Introduction

This past month was a month of visitors to SNR and IANR. Exploring collaborative partnerships with other countries to increase our visibility internationally is important for SNR’s future research and education programs and the professional development of faculty, staff, and students.

At right: Don Wilhite in front of Hardin Hall, home of the School of Natural Resources.

Australian and Colombian Visitors to SNR

Sarah Bruce (at right), Bureau of Rural Sciences (BRS), Canberra, Australia, visited the School for about two weeks to learn more about drought monitoring, planning, and policy issues in the United States. I met Sarah in November 2006 when I visited the Bureau in Canberra to discuss the status of drought-related issues in

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the United States and to learn more about the current status of Australian drought management and policy science. During that visit, I suggested a joint U.S.-Australia drought workshop that would involve climate and water scientists from the U.S. and scientists from BRS, the Bureau of Meteorology, and Australian universities. Sarah will help develop that workshop concept now that she has seen U.S. drought management issues in context. This workshop will likely be held in Melbourne in November 2008.

We also were hosts for a group of visitors from the Corporacion Para Investigaciones Biologicas (CIB) in Medellin, Colombia. I have written about CIB in previous monthly reports. This past November several IANR faculty, including Larkin Powell, visited CIB. It was IANR’s turn to host this group. The visit was very productive and our visitors really appreciated the Institute’s hospitality. Now that we know each other, SNR and other IANR units are exploring opportunities to build future collaborations with CIB and appropriate universities in Colombia. It appears there will be opportunities for SNR faculty and students to be involved in these activities and it is also likely that IANR and, hopefully, SNR will receive students and faculty from Colombia. A story on the visit of the CIB team is on the SNR website.

Pausing for a photo during the April visit were, from left: Diego Sierra, CIB Director; Z.B. Mayo; Don Wilhite; Jaime Robledo, head of CIB’s Bacteriology and Mycobacteriology Unit; and Rafael Arango, head of CIB’s Plant Biotechnology Unit.

- **Director’s Upcoming Travel**

  May 19-22
  North Platte and surrounding areas, to participate in the UNL/USGS Workshop, Sustainability in a Time of Climate Change: Developing an Intensive Research Framework for the Great Plains.

  June 10-15
  Zaragoza, Spain, to participate in an International Conference on Drought Management: Scientific and Technological Innovations and Water Expo.

  July 8-11
  Chicago, for an American Council on Education workshop on Leading, Managing, Supporting, and Navigating Change for department chairs and deans.

Nanjing, China: A Long Trip for a Short Time

In April, I participated in a joint workshop between Hohai University and UNL in Nanjing. The workshop was focused on building a partnership on hydro-informatics and water policy and was sponsored by the National Science Foundation and Hohai University. It began on Saturday, April 12, and concluded on April 16. Because of a flight delay out of Chicago, I was stranded in Hong Kong for one night and arrived in Nanjing just in time for the beginning of the workshop on Saturday afternoon. I departed Nanjing the morning of April 14. It’s always interesting to fly 8,000 miles to spend two days at a workshop and then fly home. However, by all measures, this was a very successful trip and workshop. Two other SNR faculty participated. Xun-Hong Chen was one of the organizers of the meeting and John Holz represented the Water Center and water programs at UNL. During our visit, we learned about the water-related research programs at Hohai University and discussed graduate programs in water and climate available through SNR. Several students expressed a strong desire to study at UNL in the School. Hohai University has been allocated 50 graduate student fellowships by the Chinese government for study abroad. I hope to see some of these very bright students at UNL in the near future.
In the first row from left to right:
Ping Ai, Hohai University; Huimin Wang, Hohai University; Xusong Feng, Jiangsu Water Source Company Ltd.; Heng Liu, International Center on Small Hydro Power; Alan Tomkins, UNL Public Policy Center; Erkun Gao, China’s Ministry of Water Resources; Changkuan Zhang, President of Hohai University; Don Wilhite, UNL School of Natural Resources; Sarah Michaels, UNL Political Science Department; John Holz, UNL School of Natural Resources; Wenjuan Niu, Hohai University.

In the second row from left to right:
Longcang Shu, Hohai University; Yunyi Tang, Bureau of Hydrology and Water Resources Survey, Jiangsu Province; Xi Chen, Hohai University; Liliang Ren, Dean, College of Hydrology and Water Resources, Hohai University; Shizhang Peng, Director, State Key Laboratory of Hydrology-Water Resources and Hydraulic Engineering, Hohai University; Leen-Kiat Soh, UNL Computer Science and Engineering Department; Xun-Hong Chen, UNL School of Natural Resources; Ashok Samal, UNL Computer Science and Engineering Department; Deepti Josh, UNL Computer Science and Engineering Department; Xingnan Zhang, Hohai University; Peng Du, UNL Computer Science and Engineering Department.

Grants Submitted and Received

SNR faculty continue to be the recipients of significant grants from a variety of sources. Congratulations to Sue Lackey, Ken Hubbard, Ed Harvey, Kyle Hoagland, Jim Goeke, and John Lenters. SNR received a total of $545,000 in April. Congratulations also to Mike Hayes, Ken Hubbard, Don Rundquist, Kyle Hoagland, and Durelle Scott who collectively submitted proposals totaling more than $1.2 million during April. Grants are an important component of SNR’s success, allowing us to do cutting-edge research, continue our outreach and teaching programs, and support excellent graduate students.

Geography Program to Join SNR
The details of the move of the Geography faculty and program to SNR are taking shape. During the past month we have been evaluating their space needs and how to accommodate these new faculty, staff, and graduate students in Hardin Hall. Sunil Narumalani will serve as the coordinator or program leader for this program once the move is finalized. I expect the move to occur in June. At this time it does not appear that we will need to accommodate their cartographic lab in Hardin Hall since they will continue to have access to lab space in Oldfather Hall for the next year. Those faculty joining SNR are David Wishart, Steve Lavin, Douglas Amedeo, and Clark Archer. Joyce Hurst, the Geography secretary and graduate program coordinator, will also be joining SNR. They will all be housed on the 3rd floor of the tower. We will be converting some additional space for Geography graduate students in the north wing during the summer.

**Paying Tribute to SNR Directors**

Last month I mentioned that we would be hanging portraits of SNR Directors in the vestibule area outside of the auditorium. That task has been completed but we are still waiting for the lettering to complete the project. All previous SNR directors have contributed immensely to SNR’s current success. Stop by and take a stroll down memory lane. Thanks again to Dee Ebbeka for her help with this process.

**SNR’s Welcome Center: Exciting Changes Underway**

You may have noticed some activity in the Welcome Center this past month as walls in the Welcome Center and in the small conference room received several coats of Husker Red paint. The large “N” will soon follow along with other lettering. More changes are in the works. As most of you are aware, we are interviewing candidates for the new position of SNR Advising Coordinator. When that interview process is complete, the successful candidate will be moving into Jacki Loomis’ office. We will also be setting up a work station for a part-time assistant in the Welcome Center to help both the SNR Recruitment Coordinator and the Advising
Coordinator. Jacki’s office will be moving to the office area directly behind the Maps and More Store.

I regret that in June we will be losing our Recruitment Coordinator, Jennifer Aerni. She will be getting married this summer and moving to Ohio. Jennifer has done an excellent job helping SNR build our undergraduate program. It will be very difficult to replace Jennifer, but we have initiated that process. We wish Jennifer the best of luck in all of her future endeavors. We will all greatly miss her!

Climate Change Workshop

In May, I will be participating in a workshop, *Sustainability in a Time of Climate Change: Developing an Intensive Research Framework for the Great Plains*. This workshop has been organized by the Office of the Vice-Chancellor for Research and Economic Development. The workshop is a follow-on to the workshop on climate change that was held last October in Hardin Hall. UNL and USGS are partnering to present this workshop to discuss the potential impacts of climate change on the Great Plains. All UNL faculty are invited to attend this workshop and quite a few SNR faculty will be participating. The long-term goal of this research partnership with USGS is to create an integrated, real-time knowledge base and climate change response system. The dates for this event are May 19-22. The workshop will be held in North Platte on May 21-22, preceded by two days of field trips along the Platte River and in the Nebraska Sand Hills.

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