

PRESS RELEASE

Scientists meet at University of California White Mountain Research Station to create “GLORIA Master Station” in the White Mountains.

On May 22, 2006 a group of 20 scientists met at the University of California’s White Mountain Research Station (WMRS) in Bishop, California, to plan future monitoring and research on climate change and its effects on vegetation, soils, and animal life in high mountains. Many of the participants were active members of the research teams that surveyed seven summits in the White Mountains in 2004-05, following protocols developed by the international Global Observation Research Initiative in Alpine Environments (GLORIA) network. These summits, along with many others around the world, have been surveyed to observe climate change effects.

The primary goal of the May 22 workshop was to find ways to augment and extend the White Mountain surveys, and to better understand and interpret environmental changes over the next 100 years. Discussions among the participants emphasized the value of interdisciplinary, collaborative research in the White Mountains. The remarkable 8500 year record of past climates provided by bristlecone pine tree rings, the excellent access and working conditions in the White Mountains, and the rich legacy and support facilities of the 55 year-old White Mountain Research Station provide a unique opportunity to measure, observe and understand high mountain environments.

The assembled group, including support from WMRS and in collaboration with CIRMOUNT (the Consortium for Integrated Climate Research in Western Mountains), designated a “GLORIA Master Station” at WMRS, to be known as “WMRS-GLORIA”. This designation signifies a long-term commitment to create a knowledge base and research community focused on the GLORIA concept and the broader interdisciplinary questions defined by the group.

The group also pledged to hold a scientific conference on the topic within the next two years, and make an effort to publish a conference proceedings volume. Finally, they agreed to “kick off” the Master Station concept by gathering together in July 2006 at the WMRS Crooked Creek Field Station to carry out a series of research and monitoring activities.

More information is available on the WMRS web site www.wmrs.edu, or by contacting the White Mountain Research Station at 760-873-4344.