

**Minutes of
The NSSI Oversight Group Meeting
June 15, 2006**

**Fourth Floor, Denali Room
Federal Building
Anchorage, Alaska**

Attendees:

Oversight Group:

Henri R. Bisson, BLM
Tom Melius, FWS
Brent Sheets, DOE
Wayne Regelin, ADFG
John Goll, MMS
Teresa Imm, ASRC
Ken Taylor, Executive Director, NSSI
Pat Galvin (substituting for Ed Fogels), DNR
Jon Kurland, NOAA
Lawson Brigham, USARC
Bruce Gamble (substituting for Leslie Holland-Bartels), USGS
Marcia Blazak, NPS

Staff:

Larry Peltz, NOAA
John Payne, BLM
Tim Jennings, FWS
Bob Winfree, NPS

Visitors:

Julia Dougan, Acting State Director, BLM Alaska
Hans Neidig, Office of the Secretary
Drue Pearce, Office of the Secretary
Bruce Hollen, BLM

Wayne opened meeting and Henri took over as Chair. The Oversight Group thanked Wayne for his efforts this past year as Chair.

April Meeting approval of minutes: correction to page 3, Jennifer Thomson's name misspelled. The April meeting minutes were adopted by the OG with changes.

Henri: Secretary Kempthorn will visit in September 2006. We are hoping we can brief him on NSSI while he's in Alaska. The Secretary received a brief on Interior last week and NSSI was discussed in a very positive way.

Ken Taylor – directors report (see attached) – Henri: House took NSSI out of budget, however it is in the Senate budget. Reviewed President’s budget. NSSI should be fine with the support from DOI.

Ken Taylor mentioned that the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program draft report on The Effects of Oil and Gas Activities in the Arctic is in need of some serious review by NSSI member agency experts. Henri requested Ken to draft him a memo to send to the NSSI OG requesting staff assistance to accomplish this.

Election of vice-chair: The OG charter requires that the Vice-Chair be non-federal this year. Considerable discussion on whether to elect the NSB to this position in their absence followed. Henri suggested a DNR Vice-Chair since the NSB was absent and the duties of the Chair next year may become more complex and time consuming. Marcia nominated DNR, seconded by John Kurland. DNR was elected by a unanimous vote of those members present.

Charter Revisions: STG discussion. Change on estimated annual costs by adding a 0 left of .5. Charter revisions passed as amended without opposition.

Oversight Group Charter: Discussion: USGS is not currently a voting member. DNR suggested a perception that NSSI is a joint initiative, and that adding USGS as voting member may create a somewhat negative perception that NSSI is heavily weighted toward federal agencies. The NSSI really should focus back on what our charter says we are going to do which is to provide the best science we can for making land and resource management decisions. Henri proposed rewording of membership and voting to address these memberships without voting privileges. The decision was made to leave non-land/resource management agencies as non-voting members. **Action: Ken will revise the charter language to address non-voting membership.**

Issue: Henri mentioned that the membership of the STG had been brought up as an issue and believes there should be someone selected from an environmental organization during the next selection process if someone with strong credentials and North Slope experience is nominated. Action: Ken will encourage nominations of qualified people from conservation organizations during the next nomination period.

Issue: Meetings in Barrow annually currently required in the charter may not be necessary or an obligation the NSB wishes to have. Suggested language change. **Action: Ken will revise language proposed by NSB and incorporate into OG Charter. Pat and Lawson will also provide language respective to their organizations. Ken will send out edits to OG. Ken will change “Goals” to “Objectives” to match Energy Policy Act language.**

NSSI Overview Presentation: Ken Taylor

Ken gave a brief history of how NSSI developed and what had been accomplished to date. This led to a discussion of suggested priorities identified by the OG and suggestions regarding which the STG should focus on at their next meeting.

Monitoring Strategies Presentation: John Payne

John discussed the development of BLM's national wildlife monitoring strategy and how he hopes it will role into the monitoring strategy BLM is developing for NPR-A for all resources. Hopefully, these products will be useful in developing a monitoring strategy across jurisdictional boundaries throughout the North Slope.

A discussion of priorities for the Science Technical Group followed. The STG agenda needs to focus on what the OG needs, not what the STG wants to do. Considerable discussion on the role of STG and assignments followed. Suggested issues for the STG agenda included focusing on the monitoring programs for fish, wildlife, air and water; hydrology data gaps with specific recommendations on potential for remote sensing to augment hydrology information; are there remote sensing data available that are more cost efficient for measuring/monitoring some parameters; review the draft Science Strategy and identify shortcomings, additions/deletions to improve it; encourage them to form subcommittees to address specific priorities. **Action: Ken Taylor is to work with John Kelley and two other STG members to develop agenda for STG meeting June 26-28, 2006.**

No members of the public were present...no public comments were received.

Action: Ken Taylor will poll OG members on date for next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 4:40 PM.