

**Director's Report**  
**North Slope Science Initiative**  
**December 5, 2007 through January 25, 2008**

Since the last Oversight Group meeting a substantial amount of time has been spent on revising the Business Processes Plan. I have received over 100 written and about 30 verbal comments. The Senior Staff Committee met on January 15, 2008 to go over the Draft Business Process Plan. After the meeting a revised document was forwarded to the Oversight Group for discussion at the January 28, 2008 meeting. Since forwarding the Draft to the Oversight Group several additional comments were received and incorporated into a new version (January 28, 2008, v2). The last comments received were mostly editorial in nature and did not change the document in a significant way.

Adrienne Pilmanis, Senior Technical Specialist for the NSSI, served 60 days of a 119 day detail. Adrienne requested early termination of her detail early. She returned to her permanent position in Oregon mid-December. Adrienne was an outstanding asset during her detail and she will be missed.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have offered a Senior Technical Specialist to serve as a one-year detail to NSSI. NSSI would be responsible for salary, benefits, cost of living allowance and travel for Dr. Denny Lassuy while on detail. The offer was accepted and I am currently working on the details to bring Denny over to NSSI.

The Natural Resources Specialist position is to be advertised in early February as a four year term position. This is an entry level position starting as a GS-7 with promotion potential to a GS-11. It is expected it will be late May or early June 2008 before the selected candidate is on board.

The nominations for the five vacancies on the Science Technical Advisory Panel went forward to the Secretary of the Interior on January 17, 2008.

The nomination process for the second five vacancies closed on January 17, 2008. Five nominations were received, four were re-nominations and one is a new nomination. The names will be forwarded to the Oversight Group on February 1, 2008.

The Charter renewal for the Science Technical Advisory Panel is currently moving through the surname process to the Secretary of the Interior.

#### Meetings and Conferences

December 5 and 6, 2007: USGS, Alaska Satellite Facility and GINA representatives met in Fairbanks on December 5, 2007 to discuss "image cubes" that could be used to detect change across the North Slope over time. These "cubes" would represent a time sequence from the mid-1970's through present using Landsat Thematic Mapper imagery.

The discussion will lead to a partnership between USGS, Alaska SAR facility and GINA to serve this important information.

December 7, 2007: Adrienne and I met with Keith Boggs at the Alaska Natural Heritage Program in Anchorage to continue our discussion on the possibility of combining the NSSI landcover initiative with LandFire and GAP programs (see separate summary of activities for Landcover Facilitation Project, attached). Combining our efforts would likely meet most of the user requirements discussed at the November landcover workshops, increase field validation, and reduce costs overall. This would free up the NSSI to move toward a quality change detection project in the future.

December 12 and 13, 2007: LandFire meetings were held in Anchorage to discuss LandFire projects elsewhere in the state.

December 18, 2007: I met with Carl Markon, USGS, to continue the discussion on the possibility of having a joint project with LandFire. A two day meeting was scheduled at the Alaska Natural Heritage Program office on January 30 and 31, 2008.

December 19, 2007: I attended the Alaska Coordinated Planning Group meeting at the Department of the Interior office in Anchorage.

January 9, 2008: Ken Taylor and I met with the North Slope Borough Mayor and Karla Kolash to discuss North Slope Borough needs as they relate to the NSSI. The meeting was very productive in helping define needs. The North Slope Borough is very concerned with the lack of baseline information available for the off-shore environment and would like to see NSSI aid in collecting information for the future.

Also on January 9, 2008, Ken Taylor and I met with the North Slope Borough Wildlife Department. The afternoon discussion was focused on the functions of the NSSI, defining what the NSSI is and which agency is responsible for its operations. The meeting helped clarify several misconceptions about the NSSI, including NSSI responsibilities to the Bureau of Land Management's Research and Monitoring Team.

January 15, 2008: The Senior Staff Committee met in Anchorage to discuss the Business Processes Plan.

January 17, 2008: I participated in the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee telecom. The primary discussions were about the Native cultures and the status of the Arctic Observing Network documents that were forwarded to the Arctic Council.

I also met with Becky Morton, Fugro Geospatial Services about developing quality digital elevation models for the North Slope. Fugro operates several remote sensing platforms that have the capability of gathering high quality imagery to make digital elevation models. The requirements discussed were generally outside the budget available through NSSI. Becky said she would follow through with USGS.

January 24 and 25, 2008: I met with John Kelley, Chair, Science Technical Advisory Panel in Fairbanks. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the operation of the STAP and the status of the task orders that were presented in December. We also discussed the upcoming STAP meetings in Fairbanks.