

Director's Report, North Slope Science Initiative
Activities from February 23 through April 27, 2011

Jason Taylor has completed his detail with the North Slope Science Initiative and has returned to his home station in Denver, Colorado.

The Barrow workshop: "Working Together to Understand Our Changing Arctic," was held on March 29-31, 2011. This was the first of several planned "place-based" workshops to bring resource managers, scientists and local North Slope residents together to share information, science and observations. The Heritage Center was filled to capacity all three days with some 136 pre-registrations plus additional attendees from the local community. This was the largest science based workshop ever held on the North Slope and the feedback has been very positive. The workshop report will be independently reviewed and released in early May. This workshop set the bar high for the NSSI and it was so successful that the Mayor's Office asked the NSSI to plan on having these with regularity.

The STAP connectivity paper is complete and has been forwarded to a publisher. As with any activity planned and written by a collective body of people, it has been a challenge keeping the paper on track. A complete rewrite of the paper was accomplished in late October and the draft presented at the December and February Oversight Group meetings. Thanks to all of the STAP members, and especially Bill Streever for their continued dedication in developing this important paper. The final paper is to be released at this meeting.

The STAP has also completed the Fisheries and Cultural Emerging Issue Summaries. The Reclamation Emerging Issue Summary will be finalized in July 2011. Thanks go to senior staff committee member, Robyn Angliss, for spearheading the fisheries paper and keeping it on track.

Logistical planning for the North Slope land cover project, a cooperative effort with the Alaska Natural Heritage Program, National Resources Conservation Service, Ducks Unlimited, Inc. and Spatial Solutions, Inc. has started. Scott Guyer, BLM, is the logistical coordinator and team lead. We were hopeful to be able to complete the field work and image processing this year with the help of the Arctic Landscape Conservation Cooperative.

Data Integration and Project Tracking

Project information in Catalog (catalog.northslope.org) has been updated. Project updates for BLM, NSB and NPS are complete. GINA has participated in the design of automated project metadata standards with the Alaska Data Integration Working Group (ADlwg) and will implement this standard in generating the 2011 update of NSF Catalog project information.

Data within Catalog have been completely refreshed with new information. There are currently over 244 data records available in Catalog which represent a wide variety of data types. Users can access data directly from the GINA archive or are referred to appropriate web sources that are maintained by other entities (ie. NSIDC, ADFG, etc). GINA will continue to update Catalog data holdings and is participating in the Arctic LCC Geospatial Data Working Group (GEOwg) meetings and data development activities.

Developing participation in Catalog is important. As part of the project update cycle for 2011, NSSI organizations will be provided with a user login to facilitate maintenance of project records and the integration of Catalog with existing automated project tracking systems will be encouraged.

Collaborative development of Catalog resources is being pursued with additional partners (USFWS/Arctic LCC, AOOS, USGS and USARC).

GINA, together with UAF/ASF and MTRI, is developing information products relevant to the availability of winter liquid water within North Slope lakes (NFWF Grant). This can be relevant to ecological evaluations and development planning. Also GINA is in the process of developing orthoimagery (2.5m resolution) for the entire North Slope through the SDMI project. The 2009-2010 SDMI acquisitions provide good coverage of the North Slope region (www.alaskamapped.org/assets/25/spot-accepted-2010.10.jpg) and acquisition will be continuing. GINA is a reception facility for the MODIS satellites and is working with partners such as NPS-Arctic I&M Network in developing products and analysis for the North Slope region. All these information products will be provided to NSSI Catalog users.

NSSI Public Website

All Barrow workshop presentations are currently available for viewing or downloading on the NSSI website. Poster pdf's are still being received and made available.

Arctic Communication and Coordination

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. The NSSI has been selected as the co-lead with Denmark on the Terrestrial Monitoring program for the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna, a subgroup of the Arctic Council. The first joint meeting between the Arctic countries was held in Iceland on February 1-3, 2011. The U.S. Arctic Research Commission is co-leading with the NSSI as the U.S. partners. An Arctic (U.S. only) specific terrestrial monitoring workshop is being planned for the near future. Two, larger, international workshops are also planned: one in Anchorage and the other in Denmark over the next three years.