

I. Greetings from the EREN Coordinator's Office

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Hello EREN Members!

Greetings from the deep freeze that is Central Ohio! I am thinking enviously of some my EREN colleagues in very different climatic zones and wishing I could visit some of your field sites NOW.

My key message to you at this point is to **SAVE THE DATES of June 10-12, 2015** for the EREN All Members Meeting. Dr. David Bowne, Lead Scientist of TurtlePop, has generously agreed to host EREN at Elizabethtown College in Elizabethtown, PA. The Lead Scientists and the EREN Leadership Team will be discussing the specifics of the agenda and a registration invitation will be issued soon. We will be able to accommodate up to 70 attendees and there will be some travel funds available, using the last dregs of our National Science Foundation Funding. Once again, please save the dates!

We have applied for, and received, a one year extension of our grant, so our funding now officially ends in April 2016. We continue to explore future funding options. This conversation has moved more slowly than I had hoped (mainly due to my rotating into being chair of my department) but we are aiming to get some more concrete ideas for continuing EREN out into our community for discussion as soon as possible.

One final bit of exciting news – EREN is going global, with new members joining from all over the world, as you will read below. Welcome to our international colleagues!

Laurie Anderson
EREN Coordinator

II. EREN Updates

November 3-5, 2014: EREN Coordinator Laurie Anderson attended a workshop at the Cary Institute for Ecosystem Studies funded by the National Science Foundation titled “Grassroots Scientific Networks: Lessons Learned and Paths Forward”. A paper articulating the scientific value and potential of grassroots networks is being prepared by workshop participants.

January 30, 2015: EREN Coordinator Laurie Anderson attended a meeting of Principal Investigators and Program Officers for the Research Coordination Networks-Undergraduate Biology Education Program at the National Science Foundation. We discussed ways to document the success of our programs and the structure of a survey instrument NSF would like to send to PIs to gather information on RCN-UBE projects. There are plans to request funds for a broader summit meeting of RCN-UBE PIs to share best practices and lessons learned.

EREN continues to grow across the globe: As of February 25, 2015, we had 277 members representing 195 institutions from diverse countries, including Australia, Singapore, the United Kingdom, Columbia, Canada, Mexico, and the Bahamas. Visit <http://erenweb.org/map-of-collaborating-eren-institutions/> to see a map of all the EREN sites.

III. Upcoming EREN Events

The **EREN All Members Meeting** has been scheduled for June 10-12, 2015 at Elizabethtown College in Elizabethtown, PA. Save the dates and stay tuned for more details!

EREN will again have an active presence at the **Ecological Society of America Annual Meeting, August 9-14, 2015** in Baltimore, MD. We will publicize presentations by EREN Members and host a low-key social event. More information to come as plans finalize.

IV. Featured EREN Member: Tracy Gartner

Tracy Gartner is co-Lead Scientist, along with Carolyn Thomas, on the EREN DATIS Project: Decomposition in Terrestrial and Aquatic Invaded Systems. She is also one of the EREN Founders and serves on the Leadership Team.

Tracy is an Associate Professor at Carthage College in Kenosha, Wisconsin where she has been teaching in the Environmental Science, Biology, and Geography/Earth Science departments since 2005. Courses she teaches include research- and service-oriented courses in environmental science, ecology, botany, experimental design, and restoration. She also has directed the Environmental Science Program for the last 8 years, more than tripling the number of majors in that time. The program is very project- and research-oriented and EREN has played an integral role in the Environmental Science curriculum for the last 5 years.

Carthage College also has a strong emphasis on undergraduate research and Tracy has maintained an active research group. Broadly, her research focuses on how shifts in biodiversity (due to invasive species, environmental change, and human disturbance) influence community structure and ecosystem nutrient dynamics. Since her arrival at Carthage, she has concentrated more strongly on the ecosystem impacts of invasive species, especially buckthorn. She finds collaborative research the most enjoyable and rewarding and has often been surprised where those types of questions have taken her.

Tracy graduated from Coe College with a BA in Biology, Environmental Science, and General Science. She obtained a PhD in Ecology from the University of Connecticut. She did postdoctoral work through the University of California-Irvine while being a Visiting Scholar at Pennsylvania State University and conducting field work in Alaska.

While providing the notes for this bio, Tracy realized the importance of the number three in her life, with the most important being her three-year old son, a budding scientist with an interest in botany, maps, and engineering.