

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
4201 Wilson Boulevard
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22230



OFFICE OF THE
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
FOR GEOSCIENCES

August 7, 2017

Dr. Pamela Kempton
Department of Geology
Kansas State University
108 Thompson Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506

Dear Dr. Kempton:

Thank you for submitting the report of the Committee of Visitors (COV) for the Division of Earth Science (EAR), which was held June 19-20, 2017. Both the COV report and the NSF response will be presented to the NSF Advisory Committee for Geosciences (AC-GEO) at their October 2017 meeting. Once approved by AC-GEO, the report and response will be public.

I sincerely appreciate the time and energy that you and each member of the COV dedicated to this process. NSF and the Earth sciences community will benefit greatly from your thorough and thoughtful analysis of the Earth Sciences division. I was pleased to hear that the COV concluded that EAR programs are well managed, and I am particularly appreciative of the constructive suggestions for improvements, both in the areas of merit review processes and in long-term portfolio planning. Your insights and recommendations will help us balance the near-term and long-range strategic science and management objectives of the Geosciences Directorate.

I recognize that the COV's contributions went far beyond the two days of face-to-face meetings. The many hours of advance work, reviewing a portfolio of EAR project awards and declinations and other pertinent background information, were clear from the informed discussion and insightful questions raised on-site. We owe you and all the members many thanks for mastering the Foundation's electronic business processes and reviewing the many documents in the weeks leading up to the COV meeting.

Carol Frost, Division Director for Earth Sciences, has provided a set of specific responses to your findings and recommendations in the enclosed document. Thank you again for your contribution to maintaining the tradition of close cooperation between NSF and the Earth Sciences community through a process of periodic outside review by a COV.

Once again, thank you for your time and effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William E. Easterling".

William E. Easterling
Assistant Director

Enclosure

Copy to: COV Members
Dr. Kip Hodges, AC-GEO Chair