

**NSSI Science Technical Advisory Panel &
Senior Staff Committee Meeting
May 8-9, 2012
Anchorage, Alaska**

MEETING NOTES

STAP Members Present*

Scott Pegau, OSRI (Chair)
Dan Reed, ADFG (Vice Chair)
Donie Bret-Harte, UAF
Doug Kane, UAF
Bob Shuchman, MTRI
Wendy Loya, The Wilderness Society
Philip Martin, FWS
Robert Suydam, North Slope Borough
Sue Moore, NOAA

Senior Staff Committee

Dave Yokel, BLM
Sue Rodman, ADFG
Heather Crowley, BOEM
Tim Viavant, ADFG
Melissa Head, DNR
Tom Leibscher, NPS
Greg Balogh, FWS
Robyn Angliss, NOAA

Oversight Group

Bob Winfree, NPS
Richard Camilleri, NSB

NSSI Staff

John Payne
Scott Guyer
Denny Lassuy

BLM Staff Support

Kelsey McQuigg (Recorder)

Visitors

Diane Granfors, FWS
Jason Taylor, BLM
Michael Baffrey, DOI

Tuesday, May 8, 2012

Welcome and Introduction:

John Payne welcomed all in attendance, introduced Denny Lassuy as NSSI Deputy Director and Kelsey Mcquigg as NSSI Administrative Assistant, and all STAP and SSC members present introduced themselves.

Selection of new STAP Chair:

After years of great service Bill Streever had to step down as Chair of the STAP. Scott Pegau was appointed as the new Chair and Dan Reed was newly appointed as Vice Chair.

Emerging Issue Summaries:

Robert Suydam suggested the group start by revisiting the Emerging Issue Summaries (Summaries) and ensure the Staff and the STAP work together to ensure their questions, answers, and recommendations match up.

Bob Winfree noted that the Summaries would certainly be referred to in scenarios and monitoring exercises and that this would likely influence if/how the Summaries may best be updated.

Robyn Angliss stated the Emerging Issue Summaries had already been a success, citing a recent example of their use as rapid and vetted sources of information for briefings.

Sue Moore added that it might also be good to look outside NSSI in terms of important science that is needed. John Payne said this would be looked into.

Bob Shuchman reminded the group about the need to address the two outstanding assignments that the Oversight Group gave this team (re: scenarios and monitoring) and suggested that the group consider whether action on these assignments or the Summaries was their higher priority.

Scott Pegau said it would seem more important to first track how the emerging issues papers are being used rather than revising them.

Denny Lassuy said the group could speak to NSSI's progress on various parts of the Summaries in the Accomplishments section of the annual report.

Action:

Motion was made to revisit this briefly at the end of the meeting.

Greg Balogh asked if the STAP and Senior Staff would like to be involved in development of the questionnaire that is being put together to help formulate questions for upcoming interviews with Arctic "players." All agreed that this was a good idea.

Ecosystem-based Management (EBM) Meeting Debrief, John Payne:

John discussed highlights and items that were discussed at the Secretary of the Interior's "Science and Decision-making Workshop" in Washington DC. He advised the following:

- David Hayes said it was his impression that Science is fragmented in Alaska and that agencies may not be using the best science.
- Fran Ulmer said we need to move outside of our existing boundaries and move from knowledge to action.
- David Hayes commented our problem is getting information into the decision process.
- Monica Medina, NOAA, stated that we need to focus on information needs that relate directly to the decision making process.
- David Hayes said we need to have scenario planning on both the climate and development side and we need a plan for long-term monitoring to link our information both onshore and offshore.
- David Hayes suggests the timeline to focus on is 20-years out.

Greg Balogh said long-term monitoring is usually recognized as a need but sometimes comes down to an unfunded mandate. John Payne said Fran Ulmer recognized this.

Tom Leibscher said there are a lot of people looking to NSSI to put this final process together. John Payne said we do have an opportunity to address a high level of issues here and therefore it's going to be very important that the group works together. John said we need to take advantage and build upon all of the initiatives that are currently out there.

John Payne mentioned the meeting in Sweden 3 weeks ago regarding ecosystem-based management, and noted that Secretaries Salazar (Interior) and Clinton (State) are the Arctic Council leads on EBM. When John gets the official notes he will send out the definitions and identification of sensitive areas in the Arctic.

Comments/Questions:

Donie Bert-Harte asked if there was any proposal to bring people from different countries to get an international working group together. John Payne said they have set up intersessional working groups that have included some international working groups. This is a long-term process but right now the Arctic Council is going to make a decision as to whether to advance Ecosystem-based Management.

John Payne encouraged anyone that would like to participate in the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring meeting next week to please register. This will link into the long-term monitoring that the STAP and SSC will be working on.

GINA Update and Reaction to OG Responses, Jess Grunblatt:

Jess presented an update on GINA via a PowerPoint presentation. The presentation addressed the following:

- Evolution of Catalog (include diverse data types, promote broad participation)
- Major external sources (NSF, NSIDC) “Data Ecosystem” not “One Stop Shop”
- Leverage existing capacity (lower requirements for participation.)
- NOAA Arctic ERMA
- WMS Services
- Visualization: Ice Data, ground-based radar
- NSF: data subset, duplicates based on logistics
- USGS/ALCC/AOOS/NPS/NSIDC: Implement collaboration
- BOEM: Promote collaboration
- Industry Participation (Conoco Data Sharing Agreement)
- Data Development: NS Lakes, Arctic Ecosystems, Vegetation Field Sites, Hydro/Met Secure Data: Caribou, Migratory Birds.
- STAP May 2012 OG Recommendations
 - **STAP: Recommends that the OG assign a Senior Staff Committee member or other representative from each member agency to act as a single point of contact with NSSI GINA catalog staff.**
 - OG: Endorse, but the single point of contact remain with the individual senior staff member.
 - **STAP: Recommends that the OG encourage information sharing policies that govern sharing of agency information products in a timely and professional manner and which promote information sharing with others.**
 - OG: The decision on information dissemination remains with the individual agencies due to mandates or internal policies.
 - **STAP: Recommends that SPOCs assist NSSI GINA Catalog staff to help make information products available that is relevant to science based management decision making on the North Slope.**
 - OG: Endorses this recommendation, but recognizes internal agency priorities or capacity of senior staff, may delay the availability of information not currently in a format that is easily transmitted to GINA.

Questions/Comments:

Jess cited Canada Polar Data Catalog’s use of NSSI/GINA to support its own operations.

Jess said it would be good to have a discussion on how we can more effectively deal with the firewall and it would be great to return to the issue.

Philip Martin said that to his knowledge in FWS there is no data sharing policy. As a test case they decided to test the Migratory Bird data that pertained to threatened species and found it to

be inordinately cumbersome task in the absence of clear agency policy. Heather Crowley said that BOEM researchers are required to submit their data to NODC so they are meeting their legal obligations for making it publically available.

Scott Pegau asked how much effort we need to put into going after secure data vs. open information. Bob Shuchman said GINA is a worthy challenge to ensure all the research that is being done does not fall through the cracks.

Dan Reed said there is some ambiguity in agencies and it is really unclear whether or not the data sets are protected or not.

Philip Martin said perhaps what is needed is not an overarching top down policy but possibly we need individual agencies internal policies. Bob Shuchman and others agreed with this.

Bob Winfree believes moving forward we should identify when we are running into problems and recognize the advantage of the larger database. The agencies have to see the value of the effort they are going to put into it. He would encourage us to move forward.

Dan Reed believes STAP intent may have been misunderstood by the Oversight Group but believes we are like minded in their thinking. He is not sure we need to push the Oversight Group on this issue again.

Jess said it seems everyone acknowledges that federal data collection should be public but when it comes down to individual entities they can be more reluctant.

Tom Leibscher said he does not think there is that big of a disconnect between the OG and the STAP.

Scott Pegau asked if we need to send a recommendation back to the OG. Believes we should take a look at this and see how the efforts of populating GINA could benefit the agencies. Bob Winfree asked if we have to go back with another set of recommendations since the OG already gave us recommendations. Believes we should go back to them with how we are going to act on their recommendations.

Action:

Decision was made to revisit the wording that we may want to put forward after tomorrow's workshop.

Long term Monitoring, Jason Taylor:

Jason gave a Webinar presentation on long-term vegetation monitoring in the NPR-A under the BLM's national Assessment, Inventory, and Monitoring (AIM) Program.

Questions/Comments:

Scott Pegau said that monitoring projects take time and he is concerned that time was only mentioned briefly in the presentation. It was unclear to him if this is top down or bottom up driven. Jason said the answer is both but he is not yet sure what the temporal scale will be. Donie Bret-Harte asked if there is a plan in the future to integrate any wildlife or soil based components. Jason said from the soil components are moving forward but the wildlife piece still needs to be integrated. He explained they started with the vegetation and as they begin to expand the models they will be able to integrate wildlife into it. John Payne will give Jason's contact information to Donie so they can further this discussion.

Tom Leibscher asked what the budget for the NPR-A portion was. Jason thought it was roughly \$140,000 plus contractor work.

Denny Lassuy commented that the outlined monitoring system was a start on the physical-biological system, but wondered if/how it may be expanded to more fully reflect the broader social-ecological system in which the scenarios will play out – i.e., how this monitoring system could be more effectively adapted to reflect and serve the scenario planning effort.

NSSI STAP Long-term Monitoring Subcommittee Progress Report, Robert Shuchman:

Robert presented an update on NSSI STAP Long-term Monitoring via a PowerPoint presentation. Bob had a student develop a draft table of long-term monitoring programs, which also provided a realistic test for what an intelligent person would be able to find. Most of the programs that were identified by the student were found using the NSSI GINA database.

Questions/Comments:

Doug Kane said in order to come up with monitoring plans for the future we have to have scenarios for what the future is going to look like. Bob Winfree commented that using existing monitoring sources may help see what trends are developing but agrees once you have scenarios you will be able to better see gaps.

Doug Kane asked if the long-term monitoring summary table includes meteorology. Bob said it did not.

Philip Martin noted that at a glance there appears to be a few things that are not pertinent to long-term monitoring such as research projects etc. Bob said he would like everyone to provide feedback as to what adds value and what does not.

Greg Balogh raised the reminder that David Hayes wants the agencies to be doing long-term monitoring. John Payne brought up the issue of funding and how we get long-term funding to

support the long-term monitoring. Bob agrees there appears to be much support for the idea of long-term monitoring but nothing in the terms of monetary support has been outlined.

Bob Shuchman said one suggestion to consider is to shorten the timeframe for what would constitute long-term monitoring to five years instead of ten.

Scott Pegau asked what people's feelings were in terms of timeframes. He said we will have to define what the minimum sampling will be in order to have useful data. Doug Kane said it depends on what we are sampling. Bob said we do have to be careful on the 3-5 year studies but we have to trust the expertise in the room to make judgment on timeframes.

At this point the long-term monitoring efforts are ahead of the scenario planning efforts and we do not see that as a problem yet since we are in the process of identifying existing programs. We expect to be able to identify general gaps in the existing monitoring efforts, but will need the scenario mapping to be more complete before we can address specific gaps.

Action Items:

- Bob to send ongoing monitoring table out to the STAP and Senior Staff Committee to look for mistakes and/or what may be missing.
- STAP to clarify definition (e.g., duration) of 'long-term monitoring.'

Public Comment:

The floor was opened for public comment and one statement was made.

- Diane Granfors of Fish and Wildlife Services Refuge Program (Inventory and Monitoring Initiative) said one of the first things their program is doing is working on a database that is capturing what people are doing on the ground. She also mentioned one of their data managers is working with Alaska Data Integration Working Group to develop data standards for data groups such as this.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.

May 9, 2012

Discussion on OG Response to STAP Recommendations:

John Payne gave highlights from the Retreat Summary:

- Identify future development scenarios on Alaska's North Slope, including on-shore and off-shore
 - Timeline: 20 years into the future
 - Score: Oil, gas, minerals, and associated infrastructure; shipping, tourism, defense, ports; fishing; various development projects
 - Resolution: Significant development (about the site scale)
 - Define data limitations (e.g., intended use, scale uncertainties, etc.)

- Coordinate long-term monitoring
 - Identify inventory of existing monitoring efforts
 - Identify gaps in needed monitoring
 - Identify which variables should be monitored over what periods of time

Scenario Mapping:

Wendy Loya volunteered to be the sub group leader for Scenario Development.

Bob Winfree said there is more than one way to identify scenarios such as exploring and determining what the drivers of change are likely to be. Scenarios are different than forecasts. In the Scenario process the best thing to do is select a couple of drivers that would be very influential if they occurred but have a fair amount of uncertainty attached to them. He said when Global Business Network has done scenario planning they usually get the high level and technical folks together to gather the information, frame the issue, and then break for a period of time to let people research and then reconvene. This is not the only method but it is a well-structured process.

Robert Suydam asked Bob if they had gone through different scenarios where there wasn't much change and then ones where there was a lot of change. Bob said yes and that all of the scenarios should be run through plausibility tests. It is important to factor in the socio-political as well as the bio-physical aspects.

Tom Leibscher stressed how important plausibility tests are and how important it is to think outside the box.

Wendy Loya talked about her experience with Scenario Planning. She reminded everyone that as we think about how to take information forward we need to think about how this will take a huge commitment from the experts as well.

Bob Shuchman asked if in the DOD intelligence community they do scenario planning with worst scenario, status quo, and then best guess. Wendy said yes, that is exactly what they are doing with NPR-A.

Scott Pegau asked for clarification if we were asking for qualitative or quantitative data. Bob Winfree said the important thing to remember about scenarios is scenarios are not forecasts. They are not telling you what will happen they are telling you some possibilities about what could happen.

Sue Moore said that it seems frames are a fundamental step in the matrix but asked how we are coming up with the frames. Bob said when he uses the term 'framing the issue' it means what is the question that is driving the study. He believes you have to pick a few items in the matrices and then try a few to see what will be the most important driving factors. Sue said it sounds to her like the developing of the matrices depends a lot on the participants in the workshop. Bob said this was accurate.

Wendy Loya said we need to figure out what has already been done that we don't need to do. Robert Suydam said for him it would be very helpful to take a step back and figure out why we are trying to do this. He asked if we are making recommendations to the Oversight Group or if we are trying to prepare ourselves for what could happen in the future. Dan Reed said the reason for the scenarios is so that they can make recommendations for scenario planning. John Payne said what they are really looking for is what the future of the Arctic is and what it is going to look like. Bob Winfree said if all of the information sources are brought into the exploration phase of this and if the right people and right thought go into this then it could be a very significant product.

Bob Winfree said when you do scenarios you have to run each of them against a plausibility test. You are trying to explore the areas of uncertainty but you are not doing a forecast. Greg Balogh asked if we are making this more complicated than it needs to be. He believes what the OG wants is a thumbnail sketch of potential scenarios, a feeling as to which ones we are most likely going to have to respond to, and how we would respond.

Donie Brete-Harte got back to what we are tasked with and believes scenario outcome and quantitative analysis could be complimentary but useful for different things. Wendy Loya stressed that we need to look at taking this to the next step. Bob Winfree agrees we need to bring in all the qualitative and quantitative information and then create a matrix for how we take action. Scott Pegau said we need to think about what the STAP can do to help the OG. John Payne said the OG realized there was a need to move on to working with a contractor. Greg Balogh said one of the activities that the group can do to add value is take the potential outcomes and then describe the circumstances that could get us to that point and then do an evaluation for how likely it is that those outcomes will occur.

Heather Crowley said one of the things the group could do is take all the agencies scenarios and look at the bigger picture. Bob Shuchman said we need to define our assignment within the

constraints of time and money. Philip Martin said if we think about what would constitute a ‘no regrets’ outcome, we need to think about those things that would be worth the risk of overspending and what are the things that would influence the kind of science the group does.

Michael Macrander said the group should focus on where this process adds value. He would like to hear what people conceptualize as the source of information that could be considered. He asked the group what would be a concrete step that they could take now and what kind of information would they use.

Bob Shuchman suggested the idea of talking about the various drivers at the next STAP meeting. Bob Winfree reiterated the need to frame the issue, collect the background, and identify the drivers of change no matter what process we use.

Scott Pegau asked for what the next steps should be and who would be willing to lead the charge. Donie Brete-Harte, Scott Pegau, Wendy Loya, and Dan Reed were designated as a subcommittee for this issue.

Action:

The committee will check with John Payne to see what fiscal constraints they have to work with. Would be a good idea to define what the SOW will look like if we did hire a contractor.

Monitoring

Bob Shuchman said we need to formally pin down the template for what a user would want to know. We may need some refinement as to what we want to put into the template. Jess Grunblatt said typically they pick keywords and categories for how they organize the database. Bob clarified that his document would be one of the STAP deliverables that would be an executive summary overview of the who, what, when, and where for the monitoring activities on the slope. He suggested the group use the monitoring exercise to update GINA to improve its functionality as a database that the group can tap into to get the required information they need to get their work done.

Scott Pegau asked if we should send out the North Slope Long-term Monitoring Summary table to everyone or if a different template should be sent out for people to review. Bob Winfree likes the framework that Bob Shuchman used on his Summary. Philip Martin said we should use the emerging issues as a guide. Scott Pegau asked how we are designing these long-term monitoring plans to take advantage of the existing monitoring we have already done. Dan Reed said the important thing to do is capture the legacy work in the GINA database to take advantage of all the funding and monitoring efforts that have been put forth already.

Bob Shuchman thought one potential benefit would be to fix the geographical location of the previous monitoring problems. If we could institutionalize that process it would be a great contribution. Bob pointed out that there are really two activities that are going on in parallel. In

the process Jess wants to use the monitoring group to get constructive feedback to make GINA a more productive tool for the NSSI stakeholders.

Bob Shuchman said this is a long journey and we should start gathering the information and then figure out how we are going to report it out. Bob suggested the group focus their energy and modify the gap analysis as the scenario mapping gets solidified

Action Item:

Everyone to take Bob Shuchmans existing summary and give feedback to see if we are missing a column and if there is any inaccurate or missing information. Feedback, additions, and suggestions for missing information should be sent to Bob by June 15th. One-page summaries to be completed at the next meeting.

GINA: Follow up on Items from last meeting

Scott Pegau said we need to keep putting data sets in. He asked if we should prioritize particular data sets or if we should let the participant's energy drive them on their topics. Jess Grunblatt said we should refer to some of the priorities that were defined under our emerging issues.

John Payne said we should start thinking about prioritizing by what we need for our daily workload. Tim Viavant said the fact that the actual data doesn't exist in GINA isn't a bad thing, we just need GINA to know that the data exists somewhere. John said some of the reports we already have are invaluable; people just need to know where to go to find them. Jess Grunblatt said he has enough information to move forward. He wants to continually update with information he can get from the group.

Matt Vos gave an update on our website

- Still "Northslope.org"
- Three ribbons were added
- Link to "Find out what's happening on the North Slope" was added
- Data Catalog, Sea Ice Outlook, and Local Environmental Observer Network boxes were added. This is scheduled to change every two weeks.
- Social media element (Facebook and twitter) have been added. Matt Vos to come up with two posts a week.

Donie Bret-Harte said that we need to make sure all of our information is updated and current. Matt Vos said he will be the one doing the updates to the website.

Robyn Angliss said she really liked the newer look and feel and asked if there was a way to link directly to the Emerging Issues so that she could direct people immediately to the website.

Bob Shuchman asked what the status is of our Congressional Report. John Payne said it has gone to Elijah and is visual.

GINA Update & Reaction to OG Responses to Gina, Jess Grunblatt;

Jess presented an update on GINA via a PowerPoint presentation.

Shell: Presentation and Update, Michael Macrander;

Michael Macrander gave a presentation on Shell Beaufort and Chukchi Sea Program Update via PowerPoint.

Questions/Comments:

Jess Grunblatt asked if they operate the wells all year round. Michael explained the time periods.

Summary of Action Items:

John Payne would like Dan Reed to provide a one page handout for Wendy to brief the oversight group at their meeting on May 23rd.

Long-term Monitoring:

Everyone to take Bob Shuchmans existing summary and give feedback to see if we are missing a column and if there is any inaccurate or missing information. Feedback, additions, and suggestions for missing information should be sent to Bob by June 15th. One-page summaries to be completed at the next meeting.

Scenario Mapping:

The committee will check with John Payne to see what fiscal constraints they have to work with. Would be a good idea to define what the SOW would look like if we did hire a contractor.

Next Meeting:

September 18th and 19th, 2012 in Fairbanks.

Meeting Adjourned at 3:00 pm.