

Director's Report, North Slope Science Initiative  
Activities from February through April 2010

Old News + Good News

I was notified in mid-January that all six Science Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) nominees have passed White House vetting and background checks. However, I have had several requests for additional information, both personal and organizational. The last request I received was to prepare a justification as to the timeline between the Federal Register publication and the current status (the nominee package has been through the DOI surnaming process). In other words, in a few paragraphs outlining why it has taken more than a year to get to the point of sending out the appointment letters.

The Science Technical Advisory Panel charter is due for renewal by May 2010. All paperwork for renewal has been completed and forwarded to the Bureau of Land Management, Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) coordinator in January 2010. Since this charter is in the NSSI implementing legislation, there are no changes to the previous charter. It is expected to take 60 to 90 days for the renewal documents to be reviewed by the White House, DOI Solicitor and FACA coordinator, then on to the Secretary for signature. The final step is to file the charter (after Secretarial signature) with Congress. As of April 20, 2010, the charter renewal package is in the BLM Director's office for review.

Emerging Issues

During the January 27-28, 2010, STAP meeting work began on developing additional emerging issues that will include socio-economic, restoration and reclamation and fisheries. The status of these new emerging issue papers will be presented at the May 5<sup>th</sup> Oversight Group meeting.

Data Integration and Project Tracking

The STAP data subcommittee has been working directly with GINA on cleaning up the data side of the portal and now has the most current records from the various data administrators. Jess has been working to develop a new interface for the data and project tracking sections of the NSSI/GINA program and this should be operational in early May 2010.

On the Project Tracking side, there are over 1100 project records are now available. The NSSI is now working to geo-locate each of the entries. Keeping the project records current continues to be an institutional challenge. Internal to the NSSI membership maintaining records of current projects ranges from a simple electronic "integration" between individual tracking systems to manpower queries and spreadsheets. The annual senior staff committee coordination meetings help the NSSI secure records from those entities that have no internal tracking systems, but such records must be entered manually. External to the NSSI membership, we have complete operability between the National Science Foundation and the NSSI, but, as with the NSSI membership, there is project discovery that often requires manual query and input.

Department of the Interior – Arctic Communication

The DOI continues to hold monthly conference calls for communicating Arctic information between the various DOI Alaska bureaus and the Washington, DC DOI offices. The majority of these calls are about

communicating international efforts with such entities as the Arctic Council. The NSSI participates in these monthly calls.

### Meetings and Coordination

The NSSI participated in three major conferences this spring: Alaska Marine Science Symposium, Alaska Forum on the Environment and the international State of the Arctic Conference. STAP member Dr. Robert Shuchman presented the emerging issues at the State of the Arctic Conference and manned the NSSI display booth.

The Second United States and Canada Oil and Gas Research Forum is scheduled for Calgary, Alberta, Canada, November 30 through December 2, 2010. An organizing committee has been established and the planning efforts are underway. The NSSI is on the organizing committee and is a principal sponsor. The Canadian government has underwritten a substantial portion of the forum by providing \$200k. Budgets permitting, the NSSI will be providing additional funding. The organizing committee has developed a draft outline for the forum, and are currently working on filling in that outline with invited speakers.

Karla Kolash, Dick LeFebvre, John Farrell and I visited Washington, DC the week of April 12<sup>th</sup>. A separate trip report has been prepared for this event.