

NSSI STAP Meeting
UAF Campus, Fairbanks, Alaska
February 6-7, 2008

Present

John Payne, NSSI
Doug Kane, UAF
Matthew Sturm, USACRREL
John Kelley, UAF
Caryn Rae, Conoco Philips

Bob Shuchman, MTRI
Bill Streever, BP (Wednesday only)
Dan Reed, Alaska F&G
Gary Kofinas, UAF
Denny Lassuy, NSSI

Staff Committee:

Tim Viavont, ADF& G
Deborah Rocque, FWS
Dee Williams, MMS

Gary Schultz, ADNR
Dave Yokel, BLM

Guests:

Dave Howell, BLM
Pete Hickman, GINA
Brian Person, North Slope Borough
Torre Jorgenson, ABR
Patty Burns, GI/GEO

Wendy Loya, Wilderness Society
Cheryl Haase, GINA
Will Fisher, GINA
Dan Atwood, UAF
Bruce Hollen, BLM (Thursday only)

All handouts (agenda, list of tasks, etc.) and presentations referenced in these notes are located on the NSSI website: www.northslope.org

Wednesday, February 6, 2008:

Welcome and introductions, John Kelley, John Payne

John Kelley and John Payne greeted the group. Members of the group stated their names and affiliations.

John Kelley went over the agenda with the group as follows:

- The individual presentations will be presented until lunch time.
- The afternoon will be used to share concerns and needs.
- Tomorrow the group will look at GINA, monitoring, fire management, etc.
- Each day should end by 4:00 p.m.

NSSI member mandates/missions presentations (Senior Staff Committee):

John Payne told the group that the following presentations are a result of the STAP's request to understand the various agency mandates/missions.

MMS (Dee Williams):

Dee Williams is a new member of the Senior Staff Committee and was introduced to the group. He has been with MMS for about 5 years and has a strong background in academia and Anthropology.

A PowerPoint on MMS mandates/missions was presented. MMS's main mission is to meet challenges related to leasing, exploration, and development of oil and natural gas resources on the OCS. This is done with two parallel programs, Environmental studies and technology Assessment and Research. There is an independent scientific committee for advising the program and evaluating study proposals.

They are involved in a studies program, involving NOPP, CMI/UAF, CESU, USGS/BRD, IA. The Studies Program has been in effect since 1973. The bulk of the budget is spent on Alaska off-shore impacts with a social science component.

The MMS planning process is a two year process. Submitted studies are evaluated internally first to ensure they are in line with the mission, they are then ranked in priority order and modifications are made if needed. The second year is spent on funding the study through contracts, inter-agency agreements, etc. There are presently 60 on-going studies. All studies are public and are located on the web page at: <http://ww.mms.gov/tarprojects/608.htm>.

MMS is currently focusing efforts on the Chukchi Sea (COMIDA).

They are in the process of making a 2009 list of new start projects. MMS operates on a base of \$6 million per year.

Questions/Comments:

Bill Streever asked about MMS's role in the on-shore impacts of drilling. Dee said the mandate to study potential impacts does not stop at the shoreline. Since the oil will eventually be brought on shore, the impacts have to be studied. MMS does monitor and tries to establish a baseline on social indicator studies.

Bill Streever asked if MMS was still using ANIMEDA. Dee said it was a seven-year phased study and is now in the last year. Individual studies may continue as stand alone projects.

Brian Person asked how long COMIDA will last. Dee said everything begins as a five year study based on the lease sale schedule, but can be extended if needed.

Wendy Loya asked if the Chukchi lease sale goes through today are some of those studies included in the 2009 proposed studies. Dee said once the proposal for a lease sale was determined, the studies related to it are included in the plan.

Caryn Rae asked if MMS collaborates with NPRB. Dee said they do to ensure no duplication of effort is occurring.

Brian Person asked if all the budgetary money is just for the environmental studies. Dee said technology Assessment and Research are separate.

Bill Streever asked about MMS tar studies and stated that BP has done similar studies. He suggested the tar office reach out more to others already completing similar studies. Dee agreed that there needs to be better coordination as a whole and that Alaska does have unique issues. He also said the challenge of collaboration is bigger than any one agency.

Bill also commented that the results of the sound study were skewed at first because they were based on studies done in the Gulf of Mexico.

Gary Kofinas stated when several researchers are doing social science in an area, there is too much repetition and people get tired of being asked the same questions over and over. Dee agreed and said there are major gaps when projects go through the various channels. They are not always looked at as parallel research activities. The initial burden lies with the disciplinary specialist who is writing the tasks for the research effort.

Action:

None

FWS (Deborah Rocque):

Deborah introduced herself to the group. She gave the following information on FWS:

FWS manages their trust resources (endangered species, marine mammals, migratory birds, inter-jurisdictional fishes, etc.). On the North Slope there are two bird species on the endangered list (Steller's and spectacled eiders). They have marine trust responsibility for Polar Bears and Walrus. They manage the lands and waters of the Arctic Refuge as well as the species located there and work with numerous agencies on subsistence issues. They work with BLM and MMS on development issues.

They review projects and do impact analysis on BLM/MMS activities on the North Slope. They also work with other agencies and industry to do landscape level impact analysis. They also do research and monitoring on their refuges and with USGS on the Slope.

Questions/comments:

Bob Shuchman asked what FWS is best known for. Deb said probably the management of species through monitoring.

Matthew Sturm asked how FWS gets funding for studies. Based on limited agency funding, FWS uses partnerships with other federal agencies, academia, and NGOs to accomplish their mission. Deb said with declining budgets, collaboration is increasing. Matthew asked if FWS has issues with getting WO personnel to understand the issues in Alaska. Deb says that is an ongoing issue.

Bill Streever said he sees the difference between MMS and FWS is that MMS has an office in DC trying to work the issues in Alaska where FWS does not. John Payne said that DOI has a representative for Alaska Affairs and also a liaison in Alaska. The idea was to bring the Interior agencies together and communicate the differences in Alaska to those at WO.

Caryn Rae said industry is also faced with educating persons from the lower 48. She also asked if FWS has a list of current studies on their website. Deb said there is not a one-stop shop at this point. Each individual program would have to update its own website. Deb will propose a centralized link to gather this information.

Caryn Rae asked if FWS keeps a list of data gaps they see on the North Slope. Deb said they are in the process of trying to figure that out.

Dan Reed said the Office of Subsistence Management is currently funding Fisheries projects.

John Kelley said the synthesis types of meetings in the past were effective in identifying gaps. Deb said that would be a valid idea. They still do that for some things, but mostly in a reactive mode.

Denny Lassuy mentioned the climate change workshop a few years back. There was collaboration at that time and the summary of the workshop is on the website.

ACTION:

- Deb will look at the feasibility of having the FWS current studies listed in one location on the website.

ADF&G (Tim Viavont):

Tim introduced himself to the group. He has been a Fish Biologist for the past 15 years, working on the Dolly Varden study.

He went over the mission and core services of ADF&G. The mission statement is driven in large part by the Alaska State Constitution, based on the section on preservation of natural resources, article 8. Case law, the McDowell case, also drives their mission. This case gave subsistence the highest priority use. This change made ANCSA conflict with state law and now there is dual management.

The department manages for consumptive use of fish and wildlife populations for sustained yield, including the North Slope. Research on the North Slope is centered on Caribou, Moose

and Muskoxen, primarily the Caribou herds. This includes quantifying subsistence use and managing human behavior.

He mentioned a mandate in the constitution on managing water rights for in-stream flow reservations. Gauging stations would be a great help.

Questions/Comments:

Caryn asked if there are any plans to do a photo census of the Central Arctic Caribou herd this year. Brian said he has not heard of any plans to do one on the central herd. The last census was in 2001. Funding affects the census. Due to the limited studies in this area, there is a data gap on what the healthy stock levels are.

Matthew Sturm asked how they collaborate with federal agencies. Gary said it starts at the field level most effectively. This is mostly communication, not necessarily collaboration. FWS has assisted with flight time to the slope on projects. They can provide man power hours in lieu of money on projects due to limited funding.

John Kelley said a common thread throughout the presentation seems to be coordination/collaboration. He sees that the non-allowance of using federally funded projects as matching funds impedes this.

ACTION:

None

BLM (Dave Yokel):

Dave Yokel presented a PowerPoint on BLM/BLM-Alaska mandates/mission. The BLM-Alaska mission statement can be located on the BLM website at:
<http://web.ak.blm.gov/alt/index.html#mission>

BLM-Alaska maintains a land status map which details the ownership of the lands and lands that are still to be conveyed.

Dave said a way to get an up-to-date look at what the mission is would be to look at the upcoming budgets. The funded items are in priority order. At this time energy development is at the top. BLM has been writing plans in this area for more than 10 years.

BLM-Alaska uses National Petroleum Reserves Production Act (NPRPA) and Federal Land Protection Management Act (FLPMA) to develop oil and gas lease sales. There are several mitigating factors that have to be addressed when comprising an oil and lease sale. BLM wants to ensure that development does not impede future populations of animal species in that area.

Other issues of concern include:

- subsistence uses
- adverse affects of oil and gas activities on socio-cultural systems
- winter tundra travel, environmental contaminants from oil/gas activities

- legacy wells
- shoreline erosion
- baseline hydrological data
- access to weather data for science and management.

BLM strives to put measures in place that protect the natural resources of the state, but are not overly stringent for industry.

Questions/Comments:

Bill Streever asked about lands that have not yet been conveyed. Dave said some of it is due to the length of the process and getting priorities from other sources.

Caryn Rae said an added bullet about value added through consistent mitigation strategies across the slope would be good.

John Kelley asked what BLM's attitude toward cumulative impacts. Dave said the BLM is trying to analyze future cumulative impacts in their planning efforts. This is a difficult process as future environmental change will affect the outcome.

Gary Kofinas said he sees cumulative impacts as a suite of changes and wanted to know if that is how BLM sees this. Dave said that would take years to see the results of such planning. Gary mentioned that in two weeks there will be a meeting in Canada to look at cumulative impacts on their Caribou herds. Dave said right now there is no on the ground plan to do that on the North Slope, but if this group feels that is important, the recommendation could be made to create models.

Dave mentioned the need for partnerships and the fact that BLM uses partnerships on numerous projects. They use inter-agency agreements, coordination with academia, and contracting.

Matthew Sturm asked if there were any specific things he could see the STAP doing in relation to the studies. Dave said he feels they work well at the field level to collaborate and is unsure what added value it would have to go through NSSI for that type of collaboration. He also mentioned monitoring plans as being helpful in this process. He would like to see these in print so a long-term monitoring plan could be in place and kept functional. If further review of the plans is needed, NSSI may be a forum for that. Matthew asked if he feels there needs to be a voice from outside the agency to ensure oversight of the process. Dave said it should start within the agency and NSSI could provide necessary oversight of the plans.

Dave mentioned that the funding levels for projects on the North Slope have been good in recent years, but the future is uncertain.

John Kelley expressed a concern over exploration in the oceans and asked where Dave sees that process. Dave said they deal with mostly land-based activities, but realizes the activities of both affect the other. John expressed a concern that issues will be dealt with only when they become a crisis situation. Dave said BLM would be involved in permitting pipeline and would have to evaluate the effectiveness.

Gary Kofinas asked to what extent the agencies are involved in a comprehensive coastal zone plan. Dave said when BLM permits activities within so many miles of the coastal zone, other agencies do an independent review of those activities.

Gary Kofinas asked about coordination with outside entities on activities. Dave Yokel mentioned ROWs that BLM grants other entities to operate by allowing them to go through public lands.

Gary Schultz said the projects the coastal zones are looked at by the participating agencies and the Borough affected.

ACTION:

None

ADNR (Gary Schultz):

Gary presented a PowerPoint on ADNR's mandates/mission.

Seven Divisions within ADNR who serve purpose on North Slope:

- Division of Oil and Gas (5-year leasing plans)
- Division of Mining, Land and Water (ice road, ice pad construction, ice road travel)
- Division of Geologic & Geophysical Surveys (research division)
- Office of Habitat Management & Permitting (protection of fish and wildlife)
- Office of Project Management & Permitting (mining & road projects)
- Division of Coastal and Ocean Management (coastal erosion)
- Division of Forestry (manage wild land fire program of state owned lands)

ADNR has a very small research budget, only \$32,000 for equipment, travel and work on the Slope per year.

Gary presented the following items NSSI could provide which would be helpful to ADNR in completing their mission:

- Land-cover mapping system (GINA)
- Data clearinghouse would also be very useful.
- Standardized protocols for data collections would be most helpful when conducting studies.
- Completion of the Caribou Workshop goal of establishing a set of mitigating measures for all herds
- Consistent site restoration methods and good radar data would be useful.

Questions/Comments:

Bill Streever asked if Gary was referencing a resource library or actual data. Gary said a library would be helpful, but the actual data would be even better. He mentioned collaboration with BLM and Conoco Phillips on weather station information.

Bob Shuchman asked if they had used any remote sensing products in their snow sensing activities, specifically NASA MODUS data. Gary said they have not used that type of data and he is unfamiliar with it. They have based their findings on observation. Matthew Sturm said observation is more effective for this type of study.

Brian asked if they interact with BLM at all when determining to open tundra travel. There is coordination with BLM and the North Slope Borough in determining the dates for tundra travel..

ACTION:

None

NOAA/NMFS (John Payne):

Due to there being no representative from NOAA present at the meeting, John Payne presented a PowerPoint presentation on NOAA's mandates/mission.

Projects in Alaska to include:

- Arctic projects (related to MMS research in Beaufort/Chukchi Seas)
- Bathometry studies

NOAA/NMFS sees NSSI role as providing better data availability, better monitoring scales to detect change, providing better baseline information on the Chukchi Sea and what role industry plays, exploring the possibilities of better technologies that could benefit everyone.

Use a science-based management approach. There is overlap with FWS and ADF&G.

Like most agencies, NOAA/NMFS is dealing with cumulative impacts.

Questions/Comments:

John Payne pointed out that there are no guidelines to measure cumulative impacts from climate change. John Kelley said that cumulative impacts are very important issues for all agencies.

Matthew Sturm said NOAA will put in 12 more land-based climate stations on the North Slope to deal with climate issues.

Caryn Rae also stated that NOAA is exploring the use of unmanned aircraft to detect climate change.

ACTION:

None

NPS (John Payne):

Due to there being no representative from NPS, John Payne presented a PowerPoint presentation on NPS's mandates/mission.

The overall mission of the NPS in relation to North Slope operations is to minimize the impact of climate change, invasive species, global and local contaminants, and increasing human use on the lands.

The NPS is concerned with development that occurs on the North Slope impacting their neighboring lands. They have a good inventorying program on a national level to provide baseline data.

Questions/Comments:

Bill Streever asked what NPS funding level is. John gave him the national funding level of 143 million based on a ten year plan. Bill asked if he could get the figure for an individual park in Alaska.

NPS is concerned with wildlife migration patterns, better coordination of weather/climate data, land-cover composition/health, effective modeling, and better communication within NSSI and externally to the agencies.

ACTION:

John Payne will get the figures for an individual park in Alaska.

John Kelley summarized the morning's presentations. Common threads from this morning were:

- collaboration is very necessary
- budgets are shrinking
- cooperation is necessary
- common critical data needs

Gary Kofinas said he feels that the STAP would benefit from getting information from individual members to gain insight into what they need from NSSI. John Kelley and John Payne agreed and would like to see the needs prioritized into needs into the future, specifically for the next two to five years. Wendy Loya also said what format the information should be in is also important. John Payne reminded everyone that each Oversight Group member has different priorities in mind so it is difficult to get a clear cut view of what the value of NSSI is to each. A discussion on what NSSI could do on an individual basis ensued.

Brian said from the North Slope Borough's perspective, they would see some type of monitoring protocol in the Chukchi as being a top priority. The Borough is the one entity that has to live with the decisions that are made pertaining to these areas. The off-shore development could jeopardize the livelihood of those individuals living in that area. There will not be full agreement as to what a cumulative impact is. Each agency and even the Borough is going to see this differently. Matthew Sturm commented on the agency's responsibility to look at the impacts and asked what NSSI's role would be. Caryn stated her concern is a lack of baseline data and she sees NSSI as being the vehicle to provide that information and ensure a holistic approach is taken in the Chukchi. Brian also stressed the importance of gaining local buy in through involving them in the process. Maybe NSSI could foster this type of buy in. Gary Kofinas asked for clarification as there are public meetings in the EIS process. Brian said there is very little

presence from the agencies on the North Slope, they just come in and conduct meetings and leave. Bill Streever said he understand the concern over the Chukchi, but said there are also other issues. He feels NSSI needs to think of things they can do that they have a high probability to succeed at that can be measured. Those smaller goals can feed into larger goals. Matthew agreed. Bill Streever said the Caribou workshop was a good example of collaboration. Matthew Sturm also suggested the ideas need to be taken back to the lower levels for implementation. Wendy Loya commented on the National Coastal Program changes and how important it is to have good maps. She feels NSSI could assist in how to deal with issues with very little available data. Definitions are also important. An example is permafrost. The more a group can get together and give concrete definitions would be better.

John Kelley mentioned past meetings of the OKSEP Program that were held to discuss information needs, not just data needs. Dee commented on the insufficient funding to take care of all the needs and said there is a danger for each agency to lose focus on its mission. This could undermine their congressional funding. One of the primary reasons OKSEP was disbanded was its inability to control individual agency missions. It is okay to promote appropriate and relevant coordination without impeding each agency's mission. MMS has a good structure in place for scientific oversight. NSSI should encourage collaboration without hindering each agency. John Kelley said the OKSEP was good at providing synthesis.

Gary Kofinas asked how NSSI could contribute what MMS is going on the North Slope. Dee said the following:

- Do no harm (not slow down research for further review)
- Specific moments of opportunity (when a research project is larger than one agency, providing statements of support or concurrence with projects)
- Operating as a standards board. (to maintain consistency)
- Providing peer review

Bill Streever said there has to be a way NSSI could provide support without altering individual agency missions.

Tim Viavont said there are some things NSSI could look at that are considered multi-disciplinary such as Caribou health as a result of drought conditions and increased fire activities. It is difficult to state how NSSI would be the driver to answer the questions. He also mentioned a North Slope Fisheries Workshop project as being helpful.

Gary Schultz stated that workshop goals should be stated clearly upfront before the workshop so they can come prepared to discuss the issues during the workshop.

John Kelley asked the group to think further about the subject and if they have more feedback to email John Payne.

Discussion of hosting the Oil and Gas Management Practices Symposium in Alaska (John Kelley and Bill Streever):

Bill Streever discussed past Oil and Gas Conferences held in Canada on the Arctic. At the last meeting, they contacted industry and asked about the possibility of hosting the next workshop in

Alaska. He felt it would be better hosted by AOGA or NSSI. He sent the email to John Payne and he sent them an email back, but has not heard anything yet.

Bill Streever would like to see if NSSI could pick up on this and see if we can make it happen. This is for informational purposes. Matthew Sturm said he liked the idea of NSSI hosting the workshop so they can provide the framework for it. It would also provide NSSI high visibility. Gary Schultz went to the last workshop and it was very useful. Their seismic work in their boreal forests was very impressive and they learned a lot from us on ice road formation and how to store by products from oil exploration.

John Payne asked if the group wants to form this as a proposal. John Kelley said a proposal would be necessary and a sub-committee would be necessary. Matthew made the comment that there needs to be a list of activities that are prioritized for the group before they take this on. This will be tabled until tomorrow once the list is completed. John Kelley agreed to table it until tomorrow. Dave suggested using this as an example when discussing the business plan to see how this will work.

Action:

This will be tabled until tomorrow when a complete list of activities is completed.

Landcover project report to STAP (Robert Shuchman):

Bob Shuchman gave a presentation of the landcover project report. There were two workshops held, one in Anchorage and one in Fairbanks.

Results of the workshop:

- There were various definitions given for what they thought landcover is.
- There definitely needs to be an up to date landcover map.
- The technique for getting the map varied from using an already existing map and adding the data layers to using existing data sets to create a new map.
- Resolution of the map was an issue. The consensus from the group was 30 meters from the Slope in most cases. Coarser resolution can be used on a case by case basis.
- The issue was more complicated than originally thought. Once the Ducks Unlimited gives us their report, we can give comments on that. If we feel it is the right approach it can be approved or we can ask for adaptations if we feel they are needed.

Torre Jorgenson stated the original focus of the group was to get together a classification focus of the landcover map. During the discussions, the group discussed how the map should be created, what layers should be involved, etc. The Landfire land mapping effort was also discussed and the question was posed why NSSI should do separate land mapping when LandFire was already doing this. It was felt that there may be a way to collaborate with Landfire to create a map. The issues still to be addressed are:

- Large gaps in data and more data fields needed to complete the map
- Analysis and classification issues
- Landfire's inadequate approach to classifications
- Compilation of imagery

- The need for classification clarification
- A product delivery system
- Development of maps

Torre showed the group some examples of existing maps and demonstrated how they can be used to measure various activities on the North Slope. Bob Shuchman also referenced how a change of classification scheme could make the information worthless. This is why the change detection process should be standardized.

Questions/Comments:

The question was asked about what problems they saw with Landfire. There are inconsistencies in some of the data. John Payne is going to meet with some Landfire representatives to explore the issues presented at the workshop. He asked if they would be willing to incorporate the land data NSSI wants into their map and they said not within the timeframes they have been given. John is going to present the issues since there would be a gap in data. This would delay the North Slope map by one year. Matthew asked what the STAP would do next in this process. Bob Shuchman said since the staff represents a multi-disciplinary group, they could comment on the map and give peer review endorsements of the Ducks Unlimited report. The group should include some end users. Torre reiterated that there is no way to get a high resolution map for the whole region due to cost constraints so the requirements need to be very specific. Caryn said the ability to project forward into the NPRA is very important. Thor suggested that the group decide if the project is valuable to NSSI and provide guidance on how much they want to invest in fundamental data collections and provide guidance on how integrated the map should be.

Action:

None

Review of approved NSSI Business Processes Plan (John Payne):

John Payne presented a PowerPoint on the new NSSI Business Plan to the group. It has been approved by the OG and will be available online. The plan is visionary by nature and involves a conceptual workflow. Management issues will be brought to the STAP by the Senior Staff Committee. The Staff Committee will prioritize issues and collaborate with the STAP to make recommendations to the OG based on the issues.

Questions/Comments:

Dave Howell suggested a need for more interface between the STAP and Staff Committee. John said under this plan that will increase. Dave also asked if the OG has bought into the proposal process. John said that has not been defined, but an individual can work a proposal through their individual agency. Proposed projects have to fit within the scope of NSSI.

John Payne talked to the group about challenges to DOI management as follows:

- Uncertainty about climate change
- Long term data availability
- Changing subsistence lifestyles

- Sea level changes
- Better use of technology
- Plan for baseline information
- Invasive species
- Skills needed for the future
- How do we be inclusive rather than exclusive among the bureaus?

John discussed the general subject categories (the OG list of strategic concerns) with the group. He asked the group to think about what information from these categories they will need two to five years down the road and what the social science implications are.

John Kelley presented the general subject categories to the group and asked them to review them. John Payne said the group is having difficulty coming up with a list of needs that would assist the agencies to do a better job at identifying cumulative impacts, monitoring, etc.

Matthew Sturm suggested a framework for the process. He suggested they look at the broad based things the STAP does. He came up with a list of things the STAP does and the following steps:

- What are the sweet spots the group can focus on for collaboration
- Take a realistic assessment of how much time and energy the group has
- What things will show a good and rapid turnaround to show success.
- Before the meeting ends, steps in the process should be prioritized

John Kelley said the general categories have been on the group's mind all along, but now they can address specific concerns within the broad categories.

The following items are on the table for discussion/prioritization:

- Oil and Gas meeting
- Review of DU landcover report
- List of topics (climate, species at risk, social, marine baseline, hydrology, GINA data layers, fresh water fish fisheries, quantitative/cumulative impact analysis, and fire)

Questions/Comments:

The group consensus is that the list needs to be scaled down to be more specific. The list came from John Payne's individual interviews with the OG members. The group needs to find the common threads, what issues cross divisional lines.

Caryn Rae said she does not feel that they can break those categories down further and that she thought the Senior Staff Committee would do that. John expressed the Senior Staff Committee's difficulty with that task. John said it is a strategic planning type of exercise for the future. The group should look at the list and decide what on the list is needed for the future.

Matthew asked if John is thinking the STAP would work more closely with the Staff Committee and present a report to the OG. John said his vision is an open environment discussion, resulting in simplistic recommendations on those focal areas. This would be the basis for their recommendations to the OG.

John Payne gave an example of what the European Union is doing to track vegetative changes. They got several different monitoring answers from one study. Caryn agreed that using mapping and GIS would be effective in addressing several issues. MMS is working on a project to put data on a data browser at multiple scales.

Bill Streever commented on the fact that the list of things NSSI wants to do is not possible with the budget they have. Matthew said they would be merely endorsing a concept or idea. Dee said an agency could use a NSSI endorsement as a method to gain agency funding for a process.

Action:

Liza Liversledge will put the Business Plan on line next week..

John will give each group member a copy of the Anaktuvuk River Fire Report and they will review it before the meeting tomorrow's discussion.

The group will look at the list given today to see what will be needed for the subject 5-10 years down the road.

General needs categories discussion from interview with the OG (John Payne):

John presented a PowerPoint to the group on general needs.

John asked the group to keep their general needs in mind when they discuss the categories.

Questions/Comments:

None

Action:

None

John Kelley charged the group with looking at the questions they already have to answer and provide a list of products. Caryn recommended breaking up into small groups to come up with those products. They will break out into small groups.

John Payne passed out the Anaktuvuk report and asked the group to look at it for content and to see if NSSI would want to support it.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:26 p.m. and will continue tomorrow at 8:30 a.m.

Thursday, February 7, 2008:

John Kelley welcomed the group and recapped yesterday's meeting. He expressed the need for the group to come up with a list of recommendations (based on the list of tasks given by the OG) for John Payne to take back to the OG. It is important to put them in priority order. The group will break up into two groups to accomplish this and will look at three areas, species at risk, climate change and social science.

John Payne said the goal is to position NSSI for the longer term.

Gary Kofinas was absent yesterday during this discussion and suggested that a system to accomplish these goals should be discussed. John Kelley said that was discussed yesterday. Bill Streever mentioned outreach yesterday and it is a facet of everything NSSI does.

Matt asked for clarification on what the OG really wants. John said to look at the subject and decide what issues you think are going to be important 2, 5 or 10 years down the road and provide a paragraph.

There will be two presentations prior to this exercise.

Operational presentation of the NSSI node of the Geographic Information Network of Alaska (UAF), Peter Hickman:

Pete Hickman presented a PowerPoint presentation on GINA.

GINA was created to be a data clearinghouse for NSSI. Collaboration and sharing of information will make GINA a success.

Data layers include:

- Elevation
- Geodetic control
- Hydrography
- Bathymetry
- Cadastral
- Transportation
- Governmental units
- Landover
- Digital Orthoimagery

Task list:

1. Ingestion of data
2. Develop standardized gridded datasets
3. Make data available via open standards web service and download
4. Provision of metadata services
5. Supporting the development of decision support system tools

Pete encouraged the group to browse the functionality of the program at: <http://catalog.northslope.org>.

Will walked the group through a live demonstration of GINA.

Questions/Comments:

Dave Yokel asked what will happen if some of the data is no longer physically located in the same place. Pete said adjustments can be made to address this issue. Bob Shuchman said GINA will allow a search to gain access to the owner's servers to retrieve the data. GINA would give the owners the capability to upload updated data into GINA. This would involve an authentication process involving the description of the data, purpose of the data, and owner of the data for security measures. Other server applications can be put into GINA for use. The idea of setting up an executive steering committee to oversee this process is being discussed.

John Kelley asked how the granules get inserted and how he would find information for example on the Beaufort Sea. Pete said they have a list of 135 granules at this point. If the metadata is good it can be ingested, if not the owner would have to update the format so it can be ingested. There has not been a decision on how the users want the data presented and the importance order of the data. That is another good reason to have a steering group. The goal is for GINA to be the most efficient/user friendly database possible

John Kelley asked if a person was interested in contaminants in the coastal zone and sea ice, how they could search for it. Cheryl said a key word search would assist in finding the data. You may put in the project owner's name or the project name to retrieve the data.

John Payne said there are 135 data layers identified by the committee. There are maybe 30-40 layers available at a low cost, the rest of the layers are at a higher cost so we have to decide which ones are necessary to put in.

Matt commented on the website stating it looks great, but asked what the motivation is for people to use the site and upload their data into it. It seems like that is the job of NSSI to promote the use of website and put their metadata into the system. John agreed. He gave NSF as an example. They began denying grants if they are not allowed to see data from funded projects. This would involve everyone making their data files available for ingestion. NSSI really does not have anything to hold over anyone's head to require that they share their data.

Pete asked the group to look at the documents page at: <http://catalog.northslope.org.document>. He also asked for contact information of anyone they may contact for needed data.

Dan Reed said he could not believe anyone would give data to GINA without the metadata. Brian Person said he thinks the user should find out where the metadata is located since they want the information. There could be a forum or blog on the site for this purpose. GINA already lists the owner of the data .

Action:

Group members will look at the documents page and let the GINA team know of any contact information of data owners.

Research Proposal on Mitigation Factors (Dee Williams):

Dee Williams spoke to the group about the standard level of coordination in study projects. He presented a study idea that he feels could be a candidate for broad collaboration as it involves other federal and state agencies.

The study focuses on whether mitigation measures are working. This would involve creating a pilot study to focus on looking at the community of Nuiqsut. This is a good area because of all the oil and gas activities by state and federal agencies, etc. This would be a demonstration project of larger efforts.

Dee passed out the information on the proposed project. It has been proposed to the village of Nuiqsit and it was received positively. There has been preliminary contact with BLM and they were willing to provide labor effort to the project. In order to make the study worthwhile, there would need to be support at agency head levels. This is a long-term, long-range vision and would be a good vehicle for NSSI to be involved in social research efforts. Dee walked the group through the document briefly. The study would look at cumulative impacts and the mitigation of those impacts in the community of Nuiqsit.

Dee expressed his feelings that the study is better done as a multi-agency effort, but if that is not possible, MMS may look at just the off-shore impacts. He asked the group to look at it further and provide any feedback they may have.

Questions/Comments:

Wendy asked where the comparative data would come from to provide a baseline since this community has already been affected. Dee said part of the project would be historical, looking at what was projected to happen and compare it to the realities of what actually happened.

Dave said past minutes from public meetings in Nuiqsit could be used for that type of information. Dee agreed and said that social research is always dealing with social facts. Dan Reed said there is always something to fall back on when looking at mitigation.

Caryn referenced a 1980 report on the northwest villages that could be used as baseline data. Denny asked if the study was to look at the impression of the efficacy of the mitigations or the actual efficacy of the mitigation. Dee said there is an “impressionistic” aspect to the study and there needs to be a select set of questions to assist in looking at different types of mitigation. Denny asked how to deal with the confounding effects of other mitigations that have previously been done. Dee said one would have to be meticulous in following the narrative for each particular mitigation. Caryn said it would be interesting to look at the transcripts before Alpine was put it and compare to the present time.

Dee said that social research requires commitment from a large number of participants. Matt said it would require multiple agencies to be involved and pick relevant questions to be answered. Caryn said she feels industry would be interested in participating in such a study, but perception would be a big part of the study. Brian asked what the end product would be of the survey. Dee said it would be a narrative report with recommendations based on the findings.

ACTION:

- **The group will look further at the proposal and provide input to Dee Williams on their recommendations.**

Breakout groups: John Kelley gave out assignments to the breakout groups. He told the group to provide either a STAP comment, a recommendation for a sub-committee, or a letter of approval/disapproval just a paragraph based on their discussion on the assigned topics. The assignments are as follows:

Group 1 (John Kelley):

Mitigation
 Outreach
 OG Best Management Practices
 Dee's proposal on Nuiqsut

Group 2 (Matt Sturm)

NSSI data (GINA)
 Report on landcover project
 Gaging stations
 Fires on the N/S

The participants broke out into two groups to address the above issues.

The results of the breakout groups have been combined and are presented in a report to the Oversight Group (attached).

The meetings adjourned at 3:40 PM.