

**Meeting Summary
North Pacific Research Board
Teleconference
August 25, 2010**

A teleconference meeting was held on August 25th at 12pm (AST) between the Science Panel and Board to discuss the Science Panel's response to the COV concerns regarding the GOAIERP. In attendance representing the Science Panel were: Doug Woodby (chairman), Vera Alexander, Dick Beamish, Mike Dagg, Bob Gisiner, Stew Grant, Patricia Livingston, Seth Macinko, Andre Punt, Tom Royer, Pat Tester, Bill Wilson and Dave Witherell. In attendance representing the Board were: Ian Dutton (chairman), Nancy Bird, CAPT Michael Cerne, Dorothy Childers, Doug DeMaster, Michele Longo Eder, John Gauvin, John Hilsinger, Howard Horton, John Iani, Paul MacGregor, Heather McCarty, Gerry Merrigan, Eric Olson, and Pam Pope. Science Panel members were introduced to the Board and John Hilsinger noted that Sue Aspelund was also sitting in on this call as she will be his representative from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game at the September Board meeting. Chris Oliver also listened in. The meeting was staffed by Clarence Pautzke, Francis Wiese, Carrie Eischens and Tom Van Pelt.

The Board chairman noted that draft summaries of previous meeting would be approved at the September Board meeting. Board members questioned whether the purpose of the current meeting was to discuss the COV concerns and Science Panel's response or to go one step further and make a decision on how to proceed. The Executive Director reminded everyone of the timeline detailed in the July 16th letter to the COV and reiterated that, because time was of the essence, the Board should decide at this meeting whether to submit the proposal package to the Secretary of Commerce for approval by September 1st, which would allow for SOC approval by mid-September. Any further delay would jeopardize the entire GOAIERP program, given the seasonal cruise schedule and leveraged NOAA surveys scheduled in 2011 and 2013. The chairman concurred that a decision needed to be made at this meeting.

The Executive Director then summarized the history of the COV concerns, stating that the Board received a letter on July 1st indicating that in the COV's opinion, the GOAIERP program was fatally flawed and should be halted. The Board requested a more detailed review from the COV identifying specific issues on July 16th, and a response was received on August 3rd. The Science Panel reviewed this letter and responded to the COVs concerns.

Doug Woodby, chair of the Science Panel, presented the Science Panel's response (Appendix 2 of Science Panel meeting summary) and summarized by stating that the panel did not agree with the COV's assessment that the GOAIERP was fatally flawed, but rather that this was a work in progress that would be tended by NPRB staff, Science Panel and Board. The Science Panel is confident that the teams that have been selected to participate in the GOAIERP will be able to produce a product of value to the NPRB and the greater scientific community.

Board members asked whether specific COV issues had merit. Woodby responded that the COV had raised concerns about things the panel had already identified and discussed, and thus had already addressed or were currently being resolved. The current program management approach is based on lessons learned through the BSIERP process, and integration is something that will be worked on continually in the GOAIERP as it is in the BSIERP. He also noted that the budget limitation of this program should be considered, and therefore it does not seem reasonable to judge the GOAIERP against BSIERP as the COV appears to have done. Furthermore, the panel suggested that a gap analysis should

be conducted after the first year to see if issues that are not discernable now should be addressed as the program progresses.

Board members asked about the scientific issues raised in the review, specifically in regards to the Lower Trophic Level (LTL) statement of work and, in general, whether the SP believed the individual projects were sound. Woodby replied that the Science Panel discussed the scientific issues raised by the COV but had decided not to respond to each one in detail because they did not see starting a debate on specific scientific issues as productive. Woodby did point out that the issue of trace metal analysis within the LTL proposal is being addressed through ongoing collaboration with the PI, and thus the Science Panel does not consider this a fatal flaw. Woodby also noted that the Science Panel agreed with the COV on several points, specifically about the need for more transparency regarding the panel's standard operating procedures. The panel has already asked the staff to formalize those procedures in a written document.

One Board member stated that if we were to terminate the GOAIERP program now, all of the matching support would be lost and we would likely not end up with a stronger program if a new RFP was issued. If anything, NPRB would lose time and, more importantly, credibility by terminating the GOAIERP program. Woodby stated that the Science Panel had also discussed this possibility and had come to the same conclusion. As noted previously, the Science Panel believes that much can be gained from the program and thus there is much value in moving forward with what is in hand.

Another Board member asked about possible ramifications (funding or otherwise) if the Board decided not to follow the recommendations of the COV. Chairman Dutton stated that NPRB is the COV's client and that the COV has no formal authority or influence beyond what the Board gives it. Therefore rejecting the COV recommendations would have no concrete ramifications beyond NPRB. He did note, however, that both points of view will be part of the public record and will be submitted to the SOC as part of the funding package, and thus the Board would need to be prepared to defend such a decision.

A Board member stated that relative to the BSIERP, the GOAIERP is not a complete IERP, so perhaps it should be called something other than an IERP. Woodby reiterated that GOAIERP is an integrated program but that it simply is not as comprehensive as the BSIERP. The GOAIERP does not cover the entire top-to-bottom ecosystem the way the Bering Sea program is able to, due to the funding limitations. Board members varied in their opinion on whether a name change for the GOAIERP was necessary.

Chairman Dutton reiterated that a decision had to be made regarding how to proceed – either to go forward and submit the GOAIERP package to the Secretary of Commerce or not. Board members questioned if this would include the marine mammal component of the program. Chairman Dutton replied that as per the schedule set out in Pautzke's July 18th memo, the package would go to the SOC without the marine mammal component and that the marine mammal issue would be taken up at the September Board meeting in Juneau.

A Board member asked about the discrepancy between the COV and the Science Panel/staff comments regarding the nature of the GOAIERP PI meeting. Staff seemed to indicate that everything had gone very well and that it had been a productive meeting, but the COV seemed to imply the opposite. Staff noted that the COV was not present at the GOAIERP PI meeting nor had they asked staff about it. It is therefore unclear how the COV came to their conclusion that the meeting was not successful.

After further discussion, Michele Longo Eder made the following motion:

“Send the GOAIERP package as currently constructed to the Secretary of Commerce for review by 31 August 2010.”

The motion was seconded by John Gauvin. Further discussion followed on what would be included in the package to the SOC. It was clarified that, aside from the proposals, the submission would include the COV letter as well as the Science Panel response. The motion passed with one recusal (Doug DeMaster) and one objection (Heather McCarty).

Chairman Dutton thanked the Science Panel for their work on this matter and adjourned the meeting.