meeting on February 24. Our highest priority position is the wetland ecologist position, which is a carry-over from our last prioritization process in the spring of 2008. The positions currently being discussed are:

- Human Dimensions scientist
- Environmental microbiologist
- Regional ecosystem modeler
- Climate risk scientist
- Eco-tourism scientist
- Wildlife and environmental education specialist – extension
- Forestry research/extension specialist
- Riparian systems ecologist
- Environmental geophysicist

Other faculty positions may be added to this list as our discussions continue or some may be consolidated or redefined. Even in a time of shrinking university budgets, it is imperative for SNR to prioritize its needs for future faculty positions. This, of course, was one of the intended outcomes of the recently completed five-year comprehensive review process.

One of the critical statistics revealed in our five-year review document was that SNR has 17 faculty over the age of 60. The retirement of these faculty in the years ahead will present both a significant challenge and an opportunity to the unit. Some of these positions, as they become available and with the continued support from higher administration, will need to be redirected to meeting future challenges.

The next step in the prioritization process will be the development of position descriptions for each of the positions above. These position descriptions will be discussed during our next faculty meeting on March 16. These positions will be prioritized on the basis of the following criteria: the position (1) reinforces the current and emerging issues identified in our strategic planning document; (2) contributes to further integration of SNR's teaching, research, and extension/survey efforts; (3) enhances undergraduate and graduate teaching;
(4) provides significant opportunities for external funding; and (5) contributes to the unit's engagement mission (extension, survey). Possible partnerships with other departments may also be a factor in ranking these positions.

I am looking forward to working with SNR faculty through a consensus building process on prioritizing these positions. As we move through this process, I will share our progress with staff at the monthly staff meetings.

**Status of Faculty Searches**

As part of the effort to fill the Watershed Hydrologist position funded through the Water Resources Research Initiative, UNL will begin interviewing three candidates for this position in early March. The three candidates for this position are:

- Dr. Diego Riveros-Iregui, currently a research associate in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, University of Colorado-Boulder. Diego will interview March 3-5. Diego's seminar will be held on March 4 at 3 p.m. in the City Campus Union. The title of his seminar is "A Hydrologic Perspective on Land-Atmosphere Interactions: Moving from Point Observations to Watershed Fluxes."
- Dr. Marty Frisbee, currently a Ph.D. candidate, Department of Earth and Environmental Science, New Mexico Tech. Marty will interview March 8-9. Marty's seminar will be on March 8 at 3 p.m. in the East Campus Union. The title of his seminar is "Streamflow Generation Processes at the Large Watershed Scale: Is a Small-scale Perspective Applicable?"
- Dr. Li Jin, currently a research associate, Oxford Center for Water Research, School of Geography and the Environment, University of Oxford. Li will interview March 10-12. Li Jin's seminar will be on March 10 at 2:30 p.m. in the East Campus Union. The title of her seminar is "Hydrologic and Geochemical Studies to Characterize Surface-groundwater Interaction at Different Spatial Scales."

I strongly encourage all SNR faculty and staff to participate in the interview process for these three candidates and to submit evaluation forms following each interview. The search committee for the aquatic ecologist/limnologist position is moving quickly through the list of applicants to arrive at a short list for interviews. We hope to be interviewing for this position in late March or early April.

**Water Scarcity and Drought International Conference: Madrid, Spain**

In mid-February, I participated in an *International Conference on Water Scarcity and Drought: A Path to Climate Change Adaptation*. The meeting was sponsored by the Spanish Presidency of the European Union through the Ministry of the Environment and Water Affairs. I was invited to make a presentation at the conference on progress being made in the United States on drought risk management. I also chaired a session on Water Scarcity and Drought Management with presentations by representatives from Hungary, Spain, Portugal, and the European Joint Research Center in Ispra, Italy. The conference was very successful and the recommendations from this meeting will be presented to the European Commission in Brussels later this year. My participation will also enhance opportunities for future collaboration between SNR and our European colleagues on issues related to drought management and climate change. We are currently in the final signature stages of completing a Memorandum of Understanding between SNR and the National Drought Mitigation Center with the Spanish Water Resources and Environment Center for Hydrographic Studies (CEDEX) in Madrid as a result of long-standing interactions with the Spanish government.
SNR to host Larry Schweiger: President and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation

Larry Schweiger will be visiting the UNL campus on March 10 and will be giving a seminar on the subject of his book, *Last Chance: Preserving Life on Earth*. The seminar will focus on the importance of climate change and its effects on life on Earth, now and in the decades ahead. Larry will also be meeting with SNR students for a pizza lunch sponsored by Chancellor Perlman at noon in the second floor lobby of Hardin Hall. He will also be meeting with SNR faculty at 3:15 in room 901, Hardin Hall.

Kudos to Dennis Ferraro and John Quinn For Teaching Awards

Dennis Ferraro and John Quinn each received the Holling Family Award for Teaching Excellence. Dennis received the Junior Faculty Holling Family Award, and John received the Teaching Assistant Holling Family Award. Congratulations to Dennis and John! Please pass along your congratulations by email or when you see them roaming the corridors of Hardin Hall.

Dennis Ferraro  John Quinn

Congratulations to David Wishart for Book Award

*Great Plains: America's Lingering Wild*, coauthored by University of Nebraska geographer David Wishart, won a 2009 PROSE Award in February from the American Association of Publishers for best book in Biological & Life Sciences. It was published by the University of Chicago Press in 2009. The book showcases the work of Michael Forsberg, who is a Nebraska native, a UNL Geography alum, and a widely acclaimed photographer. The photos highlight landscapes, wild and domesticated animals, plants, and people of the Plains. Wishart wrote the main introduction to the book and introductions to each of the three main sections. The foreword...
is by Ted Kooser, native Nebraskan and 13th Poet Laureate of the United States. Dan O'Brien, wildlife biologist, rancher and author, contributed essays that appear throughout the book.

**Proposals Submitted**

Faculty and staff submitting grant proposals in February included Drew Tyre, Jim Goeke, Kyle Hoagland, Dan Snow, Cindy Larson-Miller, Pat Shea, Steve Comfort, Scott Hygnstrom, Craig Allen, and Don Rundquist. The total amount for grant proposals submitted in February was $3,021,875. The total for proposals submitted during January and February was $5,296,317.