**LTER ASM 2015 Working Group Final Report**

Dustin Kincaid, Steve Hamilton, Jorge Ramos, & Luca Marazzi

**Working group title**: Inland freshwater wetlands: establishing broad-scale comparative investigations of inland freshwater wetlands

**Number of attendees**: 22 (includes workshop organizers)

**Number of LTER sites represented**: 11

**Workshop agenda**: Briefly, this group discussed (1) why wetlands are important to study and why the LTER is uniquely situated to take on broad-scale investigations, (2) the results of a survey sent out to LTER sites regarding current wetland research, (3) which research questions might be of interest to pursue within the LTER network, and (4) how this group could move forward towards new discussions, projects and publications.

**Major points of interest**:

1. The majority (16) of existing LTER sites have freshwater wetland ecosystems. Fourteen of these sites have collected some data on wetlands. In aggregate these data address the 5 core research themes central to the LTER Network (primary production, population studies, movement of organic matter, movement of inorganic matter and disturbance patterns).
2. Wetlands in LTER sites are distributed across a latitude, temperature and precipitation gradients with differing chemistries, and located in four bioregions: dry, humid temperate, humid tropical and polar.
3. The LTER network could address research gaps (e.g., broad-scale wetland research) that exist as a result of NEON’s reduced focus on freshwater ecosystems and considering that the Global Lake Ecological Observatory Network (GLEON) does not focus on wetlands.
4. There was interest in developing research questions focused on wetland hydrologic and biogeochemical processes, biodiversity and ecosystem functioning, food webs and socio-ecological dimensions (including restoration).
5. There was substantial interest in studying created and/or managed wetland ecosystems.
6. Attendees were interested in participating in a follow-up working group.

**Future directions:**

1. We will compile the results of the pre-survey sent to LTER sites and share with the LTER network.
2. We will form a LTER wetland working group with one representative from each of the relevant sites.
3. We envision planning a follow-up workshop (Spring 2016?) pending available funding.
4. Medium-term goals include synthesizing the available data from wetlands across the LTER network and writing a white paper for internal review.
5. Longer-term goal is planning and writing a synthesis publication on ecological processes and changes in wetlands across the US LTER network.