

20th Anniversary of the International Tundra Experiment (ITEX)

17-21 January 2012

The University of Texas at El Paso, USA

Purpose of the workshop:

1. Celebrate 20 years of ITEX research, education, and outreach.
2. Provide an opportunity for ITEX participants to present recent findings from site-based and synthetic studies.
3. Discuss future directions and new research in ITEX.
4. Begin discussions and compilation of data for the next syntheses.
5. Identify commonalities in site-based studies that may lead to cross-site analysis of similar parameters and a synthesis paper.

Registration

Please register for the meeting and provide abstracts for research posters at:

<http://www2.fiu.edu/~oberbaue/ITEX20thWorkshop.html>

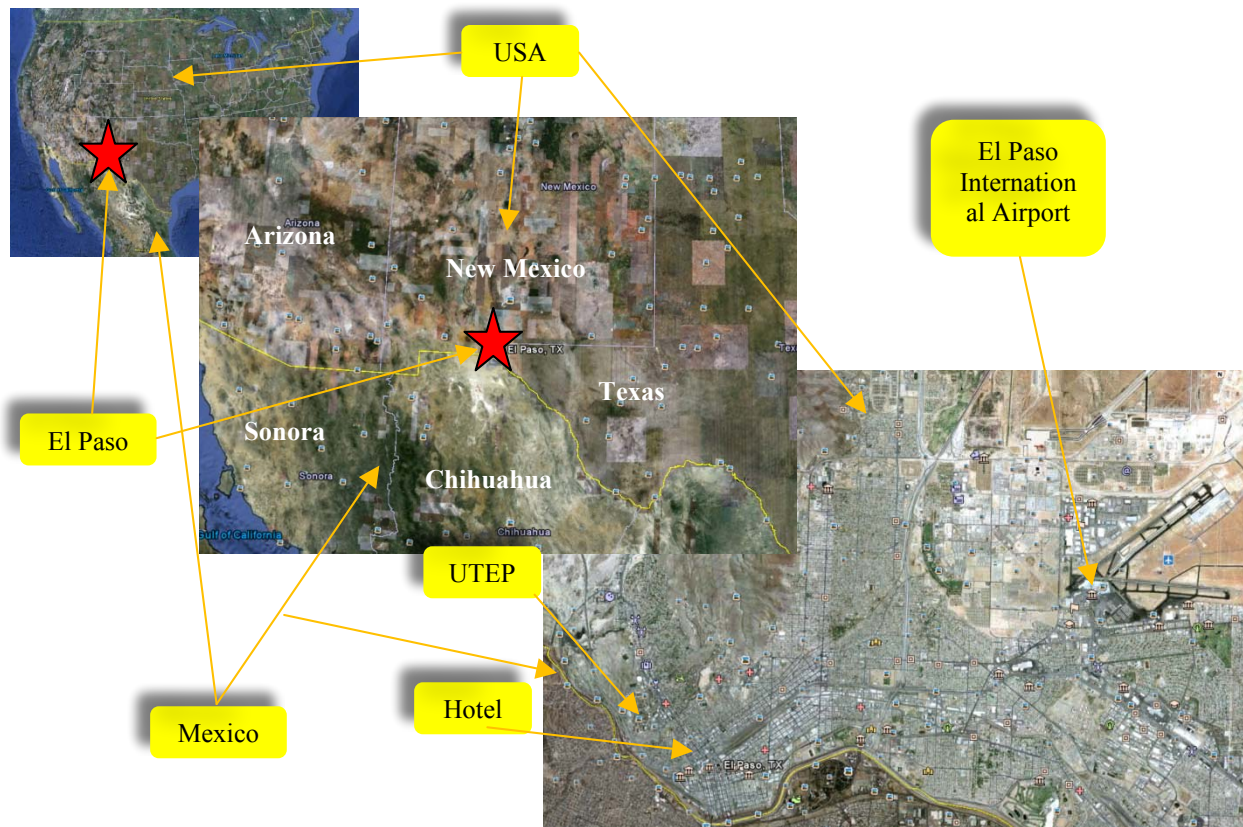
Also, please provide your logistical information so we can arrange airport pickup and assess interests in the field trips. Logistical information can be entered at:

<http://www2.fiu.edu/~oberbaue/ITEX20thWorkshoplogistics.html>

Workshop Organizers:

- Greg Henry greg.henry@geog.ubc.ca
- Steve Oberbauer oberbaue@fiu.edu
- Craig Tweedie (host) ctweedie@utep.edu
+1 915 747 8448 Office;
+1 915 490 7302 Cell/Mobile

Location of Meeting – El Paso, Texas, USA:



El Paso International Airport (ELP):

- The closest airport is El Paso International Airport (ELP). The most convenient connecting flights to ELP are provided through Atlanta, Houston, Dallas, Chicago, Denver, Phoenix, and Los Angeles.
- More information on the El Paso International airport can be attained at <http://www.elpasointernationalairport.com/2009/index.html>
- A free shuttle will be available for transporting participants from El Paso International airport to the Hotel Camino Real in downtown El Paso. There is a courtesy phone near baggage claim at ELP that dials the hotel directly (or call the number below), and the shuttle arrive at ELP within about 20 minutes of calling. Please note that the drivers work off tips and are appreciative of a few dollars in the hand for offering you transport.

Hotel:

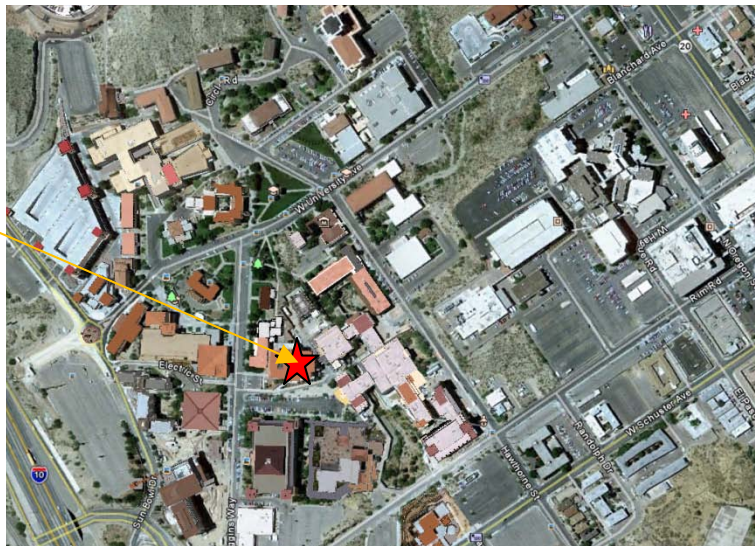
- The conference hotel will be the Camino Real in downtown El Paso.
- Contact details and more information about the hotel can be found at <http://www.caminoreal.com/english/Micrositio/index.php?id=27>
101 South El Paso Street, El Paso, Texas, USA 79901
Tel: +1-915-534 3050/3042/3099 (i.e. 3 lines) Fax: +1-915-534 3024

- The hotel is situated approximately 8 miles from ELP and takes approximately 15 minutes by shuttle. There is no easy to use public transport to travel between ELP and the hotel.
- The Hotel is approximately 2 miles (3 km) from UTEP but be prepared for a twisty route through heavy traffic if you plan to walk. We will run shuttles to and from the hotel at the beginning and end of each conference day.
- Lists of suggested nearby restaurants and bars with maps showing the location of each will be provided at check-in.

Conference Venue:

- The meeting will be held at the University of Texas at El Paso in rooms 2.154 and 2.156 of the Biosciences Building. A series of smaller meeting rooms will also be available for breakout sessions.

Bioscience
Building,
UTEP



- The workshop will also be webcast – instructions will be emailed to interested persons just prior to the conference. Please email ctweedie@utep.edu if you wish to participate via web conference.
- El Paso is on mountain daylight time - the current time in El Paso can be viewed at <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/city.html?n=395>

IMPORTANT – Safety on the US-Mexico Border:

- El Paso was recently ranked the 2nd safest city over 500,000 people in the US for violent crime http://os.cqpress.com/citycrime/2010/City_Crime_Rankings_bypop_2011-2011.pdf
- IMPORTANTLY, however, there has been what is dubbed ‘the drug wars’ raging in Mexico over the past few years. Ciudad Juarez in the state of Chihuahua is the Mexican city immediately adjacent to El Paso on the Mexican border. Juarez has been badly affected by the drug wars and is now thought to have the world’s highest murder rate with over 3000 people murdered in the city in 2010 alone <http://neglectedwar.com/blog/archives/671>. This is an extremely sad and dangerous situation and **WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT NOBODY TRAVELS TO MEXICO DURING THE ITEX MEETING.**
- Aside from murder, kidnappings, robbery, carjacking, etc. are all extremely common and there are current travel advisories for the city of Juarez and state of Chihuahua, Mexico. <http://www.nationalterroralert.com/2010/03/14/us-state-department-travel-warning-for-mexico/>
- El Paso, however is very safe and people are extremely friendly and welcoming of visitors. You should feel safe in El Paso – please avoid all temptation to walk over the bridge to visit Mexico though – it is just not safe, especially for foreign visitors.

Proposed Agenda:

(An updated Agenda will be provided before the meeting. As in other ITEX Workshops, timing and order is subject to change at the meeting.)

Tuesday 17th January

- Travel day – participants should plan to arrive in El Paso on this day
- Dinner will be held at a local restaurant – more information will be circulated the week before the meeting.
- A packet of conference materials will be waiting at the hotel for when you arrive.

Wednesday 18th January

- 07:45 Shuttle buses will depart Hotel Camino Real for UTEP.
- 08:00-08:30 Breakfast will be provided at the workshop venue at room 2.154 in the Bioscience building.
- 08:30-08:45 Welcome, housekeeping, (Craig Tweedie)
- 08:45-09:00 Introductions and charge for the meeting (Greg Henry)
- 09:00-09:30 Syntheses of long-term vegetation changes in OTCs and control plots (Sarah Elmendorf)
- 09:30-09:50 Phenology synthesis (Tiffany Troxler)
- 09:50-10:10 Syntheses of syntheses (Greg Henry)
- 10:10-10:40 Discussion of presentations – what next for the ITEX data?
- 10:40-11:00 Break
- 11:00-12:00 Update of research at ITEX sites– what has been going on across the network through and beyond IPY? Presentations by representatives of sites, 5-10 minutes restricted to 3-5 slides per person.
- 12:00-12:30 Discussion of activities across the ITEX network – new research questions and synergies.
- 12:30-13:30 Lunch
- 13:30-14:30 Poster session 1
- 14:30-14:50 Break
- 14:50-17:30 Series of invited speakers - TBA
- 17:30 Shuttle buses depart UTEP for Hotel Camino Real
- 19:00 Dinner – Carlos and Miki's Mexican Restaurant (shuttle buses will be provided).

Thursday 19th January

- 07:45 Shuttle buses will depart Hotel Camino Real for UTEP.
- 08:00-08:30 Breakfast will be provided at the workshop venue at room 2.154 in the Bioscience building.
- 08:30-08:45 Outline for the day (Greg)
- 08:45-10:30 Poster session 2
- 10:30-10:50 Break
- 10:50-11:20 Establish working groups (next syntheses, new research in ITEX, review paper, protocols & manual, others)
- 11:20-12:30 Working group meetings

- 12:30-13:30 Lunch
- 13:30-14:50 Working group meetings
- 15:00 Field trip to the Franklin Mountains. Students familiar with local vegetation and natural history will accompany the trip. Shuttle buses will be provided.
- 18:00 Dinner at the home of Craig Tweedie & Vanessa Lougheed

Friday 20th January

- 07:45 Shuttle buses will depart Hotel Camino Real for UTEP.
- 08:00-08:30 Breakfast will be provided at the workshop venue at room 2.154 in the Bioscience building.
- 08:30-09:30 Plenary: short reports from working groups (new groups?)
- 09:30-12:30 Working groups (break at 10:30)
- 12:30-13:30 Lunch
- 13:30-15:00 Plenary: Working group reports and discussions
- 15:00-15:20 Break
- 15:20-16:00 Other ITEX business: protocols, web site, data access, planning for next meeting(s)
- 16:00-17:00 Election of ITEX Chair (bylaws and procedures will be sent to participants prior to the meeting)
- 17:00-17:30 Wrap up and end of formal meeting – passing the ITEX Viking.
- 18:00 Dinner at Mesa Street Bar and Grill

Saturday 21st January

- Field trip to local sites of interest.
- Field trips are still being planned but will take on two forms (please specify your preference when you register for the meeting:
 1. ***The Scenic tour:*** We will likely visit the Jornada Experimental Range operated by the US Department of Agriculture and site of a former International Biological Program site. The Jornada also hosts one of the oldest US Long Term Ecological Research programs in the US. Following a tour of a UTEP study site where you will see an eddy covariance tower, sensor network, robotic tram system for measuring surface reflectance properties, and if the weather prevails, a few other different technologies facilitating multi-scale measurement of plant phenology and land-atmosphere carbon, water and energy fluxes. We will then have lunch at a historic Mexican restaurant at Old Mesilla, a quaint former Mexican village where the famous Billy the Kid was tried. Following a wander through the historic town plaza, we will drive through the Rio Grande valley back towards El Paso visiting one of the oldest wineries in the US where we may be lucky to see a classic desert sunset. Interesting websites associated with this field trip include:
 - <http://jornada.nmsu.edu/>
 - <http://www.oldmesilla.org/>
 - <http://www.laposta-de-mesilla.com/>
 - <http://www.lavinawinery.com/>

2. ***The Adventure tour:*** This tour will involve a long drive but will allow participants to experience a wide variety of ecosystems in southern New Mexico. We will drive north of El Paso through the northern Chihuahuan Desert, then leave the paved road to pass through one of the last grasslands that formerly dominated the Chihuahuan Desert before European occupation. From here, we will head towards the mountains and weave through a series of dirt roads that will take us through a Juniper grassland, to sub alpine coniferous forest in Lincoln National Forest – home of Smoky the Bear! A boxed lunch will be provided at a scenic lookout. We will then pass through the small country town of Cloudcroft for some souvenir shopping before returning to El Paso. This excursion will be strongly weather dependent and will also permit a short hike in the schedule.

Interesting websites associated with this field trip include:

- <http://www.stateparks.com/lincoln.html>
- <http://www.fs.usda.gov/lincoln>
- <http://cloudcroft.com/>

Sunday 22nd January

- Travel day – participants depart El Paso.

Additional notes:

- Air travel, hotel accommodations and meals during the meeting will be supported in-part for as many attendees as possible by a grant from the US National Science Foundation (PI Steve Oberbauer, contact: oberbaue@fiu.edu for assistance with travel arrangements). It is requested that participants cover the cost of food during their transit and the cost of travel to and from their home airport.
- We plan to webcast the workshop using the software “Elluminate” or “EVO”.
- If you have any particular dietary preferences please contact the workshop organizers (ctweedie@utep.edu).
- The conference venue will have basic audio/video compatible with most computer platforms. If presenters need other more specialized media, please let us know as soon as possible.
- Posters in portrait format 122 tall x 91 cm wide (4 x 3 ft) will be optimal for the available space, although landscape posters can be accommodated if necessary.
- We encourage folks to bring any data that may prove interesting to explore as time permits towards the end of the week.
- Free wireless internet access will be provided at UTEP.
- Childcare can be provided at the attendees’ expense. Please contact the conference organizers to make arrangements.
- For participants planning to attend the Saturday field trip - the weather can be quite variable, so sturdy footwear, hat and sunglasses, as well as warm clothing are strongly recommended.
- A link to the weather forecast for El Paso can be found at: [NWS-El Paso](#)