

Final Summary
North Pacific Research Board
NPRB Conference Room
Anchorage, AK
March 15-17, 2005

1. Call to Order/Approve Agenda

The Board convened at 10:20 a.m. on Wednesday, March 15, 2005. Present were Tylan Schrock, Jim Balsiger, Nancy Bird, Lawson Brigham, Dorothy Childers, Leslie Holland-Bartels, Howard Horton, John Iani, Earl Krygier, Paul MacGregor, Stephanie Madsen, LT Alan McCabe, Gerry Merrigan, and Denis Wiesenburg. John Gauvin, Robert Gisiner, Pam Pope, Robin Samuelsen and Stetson Tinkham were absent. Clarence Pautzke and Misty Ott staffed the meeting.

The agenda was approved after switching the order of items 2 and 3, and adding a request for support from the Pribilof Island Collaborative under agenda item 7, Other Matters. Tylan Schrock and Jim Balsiger were re-elected Chairman and Vice Chairman for another one-year term. The Board meeting summary for September 29-30, 2004 was approved.

2. Proposal Review for 2005

Overview of proposals received in response to 2005 RFP. The Board was presented with a summary of the 103 proposals received, requesting a total of \$24.5 million. The response was more-or-less equally divided between the specific research needs in Component 1 (54 proposals) and the general priorities in Component 2 (48 proposals). Five proposals (3, 8, 9, 66, and 79) were not processed further because they were non-responsive to the RFP. There were no responses to the specific needs for an ecosystem modeling conference, Bering Sea and Aleutian Island large marine ecosystem plan development, or evaluation of plankton monitoring methods. All proposals were evaluated by anonymous technical reviewers and then by the Science Panel.

Science Panel recommendations. The Science Panel met on March 2-4. Chairman Rich Marasco reported that the panel members went through a rough sort of proposals and then extensively discussed each remaining proposal to come up with consensus on 27 proposals recommended for tier 1 and another five proposals for tier 2. Total funding recommended summed to \$4.731 million.

Public comments. There were no public comments.

Develop funding recommendations for Secretarial approval with a funding target of \$4.95 million. The Board reviewed its conflict of interest procedures and then proceeded to develop recommendations for funding to be submitted to the Secretary of Commerce for final approval.

A motion was made to adopt Tier 1 and 2 proposals recommended by the Science Panel, totaling \$4,730,863.

An amendment passed to increase the Science Panel's recommended funding for proposal #27 (spiny dogfish – Kruse) from the \$200,000 recommended by the panel to \$305,235 requested by the applicant.

An amendment was offered, but failed, to provide funding for proposal #32 (non-invasive fur seal condition assessment – Fadely et al.).

An amendment was offered, but failed, to delete proposal #34 (winter movements of fur seal pups – Davis and Andrews). Mr. Schrock recused himself from the vote on that amendment.

An amendment passed to add \$90,000 to #34 to double the number of tags and require the principal investigators to work with staff to make the revisions. The intent was that if the principal investigators do not agree to the additional tags, the project should not go forward. The applicants also should seek ways to coordinate with #44 (consequences of fur seal foraging strategies – Springer and Ream).

An amendment was made, but failed, to add proposal #52 (subsistence uses of rockfish – Dizard) for \$199,500.

It was noted that for #61 (Gulf of Alaska LTOP – Hopcroft), issues of ship availability would have to be resolved before funding could be released. The Science Panel should be consulted on this issue.

An amendment was offered, but failed, to add #71 (Chiswell Ridge mapping and assessment – Byerly).

An amendment passed to add #85 (socioeconomic baseline information for the Pribilof Islands – Scholz) for \$94,220. It was noted that this project could be identified under the “Humans” category, rather than under “Groundfish.”

An amendment passed to add #81 (evaluation of sperm whale deterrents – Straley et al.) for \$172,507. The intent is that this funding will be used to conclude the project and that there should be no expectation that the project would continue past this new funding.

An amendment passed to add #95 (safety evaluation of fisheries management – Lincoln) for \$171,690.

The main motion, as amended, was passed unanimously, thus recommending approval for 35 projects with combined funding of \$5,962,304.

The Executive Director was requested to draft a policy on using a committee of available Science Panel members to consult with staff in initial screening of proposals from further processing, and bring it to the Board in September 2005 for their review as part of the draft 2006 request for proposals.

3. Budget Review

This agenda item was taken up by the Board ahead of the review of proposals under agenda item 2 above. The Board reviewed the status of its current grant award. It is now operating under NOAA Award NA17FL2556 for \$20,140,075, using Environmental Improvement and Restoration Fund (EIRF) earnings and congressional appropriations:

1. EIRF earnings through FY2001:	\$12,099,000	Original award
2. EIRF earnings for FY2002:	\$5,211,000	Amendment 1
3. Appropriations in FY2004:	\$2,830,075	Amendment 2

This award has funded all administrative costs, science planning, and requests for proposals through 2004. It will support administration through 2006, and partially support research funded under the 2005 RFP. The award period will run through December 31, 2007.

The Board has been audited twice as part of the Alaska SeaLife Center’s larger audit (they are NPRB’s fiscal agent and perform all grants accounting). The first audit was for expenditures through December 2003 and passed without any material weaknesses involving internal control or operations. The second

audit was for \$2.86 million spent during January-September 2004. KPMG noted no material weaknesses involving internal control or operations.

NPRB now has another \$11,071,677 available, again composed of EIRF earnings and appropriations:

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| 1. EIRF earnings for FY2003: | \$2,843,428 |
| 2. EIRF earnings for FY2004: | \$5,304,075 |
| 3. Appropriations in FY2005: | \$2,924,174 |

In accordance with Board policy to spend EIRF funds a year forward, FY2003 earnings are applied to FY2005 operations and FY2004 earnings to FY2006.

The Board discussed their administrative needs and decided to use all of the FY2005 appropriations for science planning and research, instead of reserving the allowed 15% for administrative costs. The Board also agreed to transfer all administrative funds remaining from the first award to science planning and research if they are not expended by September 30, 2006.

The Executive Director was requested to draft for review in September 2005, a policy that would make it standard procedure to always carry forward at least one year's requirement for administrative funds to the next year to protect the administration of the Board.

4. Draft Science Plan

The Board reviewed comments received from the NRC committee in mid-February. Many of the points raised have to do with implementation, rather than the plan itself. The committee argued for more emphasis on integrated ecosystems research and avoiding traditional ecosystem-component oriented approaches. They also called for reorganization of chapters 2 and 3, particularly around large marine ecosystem (LME) regions. They urged the Board to identify one or at most two geographical regions to focus NPRB activities to build a comprehensive understanding.

The Board reviewed potential restructuring of the table of contents for the science plan, based on suggestions from staff. The Board accepted moving the plan's goal and overarching philosophy and discussion of integrated ecosystem research programs up to Chapter 1 for added prominence. Otherwise, the chapters and sections will remain as drafted around ecosystems components, rather than being reorganized by large marine ecosystem as suggested by the NRC committee. The Board reemphasized its intention to move toward interdisciplinary ecosystems planning, but this first draft should remain organized more traditionally around the separate components, i.e. fish, habitat, marine mammals, seabirds, etc. The next science plan will most likely be organized by marine region based on knowledge and understanding gained in the next five years.

The Board noted that it will retain current contract provisions allowing for external review of final reports and a holdback of 10% until the reports are finalized. Peer-reviewed publications should be posted on the Board's website and reports should be of the highest quality.

It was noted that a graphic designer will be hired to complete the Science Plan for final publication. Bids so far are in the range of \$32,000-72,000 for complete production and copying of the plan. It should be completed sometime during the summer.

5. Opportunities for Collaboration

Oil Spill Recovery Institute

The Board has been approached by the Oil Spill Recovery Institute in Cordova concerning a potential collaboration on funding research of mutual interest in the northern Gulf of Alaska. A draft protocol was presented to the Board for consideration. A motion passed (with Ms. Bird abstaining) for the Executive Director to move forward with developing a joint NPRB-OSRI component for potential inclusion in the 2006 RFP. It should be brought back to the Board for review in September with the intent that the Board will make an annual decision on whether to continue funding joint projects and the amounts of such support.

National Science Foundation and LTK

A second opportunity for a partnership is with the National Science Foundation. The Board reviewed draft discussion papers developed by Anna Kerttula of NSF, Henry Huntington, NPRB's contractor for LTK, and the Executive Director. They have two purposes: (1) to describe a pathway for developing the LTK program and (2) to describe a potential opportunity for collaboration with NSF on LTK beginning this year and building toward major programs during the International Polar Years (IPY) in 2007-2008. It would begin with a pilot program of community observations in three areas – the Bering Sea (Pribilof Islands) in partnership with the Alaska Native Science Commission, the Gulf of Alaska with the Gulf of Alaska Coastal Communities Coalition, and Baffin Island with NSF. The lessons learned from these pilot programs would be very useful to the Board in establishing a longer range LTK program and partnership with NSF.

In September 2004, the Board earmarked \$250,000 for LTK activities in 2005, including hiring a contractor, holding workshops, and supporting an LTK committee. The two pilot projects with the Alaska Native Science Commission and GOA Coastal Communities Coalition would be about \$30,000 to \$40,000 each. NSF would be putting in a comparable amount for Baffin Island. This would still leave over \$150,000 for other LTK activities and committee support.

The Board authorized the LTK Committee, working with staff, to develop pilot projects up to total of \$80,000, and to work with the NSF to get this underway as a proof of concept. It will help inform the 2006 RFP and further development of LTK. The proposals for pilot projects would not have to come back to the Board for review.

PICES Marine Ecosystem Status Report

PICES requested support for collaborative development and publication of its next status report on marine ecosystems in the North Pacific. It would come out in 2007 and require travel and meetings for several workgroups. The Board approved \$90,000 CAN for 2-3 years. PICES will be requested to provide booklets for all Board members and to place the NPRB logo on the front of the reports.

6. Bering Sea Integrated Ecosystem Research Planning

The Science Plan urges development of an integrated ecosystems research program for each of the large marine ecosystems off Alaska, with initial focus on the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands. There was a project need identified in the 2005 RFP for that activity, but no proposals were received. Therefore, staff indicated that it would move forward with establishing a team and planning process, so new initiatives in integrated planning would be ready in time for the 2006 RFP this fall.

The Board received a report from the Alaska Fisheries Science Center on cooperative activities and opportunities for collaboration in research in the Bering Sea, particularly as it relates to climate change impacts via loss of sea ice on marine ecosystem components. Staff noted that a small contract would be needed with some key science planners to lead the effort. An interagency working group most likely will be formed to provide oversight. It would include the Board, AFSC, PMEL, AOOS, BEST, and other appropriate entities to work together in developing an integrated plan. A small planning meeting will be held in Seattle on April 8 and then there will be larger meetings and workshops to define the hypotheses to be examined and questions to be asked. The goal would be to have a draft plan by the end of summer and receive feedback from the Board at their September meeting before releasing the RFP in early October. The Board approved this course of action.

The Board also reviewed its 4-year implementation matrix from September 2004. The results of proposal review were added to the plan for 2005, but no other changes were made.

The Board also discussed community involvement activities and recommended that the Advisory Panel committee be reactivated to identify how to proceed. Key questions include how to invest in capacity building, whether a special part of the RFP should be dedicated to this, and what the evaluation criteria should be. Community involvement could be linked with LTK activities as they are very similar. The Board noted that it would consider supporting a meritorious project on community involvement or capacity building if one were to be identified over the summer.

The Board also received reports on the Alaska Ocean Observing System and the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment. They requested copies of the ACIA report and the North Pacific ecosystem status report prepared by PICES.

7. Other Matters

Committee Memberships

Science Panel. The Science Panel has 14 members with staggered 2-year terms. Based on direction from the Board in September 2004, seven members whose terms expired then were asked if they wished to continue. The Board had indicated that if panel members wanted to continue, they could. Two members with expiring terms, Gordon Kruse and Edward Houde, indicated they no longer wished to participate; the other five (Shannon Atkinson, Dick Beamish, Dan Goodman, Rich Marasco, and Doug Woodby) wished to continue for another term.

Two areas of expertise were identified where the panel could use some help. They include seabirds and lower trophic level zooplankton, particularly as they relate to integrated ecosystem planning for the Bering Sea and other LMEs. The Board identified other key areas such as public policy, management structures, and anthropology. After discussion of the workload of the Science Panel in reviewing proposals, the Board expanded the membership to 16 and appointed Seth Macinko (social anthropologist at URI), John Piatt (seabird expert at USGS), and Michael Dagg (zooplankton biological oceanographer at LSU), to the panel. Those appointments bring the number of members to 15. The Board will solicit nominations for a fish expert to fill the 16th seat.

Advisory Panel. The Board first appointed AP members on March 20, 2003 for two-year terms. Lots were drawn by panel members at their first meeting to create staggered terms. The AP basically had 11 seats filled out of the 20 prescribed in the SOPPs. Cora Crome resigned last year and Simon Kinneen did not want to continue for another term. Paul MacGregor moved to the Board.

After discussing the composition and operating procedures for the Advisory Panel, the Board reappointed the four members (Bradley, Cochran, Gerster, and McCarty) who could be reappointed to a second two-year term running to March 20, 2007 according to the operating procedures. The Board decided to give notice of a potential change to the operating procedures to allow reappointment of the other four members (Kelly, Thomson, Vick, and Warrenchuk). Nominations would be solicited (with an emphasis on the environmental community) and members would be selected at a Board teleconference in May. Attendance at Advisory Panel meetings would be strongly encouraged for members to be renewed in the future.

LTK Committee: The Board was scheduled to appoint members to the new Local and Traditional Knowledge Committee. The Board decided to release another solicitation for nominations and to select members at a teleconference in May. Current nominees would be informed that they are still under consideration.

International Bering Sea Forum

The Board reviewed a letter and resolution from a group called the International Bering Sea Forum, headquartered in San Francisco, seeking a response to their resolution calling for increased global cooperation to ensure environmentally sustainable management of the Bering Sea environment through an intergovernmental agreement. The Board recommended sending a letter noting that there already exist international and bilateral agreements to address management of the Bering Sea and therefore there is no necessity for a new arrangement.

Support for Pribilof Island Collaborative

The Board considered a request for funding of \$20,000 to support the activities of the Pribilof Island Collaborative. The Board passed a motion agreeing to provide \$10,000, targeted on community outreach and involvement.

AMIS and Education and Outreach Reports

The Board received progress reports on the Alaska Marine Information System (AMIS) being developed by NPRB's data systems manager, Igor Katrayev, and on education and outreach activities headed up by Mike Illenberg of the Alaska SeaLife Center.

Meeting Schedule for 2005

The Board decided not to meet again until September. A calendar should be sent out to Board members so they could indicate their availability during that month.