

North Slope Science Initiative

Report from the Executive Director

April, 2005

D.C Briefings: During the week of March 14th while four of the Oversight Group members were in D.C, briefings on the North Slope Science Initiative were given to the following: BLM Senior Staff, Interior Executive Staff, Senate Energy Committee staff, Daniel Kish (Senior Advisor, House Resources), Jeff Petrick, (House Resources), John Katz (Office of the Governor), ConocoPhillips (D.C. Staff), Lynn Scarlett, Deputy Secretary of the Interior. Attached is a list of the attendees at each briefing. The response was generally positive, and support for the initiative seems widespread.

Other Briefings: The Wildlife Society was briefed via teleconference on NSSI which was received with some reservation. Other current North Slope issues seemed to dominate TWS concerns, and further communication regarding NSSI with TWS is warranted.

A briefing was given to Fritz Reid and Tom Dwyer from Ducks Unlimited on the NSSI in Portland, John Schoen and Stan Senner with Audubon in Anchorage, and Lawson Brigham (U.S. Arctic Research Commission) on NSSI activities since January.

Other Meetings: Commissioners from the U.S. Arctic Research Commission met with several agencies to discuss their 2005 plan and priority focus areas. NSSI was discussed with them, and USARC expressed their belief that it is a good fit with the programs they are pursuing.

I attended the University of Alaska, Fairbanks Fish and Wildlife Cooperative Research Unit annual meeting to meet the professors and students conducting research on the North Slope. While there, I met with Northern Field Office BLM staff to discuss redrafting the Traditional Ecological Knowledge section of the Science Strategy. I met with the Ex. Dir. of the North Pacific Research Board to discuss the development of their science plan, funding mechanisms, call for proposals and peer review processes and other lessons learned.

Science Technical Group Charter: At the Solicitor's request, minor amendments were made to the Science Technical Group Charter, and a notice for the Federal Register was drafted and sent to Washington to accompany the Charter for the Secretary's signature.

Other Activities: Correspondence, science strategy redraft, intern recruitment, Barrow Arctic Research Consortium teleconference on GIS issues, review of BLM Research and Monitoring Team priorities, literature review of priority regarding molting geese, discussed molting geese research with Dirk Dirksen (USGS), met with Steve Arthur (ADF&G), principle investigator on Central Arctic herd caribou research to discuss

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caribou research priorities and funding issues, and drafted and circulated to Oversight Group members and staff proposed legislative language to formalize the NSSI.