

Director's Report, North Slope Science Initiative
Activities from February 14, 2009 through April 7, 2009
April 7, 2009

For information on activities from December 4, 2008 through February 13, 2009, please refer to the interim Director's Report dated February 14, 2009.

Since the interim report, the NSSI has been very busy with continuing refinements to the Project Tracking System (PTS) through targeted teleconference meetings on a weekly basis with the Science Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) Data Subcommittee and GINA management and staff. At this writing there are over 1200 individual records available in the PTS. This has been an exemplary case of a STAP subcommittee and GINA working together to improve the operability of the PTS. While there are still a few remaining issues to work out, the efforts these folks have undertaken and their commitment to the project has been outstanding. The PTS is now up on the NSSI website for review.

Two trips were made in the time period: One to Washington, DC, to meet with Department of the Interior key personnel, and to "roll out" the NSSI's first Report to Congress. The second trip was made to St. Louis, Missouri as an invited participant in the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (Department of Defense) "Arctic Domain Awareness Conference." Since this particular conference was limited to participants who currently hold a Top Secret SCI/SI/TK security clearance, I am limited on what I can discuss in a trip report, but highly valuable in content to the issues most, if not all, of the NSSI membership is challenged within the scope of climate change. A second conference is planned for late 2009 or early 2010 that will focus on the outcomes of this initial setting. Summaries of both of these trips are in separate trip reports.

We also participated in the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee (IARPC) teleconference held on March 31, 2009. This teleconference focused on the content of the upcoming Congressional reports the National Science Foundation, as the IARPC Chair, and the U.S. Arctic Research Commission (USARC) are preparing. Both reports will have sections related to the NSSI activities. The Arctic Observing Network (AON) report to Congress is due in May 2009. The NSSI provided input to this report, which includes discussions of the GINA data catalog, automated water quality technology and landcover projects. The NSSI is also participating in the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment which is being prepared for the Arctic Council and the Terrestrial Resource Assessment report which is being prepared for the USARC. The USGS, Alaska Science Center, has the lead for the latter report.

Much of the past few weeks have been a very busy time for the STAP, its Chair, and NSSI staff working on the summary documents for the emerging issues. However, it is hoped that this intense focus, plus Oversight Group review, will result in a quality peer-reviewed and interdisciplinary final product. The majority of the remaining summary papers will be presented at the April 15, 2009, Oversight Group meeting.