

**Meeting Summary**  
North Pacific Research Board  
NPRB Conference Room  
Anchorage, AK  
May 7-10, 2012

**1. Call to order, approve agenda, introductions, and approval of meeting summaries**

Call to Order: The Board convened at 1:00 PM May 7, 2012. Present were: Sue Aspelund, Katrina Hoffman, Lt Anthony Kenne, Dorothy Childers, Doug Mecum, Ian Dutton (Chair), John Gauvin, Leslie Holland-Bartels, Fran Ulmer, Howard Horton, Paul MacGregor, Heather McCarty, Gerry Merrigan, Eric Olson (Vice Chair), Caryn Rea (present May 8-10 only), Brad Smith, Michael Castellini, and Mike Miller. Science Panel Chair Tom Royer, Vice Chair Cheryl Rosa and SP member Stew Grant attended, as did Advisory Panel Chair Jeff Stephan, to represent their respective panels to the Board. Staff present included: Nora Deans, Danielle Dickson, Carrie Eischens, Erin McKinley-Quirk (temporary for Crystal Benson-Carlough), Cynthia Suchman, Tom Van Pelt, and Francis Wiese. Visitors present included: David Benson (fisheries consultant), Pete Hagen (NOAA NMFS), Tara Jones (who replaced Ian Dutton as ASLC representative after election of officers), and Brendan Kelly (OSTP/NSF; called in for Arctic discussion only).

Agenda: A motion to approve the agenda was made and seconded (passed with no objections).

Introductions: A number of new Board members were introduced (Castellini, Hoffman, Mecum, Miller, Ulmer, and Jones), and guests also introduced themselves.

Safety Briefing: Suchman provided a safety briefing.

Chair's report: Outgoing Chair Ian Dutton provided an overview of NPRB accomplishments during 2009-2012 and laid out some of the challenges ahead.

Election of Officers: A motion was made and seconded to nominate Eric Olson as Chair (passed with no objections). A motion was made and seconded to nominate Sue Aspelund as Vice Chair (passed with no objections). The new officers assumed their duties immediately. In addition, Tara Jones stepped in for the rest of the meeting to replace Ian Dutton as the ASLC representative to the Board.

Meeting Summaries: A motion was made and seconded to defer the approval of prior meeting minutes until Tuesday at 1:00 PM. At that time a motion was made and seconded to approve September 2011 and February 2012 Board meeting summaries (passed with no objections).

**2. Perkins Coie/Governance**

NPRB staff provided background regarding an MOU signed in 2001 between NPRB, ASLC, and NOAA/Department of Commerce, and reviewed a revision of its language to maintain existing relationships and clarify mechanisms by which NPRB can use non-EIRF funds. In 2011, the law firm Perkins Coie was retained to conduct a governance review and provide guidance on new MOU language. Because the attorney was asked to provide assistance in areas not initially contracted (background on conflict of interest policies for nonprofit organizations, as well as help

in working with the Department of Commerce during development of the Arctic synthesis RFP), additional funds beyond those initially approved by the Board will likely be needed (pending approval by the Executive Committee). The goal is to complete language for a new MOU in summer 2012. The Board will have the opportunity to review a revised MOU before it is signed.

### **3. Conflict of interest policy**

Draft policy from working group: Staff provided background on the development of the draft conflict of interest policy, from the suggestions of the Committee of Visitors to the working group's efforts during 2011 and 2012 to develop the draft and explanatory flowcharts. The Board discussed the draft policy in detail, including provisions for enforcement, specific instances when disclosure or recusal would be required under the new policy, and definitions and clarifications of wording.

Science Panel (SP) and Advisory Panel (AP) recommendations: Royer and Stephan presented an overview of each panel's discussion of the draft policy. Stephan pointed out that the AP operated under the draft policy during their meeting, and felt it worked quite well.

#### Board consideration:

A number of friendly amendments were adopted by the Board to modify the draft conflict of interest policy:

Accepted modifications recommended by the SP:

- Add "or member of graduate student committee" to category 4, disclose, bullet 1;
- Add "or member of graduate student committee" to category 4, recuse, bullet 3;
- Add "similar documented or formal relationship" to parenthetical category 2, recuse, bullet 1; and
- Add "similar documented or formal relationship" to category 2, disclose, bullet 2.

Accepted the five recommendations from the AP as described in its minutes:

- Recommendations 1 and 2 are already part of the draft policy;
- Recommendation 3 would require unnamed unfunded collaborators to disclose association with the proposal, with recusal decided on a case-by-case basis;
- Recommendation 4 would modify the wording in components 1 and 2 to read: "1. Educate. Board, Panel, and staff members will participate in an initial training or educational session regarding COI after agreeing to serve. 2. Agree. At the beginning of the first regular meeting of every year, Board and Panel members, as well as staff, will receive a short refresher on the CoI and will sign a statement asserting that he or she has read, understands, and agrees to comply with the NPRB COI Policy. The signed statement will be held in NPRB offices"; and
- Recommendation 5 was accepted with clarification that the intent of the Board is to review the policy every three years, but that it will remain in effect regardless.

Edited and added language to the document to make it more clear and precise. These included:

- Consistent use of "institution," "organization," and "association";
- Addition of the words "or contributor" to "member" with respect to organizations;
- Reinforcement throughout the document the sense that a conflict would exist for any relationship which would lead a reasonable person to question the neutrality of a decision;

- Clarification that disclosures would likely be made both in writing before and verbally during meetings; and
- Add to the introduction recognition that Board members are selected for their expertise or agency role in the interest of the Board's mission and acknowledgement of the need for a balance between possible conflict and necessary representation on the Board.

Tuesday, May 8, at 1:10 PM, A motion was made, and seconded, to approve the conflict of interest policy as amended above. After discussion of need for additional minor word changes, the Board asked the Executive Director to make these. An amendment was passed to put the policy in effect after May 10, 2012. The amendment was adopted with no objections. The main motion passed with no objections.

#### **4. Budget review**

KPMG Audit: Staff noted that the 2011 audit was completed without any issues thanks to continued efforts of NPRB's fiscal sponsor, ASLC. The summary letter from the auditor and the auditor's report were provided to the Board in their binders.

Grant status: For the benefit of new Board members, staff gave a brief background on the EIRF fund and the fact that NPRB receives those funds in the form of five-year NOAA awards (two years of EIRF interest funding go on each NOAA award). NPRB has three active awards currently. "Grant 3" (third in NPRB's history) will close September 30, 2012; "Grant 4" is fully obligated with a number of current projects from the regular RFP, as well as Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea Projects. It runs through September 2014.

Grant 5 proposal, year 2, and funding projections:

"Grant 5" currently has one year of funding; the second year's budget must be approved by the Board. These funds should be received by NPRB before the end of this fiscal year.

Staff presented projections for funding through 2017, as well as scenarios with various interest rates. Unless ten-year treasury note return rates increase over the next several months, the Board should expect some declines in overall NPRB budget over the medium term. Suchman suggested inviting the Deputy Director of ONRR (DOI) to give a presentation at the September 2012 Board meeting to provide an overview of investment options and strategies. This suggestion was well received.

One Board member discussed the difficulty scientists are having in obtaining funding for equipment and suggested the Board consider adding an "equipment" budget line in the future.

Tuesday, May 8, 8:25 AM. Motion and second to approve Grant 5, year 2 proposal passed with no objections.

#### **5. Proposal review for 2012**

Current research funded by NPRB: Staff provided an overview of current research funded by NPRB. To date, the organization has funded 276 regular projects, totaling \$44.8M. These have been distributed among LMEs, with approximately 8% in the Arctic, 36% in the Gulf of Alaska,

and 56% in the Bering Sea. These percentages do not include projects that are part of integrated ecosystem research programs. Staff also provided updates on the submission of metadata and data files by completed projects and the number of publications stemming from NPRB funded research.

2012 Request for Proposals and proposals received: Staff provided an overview of the 2012 Request for Proposals (for \$4M funding) and the proposals received. A total of 108 were received by the deadline, requesting \$20.6M. Eleven proposals did not go forward for review, either because they were withdrawn by the applicant (one), were returned for formatting issues (three), or were returned for responsiveness issues after consultation with a subcommittee of the Science Panel (seven). The remaining 97 proposals were sent out for anonymous peer review, and 267 reviews were received before the Science Panel met.

Review of conflict-of-interest procedures: The Board followed the conflict-of-interest procedures and policy in effect at the beginning of the meeting (the new policy will take effect May 10, 2012). The policy to be followed for the meeting was read aloud by Chair Eric Olson. He clarified that for this meeting, Board members should not participate in discussion or votes pertaining to proposals for which they declared conflicts requiring recusal. However, they would not be required to leave the room. All Board members would be allowed to vote on whether to approve the final package of proposals to be recommended to the Department of Commerce. Board members disclosed institutional conflicts to the group before discussion of individual proposals.

Science Panel recommendations: Staff provided a summary of the SP's recommendations by RFP category. Overall, the SP categorized proposals into Tier 1 (29), Tier 1 conditional (5), Tier 2 (15), Tier 2 conditional (9), or Tier 3 proposals according to the review process approved by the Board in September 2011 and published within the RFP. The total amount requested for all Tier 1 and Tier 1 conditional proposals was \$5.9M.

The Board asked staff to change the wording in the SP summaries for Tier 1 proposals to read "Excellent" rather than "Excellent (should fund)" to recognize that not all Tier 1 proposals can be funded.

Advisory Panel recommendations: Stephan described the AP recommendation process to the Board. The AP was charged with highlighting proposals with special stakeholder significance from among those ranked in Tier 1 or 2 by the SP. After deliberations, they judged 20 to have "significant" stakeholder relevance and identified an additional 15 as "noteworthy" as defined in the AP meeting minutes of May 2012.

The Board decided that the AP comments should be provided to investigators. They also asked the staff to include a simple statement for investigators with proposals not highlighted as "significant" or "noteworthy," such as: "The Advisory Panel did not identify this proposal as significant from a stakeholder perspective."

Discussion of individual proposals: The Chairs of the Science and Advisory panels summarized comments of their respective panels on Tier 1 proposals and answered questions Board members had, if any, regarding their panel's discussion of Tier 2 proposals.

Development of funding recommendations:

A framework motion was introduced and seconded to recommend funding for all Tier 1 proposals for categories in which Tier 1 proposal budgets totaled less than the category caps; and to recommend funding for Tier 1 proposals also flagged as “significant” by the AP for categories in which the total of all proposals ranked in Tier 1 was higher than the budget for the category.

The main motion was amended as follows:

- a. An amendment was introduced and seconded to remove proposal 15, walleye pollock maturation and fecundity (passed with no objections, Castellini recused).
- b. An amendment was introduced and seconded to add proposal 24, octopus discard mortality, subject to the PIs adequately addressing the concerns of the SP related to identifying individual organisms. (passed with no objections).
- c. An amendment was introduced and seconded to remove proposal 28, snow crab in a changing climate (passed with no objections).
- d. An amendment was introduced and seconded to add proposal 31, seasonal habitat use and productivity of rockfish in the Gulf of Alaska (carried by roll call vote, Castellini recused).
- e. An amendment was introduced and seconded to add proposal 32, settlement body size and nursery habitats of juvenile forage flatfish in the Bering Sea (passed with no objections).
- f. An amendment was introduced and seconded to add proposal 33, tracing the flow of terrestrial organic nutrients and ancient glacial carbon through coastal marine food webs (passed with no objections, Holland-Bartels recused).
- g. An amendment was introduced and seconded to add proposal 46, Soviet illegal catches of sperm whales in the North Pacific (passed with no objections).
- h. An amendment was introduced and seconded to add proposal 47, continued development of a catalog of left-side digital images of Cook Inlet beluga whales (passed with no objections).
- i. An amendment was introduced and seconded to add proposal 48, retrospective study of walrus foraging and movement patterns during a major ecosystem shift in the Bering and Chukchi Seas (passed with no objections).
- j. An amendment was introduced and seconded to remove proposal 50, a management strategy simulation to examine the potential indirect effects of commercial groundfish fisheries on Steller sea lion populations (passed with no objections, Castellini recused).
- k. An amendment was introduced and seconded to include proposal 83, diagnostic SNPs for Gulf of Alaska rockfishes (passed with no objections, Castellini recused).
- l. An amendment was introduced and seconded to include proposal 85, mitochondrial DNA barcodes to identify marine fishes and invertebrates (passed with no objections).
- m. An amendment was introduced and seconded to include proposal 89, improving phytoplankton assessment (passed with no objections).
- n. An amendment was introduced and seconded to include proposal 90, stable isotope analysis of herring scales (passed with no objections).
- o. An amendment was introduced and seconded to include proposal 91, a project to increase energy efficiency in fishing vessels. Defeated in roll call vote (Castellini and Childers recused).
- p. An amendment was introduced and seconded to include proposal 92, alternative methods for satellite tagging beluga whales (passed with no objections, Castellini and Jones recused).

- q. An amendment was introduced and seconded to include proposal 93, Alaska region bathymetric digital elevation model (passed with no objections, Castellini recused).
- r. An amendment was introduced and seconded to include proposal 94, crowdsourcing large-scale environmental data recovery (passed with no objections).
- s. An amendment was introduced and seconded to include proposal 99, benthic lower trophic level food webs in the Chukchi and Beaufort seas (passed with no objections, Castellini recused)

The main motion, as amended, passed by voice vote with no objections (12 noon Wednesday, May 9). The Board recommended 29 proposals for a total of \$4.19M to the Secretary of Commerce for funding. The final list included 28 proposals rated Tier 1 or Tier 1 conditional by the SP and 1 rated Tier 2 conditional. The AP had highlighted 18 as having significant or noteworthy stakeholder relevance.

Two of the 29 proposals were identified as possible candidates for collaboration with OSRI (proposals 63 and 94). OSRI has indicated intent to provide \$100,000 in support.

Funding Revisions and Stipulations: Six of the 29 proposals recommended to the Secretary of Commerce received conditional funding. Five had minor budget questions identified in the SP summaries. One was tagged by the Board as conditional (see amendment b. to the main motion, above); investigators were directed to provide detail to staff to address the science-related question raised by the Board. All conditions were to be resolved with NPRB staff prior to project funding.

## **6. Bering Sea Program update**

NPRB staff gave a status report on the Bering Sea Program. Individual projects within the BSIERP are beginning to wind down over the next year, although synthesis activities are expected to continue well into 2014. Staff is coordinating with the Bering Sea Science Advisory Board and NSF to plan final synthesis activities, timelines, and use of remaining funds. The Board will be provided a detailed overview and budget plan for the conclusion of the Bering Sea Program in September.

## **7. Graduate Student Research Awards (GSRA)**

Background and review process: As a result of recommendations by a GSRA working group in 2011, the Board approved an increase of number of annual awards to 6 (3 MS and 3 PhD), as well as award amount (from \$20,000 to \$25,000). Unlike in past years, no preference was given to students pursuing research related to stock assessment. However, in the event of a tie, preference was given to applicants who graduated from high school in Alaska.

Sixty-one applications were received by the deadline. Two were removed from the competition because their subject matter was outside the scope of research funded by NPRB. Two SP members reviewed each of the remaining 59 GSRA applications, providing written comments and ratings of Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, or Poor. The applicant pool was very strong and a large number of proposals from MS and PhD students received high overall ratings. As a result, the SP chose to discuss at length only those award applications that were most competitive. In the case of MS proposals, the panel limited discussion to those receiving at least two “Very Good”

ratings. For PhD proposals, the SP discussed those receiving at least one “Excellent” rating. For those applications discussed, the SP assigned numerical ratings (1-10, with 10 highest) for two criteria: qualifications of the student and quality of the proposed research project. Final rankings were determined from the sum of the two ratings. The SP recommended the top 3 MS and 3 PhD applicants to the Board as winners of the 2012 GSRA.

The AP discussed stakeholder relevance and during the Board meeting deferred to the SP rankings based upon merit alone.

Board decisions:

The Board discussed the fact that these awards are intended to encourage the highest quality students, an emphasis reaffirmed by the working group formed last year to examine GSRA policies and selection criteria. The goal has been to help foster the best scientists for the future, working within the broad umbrella of the NPRB Science Plan.

A motion was introduced and seconded to select the 3 MS and 3 PhD students recommended by the Science Panel (passed with no objections).

These students selected were:

- Daniel Cushing, MS student, Oregon State University
- Kalyn MacIntyre, MS student, University of Washington
- Alexis Will, MS student, University of Alaska Fairbanks
- Rachel Blevins, PhD student, University of Alaska Fairbanks
- Jannik Schultner, PhD student, Norwegian University of Science and Technology
- Samuel Hirt, PhD student, Auburn University

The Board then had a discussion about how to leverage the several graduate award programs in the region. Funding partnerships or coordinated review might be more efficient and less duplicative. The Board decided to form a working group to explore the feasibility of developing a partnership program (Mike Castellini, John Gauvin, Eric Olson, Caryn Rea, Brad Smith, and Mark Gleason to represent the AP, and Pat Tester to represent the SP).

**8. Communications, Education, and Outreach update**

Staff gave a presentation summarizing recent communications activities across the full range of NPRB programs. Staff stressed the enduring relationships developed between teachers and scientists as well as scientists and communities.

In addition, the Board voted on 2012 photo contest entries, and winners were announced. Staff plan to launch the 2013 photo contest quickly in hopes of attracting more youth entries next year.

**9. Long-Term Monitoring (LTM)**

In 2011, the Board formed a working group to make recommendations regarding planning for long-term monitoring. Before the Board made any decisions regarding those recommendations, it asked for a list of LTM-like projects funded in the past, as well as possible budget scenarios if the Board were to decide to commit to funding LTM activities. Staff compiled a list of projects,

totaling \$8M in investment 2002-2011, or \$800,000 per year. A placeholder of \$500,000 per year in the budget projection spreadsheet shows that the Board could choose to make an investment in LTM activities without altering funding available in the annual RFP. Timing or amount of future IERPs might be affected slightly.

The Board discussed various models for LTM investment, including Long-Term Ecological Research (LTER) programs run by NSF, and the desirability of leveraging funding by requiring a consortium or partnership approach.

The Board returned to the recommendations of the 2011 working group and:

- Agreed that it would be desirable to implement a strategy for LTM rather than fund these types of projects on an ad hoc basis;
- Endorsed the definition of LTM: Long-term monitoring programs are those that aid in understanding ecosystem variability and the effect of this variability on subsistence and commercial marine resources. In order to understand these processes, projects will need to address appropriate temporal and spatial scales, be interdisciplinary, and have links to subsistence and commercial marine resources; and
- Agreed that \$400,000 per year would be an appropriate, approximate investment in LTM activities.

In addition, the Board moved to reconvene the LTM working group to put forward a strategy for developing selection and evaluation criteria for LTM projects. Some of the previous working group members are no longer on the Board. The group now will consist of: Carin Ashjian (representing the SP), Mike Castellini, Katrina Hoffman, Leslie Holland-Bartels, Heather McCarty, Paul MacGregor, Doug Mecum, Gerry Merrigan, Tom Royer (representing the SP), and Jeff Stephan (representing the AP).

## **10. Other Matters**

Strategic Planning: Staff distributed an outline identifying needed strategic planning activities in 2012-2013. A working group to move forward was formed (Mike Castellini, Leslie Holland-Bartels, Tara Jones, Eric Olson, Caryn Rea and representatives of the Science and Advisory panels to be named).

Social Science Workshop: Board members Dutton and Childers presented the background and recommendations from a workshop held January 2012 to help the Board clarify its role in funding social science activities. The January 2012 workshop came about because the Board has struggled to fund this type of work in the past and at its last meeting indicated an interest in developing a social science-based Focus section for the 2013 annual RFP.

A motion was made and seconded to form a working group to create specific recommendations for consideration as part of the 2013 RFP and also to provide longer-term direction to the Board in the area of social science (passed with no objections). Board members requested that recommendations for the 2013 RFP be developed in time to send these to the Board for review prior to the August 2012 SP meeting. Working group members will be: Dorothy Childers, Ian Dutton (external), Dan Falvey (AP), Seth Macinko (SP), Heather McCarty, Vera Metcalf (AP), Mike Miller, Cheryl Rosa (SP), Brad Smith, Fran Ulmer, and Polly Wheeler (SP).



Upcoming RFP development: The Board discussed whether to continue the cyclical approach and whether to shift expected funding within categories for the 2013 RFP. NPRB staff emphasized that an early decision on intent would be beneficial in developing the draft RFP prior to the August 2012 SP meeting. Royer indicated that the SP supported continuation of the cyclical approach. The Board and panels should look for an email from staff in June soliciting input into development of topics for the 2013 RFP.

A motion was made and seconded to approve a cyclical approach for 2013-2014 (passed with no objections).

A motion was made and seconded to create a placeholder for funding amounts for the purposes of RFP development (passed with no objections):

	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
Lower Trophic Levels	\$500,000	\$200,000
Fish and Invertebrates	\$1,200,000	\$1,300,000
Marine Mammals	\$800,000	\$200,000
Seabirds	\$100,000	\$500,000
Humans	0	\$200,000
Other prominent issues	\$100,000	\$300,000
LTK and Comm. Involvement	\$200,000	\$200,000
Collaborative Research	\$300,000	\$300,000
Technology Development	\$300,000	\$300,000
Data Rescue	\$100,000	\$100,000
Focus : Social science	\$400,000	
Focus: TBD		\$400,000
<b>RFP total</b>	<b>\$4,000,000</b>	<b>\$4,000,000</b>

Outside funding requests: The Board considered five requests for funding for outside meetings and other activities for a total of \$50,000. After considerable discussion of each request in the context of the criteria the Board has used to determine which types of requests to prioritize, a motion was passed (no objections) to support four of the five outside requests, totaling \$35,000: 9<sup>th</sup> International Flatfish Symposium (\$5,000); 28<sup>th</sup> Wakefield Symposium (\$10,000); Marine Mammals of the Holarctic Conference (\$10,000); and support for publication of Life Histories of Pacific Salmon and Steelhead Trout in Ocean Ecosystems (\$10,000).

Science Panel membership: The Board discussed the benefits and drawbacks of designating seats on the SP for specific agency representatives. The goal is to ensure that the panel includes the best scientific expertise, but also sufficient awareness of important management issues and considerations. In the end, the Board decided that scientific expertise would remain paramount, but the nominating committee could consider understanding of practical management application in its deliberations among nominees. For the current vacancy, the announcement should include a description of the fishery science expertise needed, as well as a statement indicating preference

for an individual demonstrating scientific knowledge in the context of practical management application.

Update on Project 815: The investigator has secured the required additional funding and the project will move forward.

Meeting schedule and location: The Board will meet September 11-13, 2012, in Anchorage. If locations outside of Anchorage are chosen for future fall meetings, the suggestion was made to decide a full year ahead to allow sufficient time to plan appropriate activities with the local community. The Board chose May 14-17 as the dates for its spring 2013 meeting, to be held in Anchorage.

## **11. Arctic**

Arctic plan and timeline: Staff provided background information on NPRB plans for the Arctic, including a phase 1 synthesis RFP, with proposals to be considered at the this Board meeting, and phase 2 integrated science research. Phase 2 remains under development, with active pursuit of future funding partnerships and identification of common scientific goals. The next steps for phase 2 will be for staff to present a draft science and coordination plan to the Board for consideration in September 2012, with release of an RFP and selection of research projects possible in 2013. If phase 2 projects are selected in 2013, fieldwork could begin in 2014.

Overview of Arctic synthesis RFP, proposals received, and Panel Review: Brendan Kelly (OSTP/NSF) joined the Board meeting by teleconference for this portion of the Arctic discussion. NPRB staff provided background for the Board: The North Pacific Marine Research Institute, in partnership with NSF (and with funding from Shell and ConocoPhillips), released a special RFP for Arctic Data Synthesis and Research Needs in January, with proposals due in March, 2012. Two proposals were submitted. Each received four external reviews.

Science Panel Chair Royer provided an overview of the panel's review of the proposals. The SP placed one proposal in Tier 3 and the second in Tier 2 with specific conditions. The SP recommended the Board fund the Tier 2 conditional proposal, but only after a review of the revised proposal by the full SP.

Advisory Panel Chair Stephan provided an overview of that panel's discussion of the Tier 2 conditional proposal and its recommendation that the investigators be asked to enhance interaction with Arctic communities in their proposal revision.

Board decision on Arctic synthesis proposals: The motion was made and seconded to accept the SP's recommendation. An amendment (seconded) to add the AP's recommendations was accepted (with no objections). The main motion was accepted as amended with no objections (Castellini, Rea recused).

Status of Arctic legislation: Staff provided an update regarding two bills introduced by Senator Begich in March 2012 that would create and fund an Arctic research program to be implemented by NPRB. There has been, to date, no further action on the legislation. The Board has been asked by Senate staff to provide comments. A letter from then-Chair Ian Dutton was sent to the Senator on April 3. A second letter including more specific comments regarding legislative language will

be drafted in the coming weeks, and Board members will first be asked to provide feedback on these, if any, to the Executive Director.

## **12. Gulf of Alaska Program Update**

NPRB staff provided an update on the Gulf of Alaska Program, including completion of a successful investigators' meeting in March 2012 in Juneau, selection of a data management proposal early in 2012 and integration of data management into ongoing science activities, and plans for a limited 2012 field season. In addition, a detailed update on the program's ecosystem modeling component was provided (initially at the request of the SP).

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM, May 10.