

North Pacific Research Board

*“Building a clear understanding of the North Pacific, Bering Sea, and Arctic Ocean ecosystems
that enables effective management and sustainable use of marine resources.”*

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Executive Committee Meeting Summary February 4, 2002 EVOS Conference Room, Anchorage, Alaska

Please Note: After the discussions summarized below, the Executive Committee decided to hold a full NPRB teleconference on March 1 and a full NPRB meeting in Anchorage on March 21-22, 2002. Agenda items for each meeting are identified below.

Administrative Update

The Executive Committee (Committee) received a report on current staffing and office arrangements for the NPRB. The new executive director assumed the position on January 1, 2002, and soon will be circulating a position announcement for an administrative assistant who should be onboard by mid-March or early April. Additional staff members will be considered late this summer or early fall. NPRB also will have half-time support from a financial assistant at the Alaska SeaLife Center and a half-time clerical at the Exxon Valdez Oil Trustee Council office that will be the temporary location of the NPRB office through June. Phone numbers are above.

The Alaska SeaLife Center is the Board’s fiscal agent and will maintain accounting services for the Board. The Committee unanimously passed a motion authorizing the Board’s executive director to establish accounts at the Center, sign checks, establish an office, authorize payroll, and expend funds in accordance with a transitional budget. NPRB accounts will be maintained separately from any other Center accounts. A website, www.NPRB.org, is in the final stages of development and should be operational by the end of February.

The Committee was informed that draft standard operating procedures for the Board will be prepared for full Board review in March. Additionally, the Board will review a draft memorandum of agreement concerning joint research planning and cooperation among the Board, EVOS Trustee Council, Northern Fund of the Pacific Salmon Commission, and the University of Alaska. The draft MOU is currently being revised before distribution. Last, the Committee was given an address list for NPRB members (attachment 1).

Funding and Budgets

The NPRB administers two research funds, the Environmental Improvement and Restoration Fund (EIRF), and the North Pacific Marine Research Institute (NPMRI). EIRF funds available for FY01 were \$2.1M, of which \$2.099M remains. Five percent (\$105,000) is available for administration and about \$104,000 remains unspent. \$1.995M is available for research.

The Institute has \$2M, of which 10% or \$200k is available for administration, and the remaining \$1.8M for research, education and demonstration projects. Some of the \$200k has been spent on Board administration, leaving about \$180,000 for further administration. Thus, the Board has available from EIRF and the Institute, combined, about \$284,000 for administration. The Committee has reviewed a draft start-up budget showing that about that amount would be required to fund the Board and staff through September 2002.

No additional funds were granted to the Institute for FY02, but the EIRF, based on interest earned in FY01, will provide about \$10-12M or even more for research. Five percent or \$500-600k, is earmarked for administration and the remainder is available for research in 2002 or 2003. In summary we have the following funds available for administration and research over the next 21 months:

	Administrative Funds Available			
	for January 1, 2002 - September 30, 2003			
	EIRF FY01		104,000	
	Institute FY01		180,000	
	EIRF FY02		<u>500,000</u> +	
	Total		784,000	

Additional administrative funds may become available later this year if there is a second major release of EIRF funds. The Board needs to be very cognizant of the workloads that could develop over the next 12-24 months. The staff workload will increase later this year when the major RFP for 2003 is out on the streets. The peer review process alone will pose quite a challenge. For example, the North Pacific Marine Research Program received 120 proposals for the \$6.6M available in 1999 and funded 30 projects. The \$15M available for Steller Sea Lion projects through an RFP attracted 70 proposals, of which 31 were funded. Andrew Trites' program has \$4M that attracted 38 proposals amounting to \$10M, and 24 were funded. There are over 150 projects now being run on SSL funded by the \$40M+.

The review and approval of proposals, and their eventual monitoring, will require significant time and manpower. The grants could run over multiple years and have multiple component projects under several principal investigators. NMFS will not be able to provide grants managers, so NPRB must fund positions for that work, either on its own staff in Anchorage or with the Alaska SeaLife Center as our fiscal agent. The Board could easily find itself in the position of having insufficient staff to perform the above review and monitoring processes in a multi-grant environment. The \$500-600k now projected as administrative support for the next fiscal year could easily be exceeded. The Board will need to consider how best to address these needs and thus not jeopardize its ability to fund and monitor many projects.

In addition, the Committee considered a request for daily compensation for certain non-voting members for preparation, travel time, and attendance at meetings. Because of the very tight legislated budget constraints, the Committee decided not to consider daily compensation, though it will fund travel and per diem costs while at full Board meetings, for those not affiliated with federal agencies.

Research for 2002

The Committee reviewed several options for research in 2002. The Board has two sources of research funds under its purview, from the EIRF and from the Institute, as follows:

	Research Funds Available 2002-2003		
	EIRF 01		1,995,000
	NPMRI		1,800,000
	Subtotal		3,795,000
	EIRF 02		9,500,000
	Total		13,295,000

The Committee is recommending that EIRF FY02 funds be held for research in 2003, as will be discussed in the next section below. This will allow the Board time to develop a more comprehensive science plan before expending the \$9.5M that may be available. There also may be an additional release of EIRF funds in August, so the Board may have up to \$12-15M to fund research in 2003. We still are left with \$3.795M for research in 2002. Of that, \$1.8M is in Institute funds which have been available for some time now, and grants specialists are telling us that these need to be expended this year, particularly since administrative expenses are being charged against them. In contrast, part or all of the EIRF funds could be spent either this year or moved to 2003.

The Committee suggested three types of projects that could be funded for 2002: (1) Projects that were partially funded in 1999 by NPMR and would provide for continuity of research ([attachment 2](#)); (2) New projects to support science planning and coordination; and (3) Demonstration and education projects through the Institute. The first two types of projects are shown in the following two tables:

	<u>Partially funded under NPMR</u>				<u>NPMR Award</u>	<u>Need</u>
	Right Whale Research				70,000	75,000
	SE BS Shelf slope mesoscale eddies				377,794	109,732
	Continuous Plankton Recorder				250,000	150,000
	Nutrient cycling SE Bering Sea &				400,000	194,734
	Total					529,466

The following five science planning and coordination projects are being considered, and are explained more fully in (attachment 3):

Science Planning and Coordination							
	Searchable GIS research database					250,000	
	NAS Review of Research Needs					200,000	
	Science Planning					500,000	
	Alaska's Oceans and Watersheds Symposium					20,000	
	Jt Consortium Ocean. Research and Education					<u>16,500</u>	
	Total					986,500	

The Committee is considering apportioning the Institute’s \$1.8M as shown below, and has requested the Alaska SeaLife Center to recommend demonstration and education projects to fund starting this year.

North Pacific Marine Research Institute				
	Research			1,000,000
	Demonstration projects			500,000
	Education projects			<u>300,000</u>
	Total			1,800,000

The Committee would like the Board to consider three options listed in the table below. These range from a very limited RFP in 2002 based solely on remaining Institute funds, to partial or full augmentation with EIRF funds. Basic criteria and priorities identified in the RFP would be based on statutory language for the Institute quoted below, and further developed by the Alaska SeaLife Center in attachment 4:

“The projects of the Institute will relate to the North Pacific marine ecosystem, with particular emphasis on marine mammal, seabird, fish, and shellfish populations in the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska including populations located in or near Kenai Fjords National Park and the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge.”

Under Options 2 and 3, EIRF funds would augment Institute funds. They must be used to “...conduct research activities on or relating to the fisheries or marine ecosystems in the north Pacific Ocean, Bering Sea, and Arctic Ocean (including any lesser related bodies of water)... [with]...priority on cooperative research efforts designed to address pressing fishery management or marine ecosystem information needs.”

Options for Research RFP for 2002							
Basis		Institute Research Funds Available		1,000,000			
		Fund NPRM Projects		<u>529,466</u>			
		Remainder		470,534			
		EIRF Funds Available		1,995,000			
		Fund Science Planning and Coord		<u>986,500</u>			
		Remainder		1,008,500			
		Total Remainder		1,479,034			
Option 1:		RFP 2002 using NPMRI Funds		470,534			
Option 2:		Option 1 plus partial EIRF Funds		1,000,000			
Option 3		Option 1 plus full EIRF Funds		1,479,034			

The 2002 RFP would need to be released shortly after the March 1 teleconference of the full Board. The Board, NMFS and Alaska SeaLife Center would work closely together to obtain rapid peer review of potential projects. The full Board would be called together, perhaps in late April or May to approve projects and it is hoped that research could commence by this coming summer. At the end of this meeting summary report is a proposed calendar showing steps that could be taken this year for 2002 and 2003 research.

Research for 2003

The EIRF will be the main source of research funds for 2003. These could range from \$10M on up, depending on the amounts from FY01 reallocated to 2003, and the potential second release in August. We will need to develop a comprehensive science plan. This may require a combination of efforts, such as updating the 1998 Bering Sea Research Plan and extending it to the Gulf of Alaska, gathering research recommendations from stakeholders and other agencies, and/or requesting the National Academy of Sciences Ocean Studies Program to develop a research plan for us.

Developing a comprehensive plan will require much of 2002, and maybe part of 2003. Therefore, its main impact will be on our research planning and decisions during 2003 for 2004. Because we will need to complete the \$10M+ RFP and project approval process by late 2002 or early 2003 for research in 2003, we will not have the completed science plan available, though some preliminary results may be.

Therefore, for 2003 research, we most likely will need to continue to fall back on statutory language as referenced above for 2002 research planning. The Committee also is recommending that we establish two or three committees of 7-15 members to help develop research needs. These could include a blue ribbon panel of scientists, a stakeholder committee, and a traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) committee. They would be funded under the science planning project identified above. The proposed calendar of events at the end of this summary lays out steps for 2002 and early 2003 toward research for 2003.

Upcoming Meetings and Agenda Items

The Committee is convening two meetings of the full Board in March. The first is a two-hour teleconference on March 1, and the second will commence in Anchorage at 8 a.m. on March 21, and run through noon on March 22. Here are potential agenda items.

March 1 Teleconference: Final Action:

1. Approve Institute projects totaling \$529,000 for NPMR continuity of research
2. Approve Alaska SeaLife Center's proposed demonstration and education projects, if available
3. Determine scope of RFP for research in 2002
4. Approve grant request for EIRF funds for 21 months

March 1 Teleconference: Preliminary Action:

1. Financial and administrative operating procedures
2. Interim budget and staffing
3. Five start-up projects funded from FY01 EIRF funds
4. Competitive grant process, RFP procedures, and protocols during 2002 for research in 2003

March 21-22, 2002 meeting in Anchorage: Potential Agenda Items:

Final Action:

1. Financial and administrative operating procedures
2. Interim budget and staffing
3. Five start-up projects funded from FY01 EIRF funds
4. Competitive grant process, RFP procedures, and protocols during 2002 for research in 2003
5. Establish committees
6. Establish comprehensive science planning process leading to research decisions in 2003 for 2004

Other items for final or preliminary action may be added at the March 1 teleconference.

Science Planning Schedule for 2002-2003				
	Meetings		Research in 2002	Research in 2003
2002				
March	1		<u>NPRB Teleconference</u>	<u>NPRB Teleconference</u>
	14-16	NPAFC Vancouver	Approve RFP and release	Prelim science planning
	21-22		30 day response period	<u>NPRB Meeting</u>
April				Approve RFP
	5	Kodiak Comfish		development schedule
	8-11	NPFMC	<u>April 5: Proposal deadline</u>	
	15	GEM Props due for 2/3 of '03\$		
	27-29	Arctic Res. Com. Girdwood	Accelerated peer review	
May	9-10		<u>NPRB Meeting:</u>	<u>NPRB Meeting:</u>
	22-27	Pacific Rim Conference - Vlad	Approve projects	Status Report and approve
	27-31	Council Chairs - Sitka	Inform PI's	next steps
June	3-10	NPFMC - Dutch harbor		
	17	GEM Tech Comm adopt prog.	Commence Research	Stakeholder Input
	18-19	State Oceans/Watershed Symp.		and coordination
July/August				
Sept.		GEM RFP for 2003		
	16-17			<u>Full Board: Approve RFP</u>
	22-25	PSFMC annual mtg Calif.		Distribute RFP
October	2-7	NPFMC - Seattle		60-day proposal submission
	18-26	PICES - China		
November	15			Deadline for proposals
	12-14	EFH Symposium - Tampa		
	??	EPA Bering Sea Symposium		
				Peer Reviews
December				
	4-9	NPFMC - Anchorage		Peer Reviews
2003				
January		GEM proposals due		
	14-15			Science Panel Review
	29-31		<u>Full Bd: Begin 2004 planning</u>	<u>Full Board: Approve projects</u>
February				
	3-10	NPFMC - Seattle		Submit projects for approval
				Announce selections
				Notify PI's