

June 2, 2005

DRAFT Minutes: North Slope Science Oversight Group Meeting

In attendance:

Board Members

Henri R. Bisson, BLM, Chair
Wayne Regelin, ADF&G, Co-Chair
Doug Buffington, USGS
Teresa Imm, ASRC
Karla Kolash, NSB
Brent Sheets, DOE
Tony DeGange, FWS
John Goll, MMS
Marcia Blaszak, NPS
Lawson Brigham, ARC
Ken Taylor, Executive Director
Dick LaFebvre, DNR
Larry Peltz, NOAA

Staff/Public

John Payne, BLM
Tim Holder, MMS
Kim Titus, ADF&G
Tom Rothe, ADF&G
Bob Winfree, NPS
Dave Howell, BLM
Pat Galvin, ADNR
Paul Flint, USGS
Suzanne Marcy, NPS

Wayne Regelin, Co-Chair, took over his duties as Chair, per the Oversight Group Charter. Regelin opened the meeting at 1:20 PM with introductions of those in attendance. Henri R. Bisson, Chair, was delayed in attendance until 1:35 PM.

Wayne Regelin, asked for approval of the April 21, 2005 minutes. One editorial change was noted by Tony DeGange, FWS, and the minutes were approved with the noted change.

Ken Taylor, Executive Director, provided an update of the activities since the April 21, 2005, meeting (attached). As part of the visit to Washington, DC, the week of May 16, 2005, there is a possibility of the FY 2006 budget having approximately \$2.2 million in new funding for the North Slope Science Initiative. Senator Murkowski has sponsored

draft language authorizing the North Slope Science Initiative in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (HR 6), Section 318 (attached).

Teresa Imm, ASRC, suggested the Energy Bill may get held up in Committee.

Ken Taylor is currently preparing a joint Department of the Interior budget for NSSI. Wayne Regelin, ADF&G, Co-Chair, suggested the long-term funding stream needs to be \$8 - \$9 million/year.

Action: Lawson Brigham will draft a letter of support from USARC for a long-term funding stream. A draft letter will be reviewed by the Oversight Group.

The next meeting of the Oversight Group will be in Barrow, Alaska on August 3 and 4. The Oversight Group will hold its regular meeting in Barrow on August 3. August 4 will be a field trip from Barrow to the Alpine Facility (ConocoPhillips), with an evening return to Barrow and a commercial flight back to Anchorage.

Action: John Payne was given the assignment to obtain a block of rooms for the evening of August 3 in Barrow.

Action: Ken Taylor will develop a firm agenda for the August 3 and 4 meetings in Barrow and distribute to the Oversight Group members and staff.

Action: John Payne will distribute the necessary forms required for traveling on charter aircraft to the Oversight Group and staff by June 7, 2005. These forms need to be returned to John NLT June 10, 2005.

Kim Titus presented ADF&G studies and research that are on-going on the North Slope (presentation on NSSI website). Kim said ADF&G bring the added value of long-term data sets that are available to NSSI projects and others interested in working on the North Slope.

Lawson Brigham asked Kim how much ADF&G spends on studies and research in the Arctic. Kim said the exact figure is difficult to get because of the number of partners contributing to studies, but he thought the total was about \$14 million.

Action: Wayne Regelin is to research the total funding that ADF&G spends on the North Slope and report back to the Oversight Group.

Pat Galvin presented ADNR's work on the North Slope (presentation on NSSI website).

Larry Peltz presented NOAA's activities on the North Slope (presentation on NSSI website).

Teresa Imm presented ASRC studies on the North Slope (presentation on NSSI website).

Ken Taylor announced the BLM has received FY 2005 add-on funding of \$150K for hydrologic gauging stations within the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska. Henri suggested Conoco/Phillips may match the funding.

Ken also suggested a hydrology workshop this fall for activities occurring on the North Slope. The Oversight Group agreed such a workshop should be a priority.

Action: Ken Taylor and John Payne are to follow up with Brent Sheets on the possibility of funding the gauging stations with combined funding from DOE and other sources.

Ken brought up the additional funding for the ADF&G on-going caribou study regarding effects of infrastructure on caribou behavior. BLM has agreed to cover the \$50k shortfall in funding in FY 2005.

Ken Taylor handed out seven project proposals from the USGS, Alaska Science Center, that were provided in response to a request from BLM. Paul Flint of USGS answered questions on the proposals from the Oversight Group. There is an existing agreement between BLM and USGS, Alaska Science Center, to do work to support NSSI priorities. However, there is no Science Technical Team currently in place to make recommendations for NSSI. The priorities established by the NPRA Research and Monitoring Team currently offer some insight into research or studies that need to be done.

Action: Since the agreement is between BLM and USGS, Henri will work with the Research and Monitoring Team to develop a funding recommendation within the next two weeks and report back to the Oversight Group on which project submission(s) will likely be funded with the available money.

Wayne requested nominations for a Co-Chair for the next year. Marcia Blaszak nominated Henri Bisson, BLM. The nomination was seconded by Dick LeFebvre, and approved unanimously. Henri Bisson will be the Co-Chair for the next year.

The meeting adjourned at 4:37 PM