

Advisory Committee
NSF OpenTopography Project
Findings and Recommendations
June 4, 2010

The Advisory Committee (AC) for the NSF OpenTopography project met with the project team on Friday June 4, 2010. This was the first meeting of the advisory committee, comprising of: David Tarboton, Nancy Glenn, David Sandwell, David Phillips, Jason Stoker, and Steve DeLong.

Overall we are impressed with the progress made by this project since its start. The following are points where we perceive the project to be strong:

- Community oriented
- Tiered data access
- Link to scientific inquiry
- Simplicity and elegance of the web design
- Diversity of team strengths
- Leveraging of resources at SDSC
- Responsiveness to community inquiries
- Following the original proposal
- Workshops, tutorials, and online help documentation

Based on our discussions we recommend the team focus on the following items:

- Develop/clarify your mission so that it can provide direction towards prioritization of data ingestion for dissemination.
- Develop formal relationship/MOU with NCALM. The original NSF proposal had a letter of commitment from NCALM. Formal arrangements need to be made for NCALM data to be hosted through OT. One way to promote this relationship would be to invite an NCALM member to be on OT advisory committee.
- Develop an MOU with USGS to formalize data exchange and tool development.
- Improve the attribution of sources of original data. The web site should display the source of the data and recommend an appropriate citation for each data delivery.
- Acquire scientifically valuable, interesting, and strategic new types of data. (Acquire all possible data even if it is not put on line, just to secure for unanticipated future needs.)
- Continue to promote open data and software.
- Offer and publicize capability for data management.
- Become a go to place to learn about existence of LIDAR data.
- Host community developed tools with a feedback mechanism (e.g. the Matlab file exchange model)

The committee prefers the next meeting be in January/February 2011. We recommend that the first three bullets should be considered as short term priorities.