

**Science Technical Advisory Panel  
Senior Staff Committee  
North Slope Science Initiative  
Wednesday and Thursday, February 6 and 7, 2008  
University of Alaska Fairbanks  
International Arctic Research Center, Room 401**

**MEETING AGENDA**

**Wednesday, February 6, 2008**

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|---------------------|--|
| 8:30 AM             | Opening and Introductions (John Kelley/John Payne)   |
| 8:45 AM – 11:00 AM  | Presentations from each of the NSSI member agencies on their mandates/missions. Goal: Help STAP understand agency mission to provide better recommendations (Senior Staff Committee)   |
| 11:00 AM – 11:30 AM | Review Approved NSSI Business Processes Plan. Goal: Understand the administrative and operational functions of the NSSI (John Payne)   |
| 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM  | Lunch Break (on your own)  |
| 1:00 PM – 1:30 PM   | Functionality of the NSSI in developing partnerships. Goal: The NSSI is not a granting or funding entity, but it can serve to develop partnerships to address applied research, collect necessary baseline information and monitoring activities related to legislative objectives.  |
| 1:30 PM – 1:45 PM   | Discussion of hosting the Oil and Gas Best Management Practices Symposium in Alaska by John Kelley and Bill Streever.  |
| 1:45 PM – 2:30 PM   | Report to the STAP on the landcover project by Bob Shuchman and Torre Jorgenson  |
| 2:30 PM – 4:00 PM   | Present general "needs" categories from interviews with oversight group members. Goal: Senior staff suggests areas within each category where the NSSI may function strategically and where the STAP can be best utilized. This information will be utilized to develop a strategic outlook for the NSSI: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- permafrost</li><li>- weather (climate)</li><li>- hydrology</li><li>- vegetation change</li><li>- salt water intrusion</li><li>- lake dehydration</li><li>- migratory waterfowl habitat changes and distribution</li><li>- sensitive species</li><li>- marine baseline, including marine mammals</li><li>- marine acoustical issues</li><li>- coastal and riverine erosion</li><li>- changing fire regime</li><li>- sea ice degradation</li></ul> |

- social science (subsistence opportunities, overall community health, economics)
- terrestrial mammals species redistribution
- infrastructure

### **Thursday, February 7, 2008**

8:30 AM – 10:00 AM      Operational presentation of the NSSI node of the Geographic Information Network of Alaska. Report of STAP sub-committee. Goal: Continue STAP input into content and operation of GINA through the GIS/remote sensing subcommittee.

10:00 AM – 11:30 AM and 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Develop recommendations on STAP tasks, including:

- Traditional gauging stations are both expensive to deploy and operate. Most require periodic visits for either data transfer or general operational maintenance. NSSI will have seven stations deployed on the North Slope through agreements with USGS, BLM and FWS. These gauges require a significant allocation of funds and manpower to maintain. The situation will only become more expensive in the future. It is believed new remote sensing technologies may aid in accomplishing the same work with far less expense. The STAP is to investigate technologies that do not require operation and maintenance of traditional hydrologic gauging stations. This may be using technology that includes satellite or airborne platforms, or other type of remotely sensed data.

- Fires on Alaska's North Slope have been considered rare events. Only 134 fires north of 68° are recorded in fire history kept by Alaska Fire Service since 1956. The 2007 Anaktuvuk River fire was an unprecedented event in that it burned in September, that it was so large (256,000 acres—largest fire in the state this year), and that it burned all the way from the coastal plain to the foothills, crossing several ecotones. Thick smoke from the fire caused one of the turbines at a pump stations to shut down, choked researchers at the Toolik Field Station, and caused concern from villages on the North Slope. The drought conditions during the month of September were coincident with record low Arctic ocean pack ice adjacent to the coast—possibly bringing warmer, drier conditions. If this condition becomes the new norm, fire managers are concerned that large fires on the North Slope could become more frequent, and effects on vegetation, wildlife, and communities are unknown. STAP is to make recommendations on what parameters are to be measured and monitored to determine if fire is a new impact to the North Slope region.

- Monitoring report from STAP sub-committee. Goal: Identify the steps the senior staff committee and the STAP can take to start discussion on monitoring issues/concerns/needs on the North Slope and the off-shore environment.