I hope all of you took advantage of the opportunity to attend the State of the University Address given by Chancellor Harvey Perlman. If not, I encourage you to read the text of his message to UNL’s faculty, staff, and students. Harvey characterized the past decade as one in which UNL focused its energies on becoming a “better” university. His intent is that in the next ten years we will focus on becoming a “bigger” institution, without a reduction in the quality of the educational experience at UNL. The Chancellor has proposed targets for enrollment, funding, and graduation rates for the period between now and 2017. He has challenged us to increase enrollment by 3 percent per year, bringing our total enrollment to 30,000 students. For funding, our target is $300 million from external sources. The Chancellor has also challenged us to move to 120 hours for graduation for virtually all majors, which is projected to help increase our four-year graduation rate from 64 percent to 74 percent by 2017. Harvey also expects to increase the number of faculty at UNL to 1,300 in order to accommodate this increase in student numbers and the external funding expectations for research.

I strongly encourage you to attend the All IANR meeting that will be held in the Hardin Hall Auditorium on September 16, beginning at 3 p.m. Vice Chancellor Ronnie Green will be outlining short and longer term changes for IANR based on the recommendations received from the committees formed for the IANR 2025 initiative. The IANR unit heads had the opportunity to review and provide input to these recommendations at the Leadership Retreat in North Platte in late July. We revisited a number of these recommendations and the implementation strategy and timeline this week during a meeting of IANR unit heads and deans.

**Arid Lands Research Center – Tottori University, Japan**

In early August I visited the Arid Lands Research Center (ALRC) at Tottori University in Tottori, Japan, at the invitation of Masato Shinoda, whom I met while attending the annual meeting of the Korean Meteorological Society in Seoul some years ago. Tottori University is a small university with around 4,000 students. The existence of the ALRC in Japan is interesting because there are no arid lands in Japan. Most of their research is directed towards arid and semi-arid environments in Mongolia, China, and other parts of Asia. I was invited to give a two-hour lecture on drought monitoring, mitigation, and preparedness to faculty, staff, and students. This seminar was well attended and followed a tour of the facilities. On the second day of my visit, Masato organized an international workshop on drought dynamics in an arid, cold environment. This workshop included speakers from Japan, Mongolia, and China. These speakers presented a series of interesting papers on drought studies in Kazakhstan, China, and Mongolia, including papers on satellite monitoring of drought in central Asia and early warning systems in the region. I served as a commentator for each of these papers. The workshop concluded with a discussion of how these regions could shift drought management to a more proactive, risk-based management approach. Several participants plan to attend the fall meeting of the American Geophysical Union in San Francisco in early December. I look forward to meeting these colleagues again in the near future.
Masato is actively seeking the application of a visiting scientist from SNR to spend a year in Japan working with the ALRC. If you are interested in pursuing this opportunity, let me know at your earliest convenience. I believe they have a call for applications twice each year. One will be this month.

Don Wilhite, center, attended a workshop at the Arid Lands Research Center at Tottori University in Japan.

Tottori is noted for its large coastal sand dunes that lie adjacent to the ALRC's research facility.

Climate Change Short Course Proposal – Vietnamese Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

SNR, in collaboration with other departments in the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), is preparing to offer a short course on climate change for the Vietnamese Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD). I have proposed May 7-15, 2012, for the course. UNL has been
negotiating the concept of this course with MARD for several months. We recently agreed on the length of the course and the number of participants, which is expected to be approximately 10. This short course is a follow-up to the recently signed Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) between MARD and UNL. This short course will provide current knowledge to MARD staff on a wide range of issues related to climate change and how these issues affect humans, natural resource systems, and agriculture. Apart from the knowledge gained, this short course and the presence of MARD staff will provide opportunities for further discussions with UNL faculty and administration on future collaboration on broader topics.

The format for the short course will be lecture-based with substantial opportunities for discussion. We also hope to include two field trips for participants during their time in Lincoln. The content for the course will provide the MARD participants a broad understanding of climate change science, including its potential impacts on agriculture and natural resource systems, and alternative mitigation and policy options. The proposal has now been submitted to MARD for their final review. Several months ago I surveyed UNL faculty interest in this short course. I am now following up with faculty to finalize the lecture schedule.

**Jain Irrigation Team Visit**

A five-member team of scientists from Jain Irrigation in India visited IANR August 8-12 to develop further collaborations with IANR units. Following tours of Valmont Irrigation and the West Central Research and Extension Center on August 8-9, the team met with faculty in Agronomy and Horticulture and SNR on Thursday, August 10, and Biological Systems Engineering on Friday, August 11, before visiting the Agricultural Research and Development Center at Mead. Thanks to the SNR faculty who participated in our meeting with the team, including Shashi Verma, Mike Hayes, Brian Wardlow, Martha Shulski, Dan Snow, Mark Kuzila, and Ed Harvey. Also participating in our meeting were Tom Farrell from President Milliken's office and Marc Andreni from the Water for Food Institute.

I attended a wrap-up meeting with the Jain team on Friday afternoon to discuss future collaborations. The next step is to send a small team of IANR faculty to India for further discussions in October or November 2011.

The delegation of scientists from Jain Irrigation in India met with SNR faculty and others on August 10.

**SNR’s Fall Assembly**

The annual fall SNR assembly was held on August 15 to launch the new academic year. The program included CASNR Dean Steve Waller, who provided an overview of enrollment
expectations for CASNR and UNL for the 2011-2012 academic year and briefly discussed the IANR 2025 initiative. Mike Forsberg and Mike Farrell provided an excellent overview of the Platte River Time-Lapse Project and its status. This presentation sparked much interest from SNR faculty and staff. The remainder of this year’s program was devoted to business-related issues in SNR, including a report by Steve Thomas on some of the activities of the Safety and Facilities Committee, Mark Mesarch on recent changes and improvements to the SNR website, Jim Hines on our transition from Lotus Notes to Microsoft Cloud for email, and Mark Burbach on teaching assessment activities. We also invited Fred Gardy from UNL Police to discuss evacuation planning and campus emergency situations.

Thanks to Christine Steggs for arranging an interesting and useful series of workshops in the afternoon on sexual harassment training, SNR’s new image sharing system, situational awareness, and use of Hardin Hall’s new automated external defibrillators. These defibrillators are now available on the first, fifth, and ninth floors of the Hardin Hall tower and in the lobby area in the north wing.

**SNR Fall Seminar Series Announced**

Tala Awada, SNR associate director, has organized an excellent fall seminar series that strongly focuses on bringing in mostly speakers from UNL to provide opportunities for dialogue on potential collaborative research. The seminars will be held on Wednesday afternoons at 3:30 p.m. in the Hardin Hall Auditorium, with the exception of the October 5 seminar, which will be held in 901 Hardin Hall, and the seminar on Tuesday, November 15, which will begin at 3 p.m. in the Auditorium.

Faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to attend these seminars.

- **September 14** - Valery Forbes, School of Biological Sciences, UNL, “Why We Need Better Models for Assessing and Managing Ecosystem Services”
- **September 21** - Anatoly Gitelson, School of Natural Resources, UNL, “Physically-based Models for Remote Estimation of Terrestrial and Aquatic Ecosystems’ Primary Productivity”
- **September 28** - Galen Erickson, Department of Animal Science, UNL, “Going Green: Impact of Modern Beef Production on the Environment”
- **October 5** - Andy Bishop, Rainwater Basin Joint Venture Coordinator, NE, “Independent Environmental Acts of Kindness or Focused Conservation Delivery: the Changing Conservation Delivery Paradigm”
- **October 12** - John Gates, Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, UNL, “Assessing Groundwater Renewability with Environmental Tracers”
- **October 26** - Paul Black, Department of Biochemistry, UNL, “The Oily Side of Algae”
- **November 2** - Jay Storz, School of Biological Sciences, UNL, “Genetics of Adaptation to High-Altitude Hypoxia in Birds and Mammals”
- **November 9** - Jeff Royer, Department of Agricultural Economics, UNL, “Disciplinary Differences and Their Implications for the School of Natural Resources”
- **November 16** - Paul Sutton, Department of Geography, University of Denver, “The Real Wealth of Nations: Mapping and Monetizing the Human Ecological Footprint”
- **November 30** - Suat Irmak, Department of Biological Systems Engineering, UNL, “Nebraska Water and Energy Flux Measurement, Modeling, and Research Network (NEBFLUX): Progress and data on measuring plant physiology and evapotranspiration for various vegetation surfaces”

I am continuing to work on several special seminars to be held during the academic year. I have successfully recruited Dr. Thomas Lovejoy from George Mason University to present a seminar on April 26. Tom is a noted tropical biologist and environmentalist and is the former executive vice president of the World Wildlife Fund. Tom has had a distinguished and influential career in international conservation and environmental policy. In the foreword to the book *Conservation Biology* in 1980, he introduced the term “biological diversity” – later shortened to biodiversity -- to the scientific community. He currently holds the position of Biodiversity Chair at the Heinz Center for Science, Economics and the Environment and served as president from 2002-2008. He has advised U.S. presidents, the United Nations and the World Bank, and founded the public television series “Nature.” It will be exciting to
have Tom on campus to present a seminar that will have broad appeal for faculty, staff, and students.

**Lincoln Public Schools – Annual Professional Development Workshop**

On Friday, August 12, SNR participated in the 2nd Annual Professional Development workshop for all secondary and middle level science teachers in the Lincoln Public School System. SNR also participated last year at the first event. Our mission was to connect with the LPS science teachers, and to show them our various educational outreach activities that can be brought into their classrooms.

SNR faculty and staff who met with the teachers on August 12 were Ken Dewey, Dave Gosselin, Martha Shulski, Natalie Umphlett, and Donna Woudenberg.

![Image: Donna Woudenberg shows Lincoln Public Schools science teachers the educational outreach activities offered by the National Drought Mitigation Center.]

**Grants Awarded and Proposals Submitted**

Congratulations to SNR faculty and staff for grants awarded during August. Total funding received during the month was $324,634. The largest sources of grants received during August were from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (63%) and NSF (15%). Faculty and staff awarded funding included Mike Hayes, Cody Knutson, Anatoly Gitelson, John Lenters, Shashi Verma, Xinhua Zhou, and Craig Allen.

Total funding received by SNR faculty and staff during July and August was $1,584,751.

Proposals submitted during August 2011 were for funds totaling $1,617,407. SNR faculty and staff submitting proposals included Drew Tyre, Craig Allen, Kari Decker, T.J. Fontaine, Mark Kuzia, Mark Burbach, Tapan Pathak, Tonya Bernadt, Tonya Haigh, Jeff Nothwehr, Deborah Bathke, Mike Hayes, Mark Svoboda, and Larkin Powell. These proposals were mainly directed to USDA (61%) and the Nebraska Environmental Trust (32%).