



# EREN

ECOLOGICAL RESEARCH AS EDUCATION NETWORK

February 12, 2017

## Newsletter #15

erenweb.org • erenteam@gmail.com • Follow us at:



### I. Greetings from the President's Desk

Hello EREN Members!

Welcome back to a new year and a new semester, and happy birthday to Charles Darwin! EREN has now transitioned from a National Science Foundation-funded Research Coordination Network project to our own, independent and enduring organization (although we do not yet have any formal non-profit status). In September 2016, our NSF funding concluded and we officially disbanded the EREN Leadership Team and reassembled as a 15 member EREN Board of Directors, with three new Directors elected by the broader EREN membership, and me elected to a three year term as President. **The short-term plans of the Board are to assess the current status of all EREN projects, consider the financial needs of the organization, and seek additional grant funding.** Please contact the Board at [erenteam@gmail.com](mailto:erenteam@gmail.com) to suggest other priorities and agenda items.

Also, since we no longer have funds to support an annual meeting, **we will not have a separate EREN meeting this summer and instead plan to encourage smaller EREN gatherings at existing meetings** that many of us attend anyway, such as the Ecological Society of America, the Botanical Society of America, and other regional meetings. We plan to have EREN meetings again, but want to organize around a coherent theme that helps forward the organization's mission, and that could attract workshop funding. **Contact us with suggestions for meeting themes and venues, with Summer 2018 as our target date for the next EREN meeting.**

As EREN's President, I feel I must make a brief comment on national issues. EREN is an entity born out of ecological science, and **we are non-partisan and broadly inclusive, welcoming all people, from all nations, interested in engaging in collaborative ecological research with students as partners.** While I am open to diverse political views, I wish to communicate my personal concern that the current administration does not share (1) our sense of the vital importance of science, particularly ecological science, as a partner in crafting fair, reasonable, evidence-based environmental policy, or (2) our commitment to inclusive science and science education of the highest quality. I ask all EREN members to be vigilant on these points as the policies of the new administration evolve, and to make any concerns about science and science education known to your elected representatives.

Laurie Anderson, President of the EREN Board of Directors

#### In this issue:

#### I. Greetings from EREN's President

#### II. EREN Updates

#### III. EREN Board of Directors

#### IV. Featured EREN Member Michelle Anderson

#### V. Ecologist's Toolbox

## II. EREN Updates

Laurie Anderson was invited to join the newly re-formed Science, Technology and Education Advisory Committee (STEAC) for the National Ecological Observatory Network. Laurie attended the first meeting of the STEAC in November 2016. The main topic of this meeting was updating the STEAC on the state of NEON as the organization transitions to management by Battelle, a large non-profit agency in Columbus, OH that manages a number of federal labs. Please contact Laurie at [ljanders@owu.edu](mailto:ljanders@owu.edu) for ideas and questions about NEON and how it can be a resource to EREN members.

**EREN will host gatherings** of members and others who want to learn more about EREN at the **Ecological Society of America Mid-Atlantic Chapter Meeting (April 21-23, Stockton University, Galloway, NJ)** and the **Ecological Society of America Annual Meeting (August 6-11, Portland, OR)**. Details to follow in the coming weeks and months!

## III. Welcome to the new EREN Board of Directors!

The new EREN Board of Directors (BOD) assumed its duties on September 1, 2016. The board is composed of 12 former members of the EREN Leadership Team and 3 new members, elected to 3 year terms (our new members are shown in **bold**). The plan is to rotate former Leadership Team members off gradually over time until the entire board consists of elected members.

In accordance with the EREN By-Laws, the BOD has established some required roles for its members. These are shown in parentheses below. Please feel free to contact the BOD at [erenteam@gmail.com](mailto:erenteam@gmail.com) with comments, ideas, and questions.

Membership of the EREN Board of Directors, Sep 1 2016 – Aug 31 2017

Laurel Anderson (President): Ohio Wesleyan University, OH

**Michelle Anderson: University of Montana Western, MT**

David Bowne (Vice President): Elizabethtown College, PA

Jerald Dosch: Macalester College, MN

**Danielle Garneau: SUNY Plattsburg, NY**

**Jason Kilgore (Co-Web Manager): Washington and Jefferson College, PA**

Karen Kuers: Sewanee: The University of the South, TN

Martha Hoopes: Mount Holyoke College, MA

Dan Hornbach: Macalester College, MN

Erin Lindquist: Meredith College, NC

Jose-Luis Machado (Funding Coordinator): Swarthmore College, PA

Bob Pohland (Co-Web Manager): Ferrum College, VA

Kathleen LoGiudice (Secretary/Treasurer): Union College, NY

Kathy Shea (Teaching Coordinator): St. Olaf College, MN

Carolyn Thomas: Ferrum College, VA

## IV. Featured EREN Member – Michelle Anderson

Dr. Anderson is a professor at University of Montana Western, MA. She grew up by the ocean in Newport, Rhode Island, which inspired an early love of marine biology and outdoor adventure. This passion led to her work towards a BS Biology degree with a Marine & Freshwater Biology emphasis from the University of New Hampshire. After she got her undergraduate degree she wasn't quite sure what path to follow in science. She knew she enjoyed aquatic field work and conservation, which led her to an AmeriCorps position in California as a salmonid research and education volunteer. During her time with AmeriCorps she fell in love with freshwater ecology in general and rivers in particular. After a brief return to marine field work in Glacier Bay, Alaska, she pursued graduate studies in Montana researching floodplain ecology. While most of her graduate research was based near Glacier National Park in Montana, she was also lucky enough to work with researchers from around the globe and spend a few weeks studying salmon in Russia.

After graduate school she moved on to a position teaching in the Biology Department at the University of Montana Western (UMW). UMW has a unique experiential education mission and block schedule, which means during a class she teaches a single cohort of 15 - 25 students all taking one class at a time together for 3 1/2 weeks. She and her students get to do some really fun field ecology studies, including EREN projects like RBAST, BWC and PFPP. She regularly teaches courses in biological diversity, ecology, fisheries, wildlife, conservation biology, wetlands, and evolution. She also gets to engage in interdisciplinary teaching, research, and service-learning with Fine Arts, History, Education, Mathematics, English and Psychology colleagues at her campus, and with colleagues across the country in the Quantitative Biology & Education Synthesis (QUBES) network. In addition to the current BS Biology degree, her campus just approved a new quantitatively-focused BS Ecology degree that will be added next year, which she is really excited to be a part of.

In recent years she has worked on research projects in fish and wildlife conservation, such as Arctic grayling lake fishery food web dynamics, sagebrush songbird energetics in relation to climate variability, ecological interactions occurring with beaver dams, and models of disease ecology in bats. She is on sabbatical this year working to develop new research skills and questions related to continent-wide variation in frog breeding phenology, the influence of agricultural flood-irrigation on migratory waterbirds, and native mussel translocation as part of trout stream restorations. She's been fortunate to work on these research projects with collaborators from EREN, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, National Forest Service, United States Geologic Survey, Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, and the Flathead Lake Biological Station. She says, "I'm extremely lucky - I work with great students on meaningful projects in an epic place".

## V. Ecologist's Toolbox

This month, our Ecologist's Toolbox addition comes from Mark Gathany of Cedarville University. Mark writes "I have developed an "indoor" ecology lab to expose students to web data collection, data management in Excel, and creation of figures that is arranged around the development of climate diagrams. Many ecology texts use these while introducing biomes and/or environmental variation. We make use of the NOAA/NCDC weather station data sets to create climate diagrams along a regional "transect" to investigate patterns of climatic variability. This leads to a discussion of community ecology in terms of assembly and competition and what we would expect to see if we actually visited and observed the native community."

You can access Mark's materials in the Ecologist's Toolbox section of the EREN web page at this link: <http://erenweb.org/resources/ecologists-toolbox/>

Thanks Mark!