InSAR Activities at UNAVCO

UNAVCO’s mission is to support and promote Earth science by advancing high-precision techniques for the measurement and understanding of deformation, and to support education to meet the needs of the community and the public. InSAR (Interferometric Synthetic Aperture Radar) is a technique that UNAVCO is supporting in many new and exciting ways. Some of the most significant InSAR activities currently underway are 1) UNAVCO is the new host institution for the WInSAR Consortium, 2) UNAVCO will be acquiring InSAR imagery as part of GeoEarthScope, and 3) UNAVCO plans to provide education and outreach activities to benefit the InSAR community.

The Western North America InSAR (WInSAR) Consortium is a collection of universities and public agencies created to manage the acquisition and archiving of spaceborne InSAR data over western North America for their mutual benefit. WInSAR voted to make UNAVCO their new host institution in early 2006. The transition period is expected to last through 2007. WInSAR’s overall mission, organizational structure and research activities will not change with the transfer of administration from SCEC/USC to UNAVCO. UNAVCO’s primary role will be to provide administrative and logistical support for WInSAR activities such as finance management and data management. The WInSAR Executive Committee and UNAVCO staff are currently in the process of establishing WInSAR’s new administrative framework at UNAVCO. The UNAVCO Facility Data Group is also working with WInSAR to establish resources at UNAVCO to serve the WInSAR community once the transition is complete.

GeoEarthScope, a component of the EarthScope Facility project, includes the acquisition of aerial and satellite imagery and geochronology, including InSAR data. UNAVCO is currently in the process of submitting a Category 1 proposal to the European Space Agency to acquire InSAR imagery for the Basin and Range province of North America. InSAR data for other regions in the EarthScope footprint will be subsequently acquired based on recommendations provided by the GeoEarthScope InSAR Working Group.

To complement these and other InSAR activities, and to serve the InSAR community, UNAVCO also plans to provide outreach programs such as an InSAR data processing class. Preliminary planning for such a class is currently underway.

For more information about WInSAR and GeoEarthScope activities at UNAVCO, please contact David Phillips, the GeoEarthScope Project Manager (phillips@unavco.org). For more information about InSAR education and outreach activities at UNAVCO, please contact Susan Eriksson, the UNAVCO E&O Director (eriksson@unavco.org).