

STEAC MEETING REPORT

(11/25/2025)

The members of the STEAC met on November 25, 2025, with six members attending (Kelly Aho, Ben Baiser, John Kochendorfer, Daniel Rubenstein, Adrienne Sponberg, and Sam Roy). Seven NEON-Battelle staff attended (Keli Goodman, Darcy Gora, Steve Jacobs, Paula Mabee, Courtney Meier, Kate Thibault, and Chau Tran).

The meeting was virtual, and the following topics were discussed: I. Data product considerations for AY26.

I. Data product considerations for AY26:

We continued reviewing NEON's Data Product Modification Proposal, beginning with a summary of where we left off at our previous meeting (11/19/25). We began with a summary of [DP1.10058.001](#) – Plant presence and percent cover. Clarified that productivity and biomass will continue to be monitored. For the Coarse downed wood product, Dr. Xi Yang commented that 'It is very important to characterize this carbon pool of dead wood (CDW and standing dead trees), and the uncertainty of this pool is high. Other methods, such as remote sensing, often fail to capture the interannual or long-term changes in aboveground biomass pool, not to mention the dead carbon pool which is often ignored.' With some reservations, the STEAC agreed with this proposed suspension.

Reviewed suspension of stable isotopes in precipitation, in part because a collector redesign is needed and saved labor costs. A collector redesign would likely require more than one year to launch.

Modifications to sampling sections:

Plant phenology observations to be discontinued at gradient terrestrial sites, but continued at core terrestrial sites. The justification is in streamlined operations. A suggestion to learn from AI and automated imagery as an alternative. No significant objections from the STEAC.

Make a one-time shift from a 5-year to a 6-year sampling frequency at all NEON sites. Sampling at about nine sites would be postponed in FY26. Annual sampling of vegetation structure and herbaceous productivity would continue at tower plots. No objections from the STEAC.

Given this feedback, Battelle NEON supports integrating this feedback into a revised proposal, such that the stream geomorphology and coarse down wood products are no longer included for discontinuation but moved into the modified products.