

**North Pacific Research Board Meeting Minutes**  
**May 13 – 17, 2013**  
**NPRB Board Room**  
**Anchorage, AK**

The North Pacific Research Board met on May 13 – 17 in Anchorage, Alaska. In attendance were: Eric Olson (Chair), Sue Aspelund (Vice Chair), David Benson, David Benton (absent Monday and Friday) Michael Castellini, Dorothy Childers, John Gauvin, Katrina Hoffman, Leslie Holland-Bartels, Howard Horton (absent Thursday and Friday), Tara Jones, Lt. Tony Kenne, Paul MacGregor, Doug Mecum, Mike Miller, Gerry Merrigan, Brad Smith, and Caryn Rea. Science and Advisory Panel chairs, Tom Royer and Jeff Stephan, were in attendance. The meeting was staffed by John Hilsinger, Francis Wiese, Carrie Eischens, Danielle Dickson, and Susan Dixon. New hire Abigail Enghirst was present for portions of the meeting. Pete Hagen from NOAA was present throughout the meeting.

1. Call to Order/Approval of Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m., Monday, May 13, 2013. The first order of business was to review and approve the agenda for the current meeting. Time was allocated for the Executive Committee and hiring committee to meet later in the agenda. The Board also decided to defer endorsement of the budget until after the discussion of the Arctic program. The Board also agreed to take the Science Panel and Advisory Panel reports item by item as they moved through the agenda.

**MOTION: Approve agenda as amended.**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objections.**

John Hilsinger was introduced as the NPRB Interim Executive Director, Susan Dixon was introduced as the new Executive Assistant, and Abigail Enghirst was introduced as the new Communications and Outreach Director. Established staff members Francis Weise, Carrie Eischens, and Danielle Dickson were also introduced.

The Board was given a safety briefing.

Election of officers:

**MOTION: Nominate Eric Olson for Chair.**

**SUBSTITUTE MOTION: Add nomination of Sue Aspelund as Vice-Chair to the nomination of Eric Olson for chair**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objections.**

Approval of September meeting summary:

**MOTION: Approve the minutes from the September 2012 Board meeting as written.**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objections.**

2. Hiring Committee Report

The full Board had a discussion about the recent activities of the Executive Director hiring committee in Executive Session.

### 3. Budget Review

Staff provided an update on the budget and noted that the annual audit is underway, but is not yet completed. The audit is expected in about 2 weeks and will be sent to Board members as soon as it is completed. The Grant 6 budget proposal was submitted in time for the May 1 deadline with the approval of the NPRB Executive Committee. Funds for year 1 of Grant 6 equal \$9,737,067. Staff summarized the budget for Grant 6, which includes 14.1% for Admin costs, which is below the 15% statutory cap; \$4.0 million for the annual 2014 RFP; \$1.2 million for an Arctic IERP; \$400,000 for Long-term Monitoring RFP; and approximately \$1.3 million that can be used for other purposes such as a larger future RFP or an IERP. Staff noted that actual expenditure of funds for an Arctic IERP would not occur until FY 2015.

The staff and Board discussed the revenue outlook through the year 2021. Revenues are expected to decline because of the low interest rates (<2%) currently being applied to 10-year ladder Treasury Notes. Given an assumption of 2% interest starting in 2015, projections indicate annual revenues will decrease to \$6-7 million by 2021. The Board also reviewed projections assuming 1.75% interest and 2.25% interest.

Staff noted that EIRF funds could remain at ONRR earning interest for an additional year instead of shifting to Dept. of Commerce if the Board desired, resulting in an increase of ~\$20,000 in the annual budget.

**MOTION: Invest the EIRF funds between the time they are made available to Dept. of Commerce and when they are made available to NPRB, as long as this does not affect operations.**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objections.**

Staff also notified the Board that NPRB received \$325,000 in funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF) for close-out of the Bering Sea Project.

At the end of the meeting, the Board returned to the discussion of the Grant 6 budget following a detailed discussion of the Board's role in Arctic research. The Board requested that at future meetings the staff present the budget in terms of the overarching line items used in the grant applications, in addition to the detailed outlook information presented.

**MOTION: Approve the budget for Grant 6 as presented by the staff**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objections.**

### 4. NPRB Conflict of Interest Policy

Staff reviewed the conflict of interest (COI) policy in detail and requested that each Board member sign a statement asserting that he/she has read, understands, and agrees to abide by the policy. Science Panel chair Royer said that the SP found the policy disruptive and thought the institutional units triggering recusal were too broad. AP chair Jeff Stephan noted that the AP also had some suggestions regarding their COI process and said he would be happy to participate in the COI working group to review the current workings of the policy.

Signed forms were received from all present Board members before discussion of proposals began. All Board members and staff were afforded an opportunity to review the COI disclosures and recusals listed on the proposal and graduate student research award (GSRA) spreadsheets in order to make corrections. All corrections were incorporated into the spreadsheets and individuals were directed to identify any other conflicts that became apparent as the Board worked through the proposals and GRSAs. Following review and correction of the spreadsheets, the Board took action as follows:

**MOTION: Accept the conflict of interest disclosure and recusal lists for proposals and GSRAs as amended.**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objections.**

The Board revisited the discussion of the COI policy following proposal review. Staff pointed out that part of the purpose of the policy was also to deal with the perception of a COI. Much of the discussion revolved around the loss of knowledge when people have to leave the room, but it was also recognized that even answering questions about proposals could introduce bias. Some Board members thought they could discount the comments of conflicted individuals as long as the conflicts were disclosed. The Board generally agreed that the language in the existing policy is vague in its description of the level at which individuals should be recused with respect to the Institutional category of conflict (the current policy states that individuals should be recused if they are “within the same division, unit, school, department, institute, or equivalent”) because of the differences in terminology used to name units within organizations. The recusal issue was identified as particularly acute for Advisory Panel members since they don’t actually make any decisions and some of them work for very large organizations where there is no connection between the AP member and the proponent. Board members noted that taking up multiple proposals at once caused some people to be recused from more proposals than necessary. It was also recognized that there may be some mechanics of the process that could be changed to make it less disruptive.

**The Board agreed to reconvene the COI working group and tasked it with reconsideration of the policy.** The working group should better define what constitutes the same division or department for various organizations. The working group should also consider whether separate policies for the Science and Advisory panels and the Board are appropriate, and if so, should make recommendations regarding the stipulations of these separate policies.

**The COI working group will include the chairs of the Science and Advisory Panels, Sue Aspelund, Brad Smith, Tara Jones, and John Gauvin. Sue Aspelund agreed to Chair the working group. Staff will assist as needed.**

#### 5. Social Science Working Group

Dr. Polly Wheeler, Science Panel member and Co-Chair of the Social Science working group, attended this portion of the Board meeting to provide a summary of a report that the social science working group commissioned on how NPRB might better integrate social science into natural science research and fund better social science projects. Intended applications of this report include informing development of the annual RFP and providing information that would allow NPRB to better include social science when the NPRB Science Plan is updated. Dr. Wheeler noted that the authors of the paper did what NPRB asked of them and provided a very rich report with case studies that would take some time to fully digest and determine which portions to apply to the two processes noted above. The report did not explicitly provide recommendations to NPRB for how to better integrate natural and social sciences; however, the solicitation did not ask for this.

Dr. Wheeler suggested that the Social Science working group and the Science Panel need time to digest the content of the report and develop recommendations for RFP topics related to social science. They should perhaps also consider making recommendations for different criteria that could be used to evaluate social science projects. Members of the working group recognized Tom Van Pelt’s supporting role to the working group and noted that continued staff support would be appreciated. Dr. Wheeler suggested that the Board consider providing funds to bring in a consultant to staff to develop the social science program, in particular, because the existing staff is already overburdened.

**MOTION: Endorse continued work of the Social Science working group, with staff support, to review the report and respond to the authors, suggesting the report be editorially finalized and an executive summary written for a lay audience be added; the Board further charges the working group with developing a national and international distribution plan for the report, developing ideas for the 2014 RFP, and providing recommendations for better integrating social science into the NPRB Science Plan update.**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objections.**

6. Overview of current research funded and 2013 proposals

Staff provided a summary of current research funded by NPRB. Since 2002, there have been 304 regular projects funded, for a total of \$48.9 million.

The Board was given an update on project 815, which has now been cancelled. Staff expects a final report from the PIs within the week that will include recommendations for developing cooperative research with industry.

Staff provided an overview of the 2013 Request for Proposals (RFP) and proposals received. The 2013 RFP was released with a funding target of \$4 million. One hundred and thirty proposals were received.

Twenty-two proposals were rejected due to lack of responsiveness, formatting issues, or lack of signature pages. One notable reason for non-responsiveness was that some proposals in the Cooperative Research with Industry included no industry cooperator. One hundred eight proposals requesting \$23.5 million were forwarded to independent scientists and the Science Panel for review.

7. Proposal Review Process

Staff summarized the proposal review process, noting in particular that the Board will need to provide an explanation for Tier 1 proposals not selected for funding (which will be communicated to the PIs). Staff further noted that notifications cannot go out to any PIs until these explanations are complete, and reminded Board members not to notify PIs of the Board's decision on a given proposal until staff confirms that official notifications have been sent. Final approval will be contingent on approval by the Secretary of Commerce and staff expects that this will happen around the first week of June.

The Science Panel Chair explained that the panel did not have time in 2013 to separate the Tier 1 proposals into categories "a" and "b" to further rank them within the Tier 1 category. He also explained that the SP put conditions on some proposals. If a Tier one proposal had a non-science condition it became Tier 1 conditional. If it had a science condition, it became Tier 2 conditional.

The Advisory Panel Chair explained the process that the panel used to highlight proposals for stakeholder relevance in 2013, which differed somewhat from the process used in 2012. The Advisory Panel reviewed all sixty Tier 1 and Tier 2 proposals and highlighted 31 of them for which members wished to have more information. After a review of each of those 31 proposals, 20 proposals were flagged as having significant stakeholder relevance. AP members who supported identifying a particular proposal as having high stakeholder value and relevance wrote a brief (2 to 5 sentences) paragraph justifying that relevance. The AP then reviewed and edited those paragraphs before accepting them as justification for the AP identifying 20 proposals as having high stakeholder relevance. The AP did not consider scientific merit in review. The same criteria for stakeholder relevance defined in 2012 were applied in 2013.

#### 8. Proposal Review for 2013

Staff summarized the results of proposal review by the Science and Advisory panels. The Science Panel placed 33 proposals in Tier 1 and 3 proposals in Tier 1 conditional categories, requesting a total of \$7.2 million. Eighteen proposals were ranked as Tier 2 and an additional 8 as Tier 2 conditional, requesting an additional \$4.5 million. The remaining 48 proposals were ranked as Tier 3 (do not fund). The Advisory Panel highlighted 20 proposals for stakeholder relevance that were ranked Tier 1 or Tier 2 by the Science Panel.

The Science Panel Chair first summarized the Tier 1 proposals, the Science Panel reviews, and answered proposal specific questions from the Board. Staff provided additional information on the proposals as needed. The comments of the Advisory Panel were provided for those proposals that were highlighted for stakeholder relevance. The Board also discussed two proposals ranked Tier 2 by the Science Panel and highlighted by the AP for stakeholder relevance. The Board was then given the opportunity to request discussion of any specific Tier 2 proposals of interest.

Board members who were recused on specific proposals were allowed to listen to the summary of the proposal, but left the room before any questions or discussion took place. The Board chair, staff, and Board members monitored the lists of disclosures and recusals to assure this happened. In addition to the disclosures and recusals already identified in the lists accepted by the Board, several Board members identified additional recusals or disclosures as the proposal discussion proceeded. These disclosures and recusals were added to the lists accepted by the Board.

#### Discussion of Process for 2013

The Board decided that it would begin by moving to fund all Tier 1 proposals (\$7.2 million) and then paring the list down to the funding target of \$4.0 million. If a Board member wanted to fund a Tier 2 proposal, he or she was required to identify a Tier 1 proposal that would be dropped. Staff reminded the Board of their need for a statement of explanation for any Tier 1 proposal that was dropped.

The Board discussed whether \$4.0 million should be a hard cap on funding. Staff explained that there was some flexibility in the budget, but that any decision to go over the proposed amount would have repercussions on other funding flexibility in the future. The Board signaled its comfort with exceeding the \$4 million dollar funding target by a small amount, with 5% or \$200,000 being one suggestion.

#### **MAIN MOTION: Fund all proposals ranked Tier 1 by the Science Panel.**

The Board went through section by section, making amendments to the main motion as detailed below. Throughout, staff captured the rationale behind each of the amendments, and these will be included in the paragraphs going back to the applicants.

#### Oceanography and Lower Trophic Level Productivity:

##### **Amendment 1**

**MOTION: Remove proposals 2 and 5 (retain 1, 4, and 8).**

##### **Substitute Amendment 1**

**MOTION: Remove proposal 4 and 5 (retain 1, 2, and 8).**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objections carrying both amendments, funding proposals 1, 2, and 8.**

Fish and Invertebrates:

**Amendment 2**

**MOTION: Remove proposals 11, 13, 19, 25, 29, 39, and add proposal 22.**

**Amendment 2a**

**MOTION: Retain proposal 39.**

**ACTION: Motion failed on a roll call vote, with one recusal.**

**Amendment 2b**

**MOTION: Remove proposal 36.**

**ACTION: Motion withdrawn.**

**FINAL ACTION: Amendment 2 passed with no objections.**

Marine Mammals:

**Amendment 3**

**MOTION: Remove proposals 41 and 56.**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objections.**

Seabirds:

There were no Tier 1 proposals and only one Tier 2 proposal. No motions to amend this category were made.

Other Prominent Issues:

**Amendment 4**

**MOTION: Remove proposal 81 and replace with proposal 75 (Tier 2).**

**ACTION: Motion passed on a roll call vote with one recusal.**

Cooperative Research:

**Amendment 5**

**MOTION: Remove proposal 98.**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objections.**

Technology Development:

**Amendment 6**

**MOTION: Remove proposal 116 and add proposal 118.**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objections.**

Data Rescuc:

**Amendment 7**

**MOTION: Remove proposal 120 and retain 122.**

**Substitute Amendment 7**

**MOTION: Remove proposal 122 and retain proposal 120.**

**ACTION: Motion withdrawn.**

**FINAL ACTION: Motion withdrawn.**

Focus Section:

**Amendment 8**

**MOTION: Remove proposal 124 and add proposal 125.**

**ACTION: Motion withdrawn.**

**Amendment 9**

**MOTION: Remove proposal 124.**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objections.**

Actions to this point resulted in total funding of approximately \$4,404,031 for 25 proposals. The Board then discussed whether to reduce the funding level further, or leave it at \$4.4 million.

**Amendment 10**

**MOTION: Remove proposal 38 and retain proposal 39.**

**ACTION: Motion failed on a roll call vote, with one recusal.**

**Amendment 11**

**MOTION: Remove proposal 130.**

**Substitute Amendment 11**

**MOTION: Remove proposals 75, 112, and 118.**

**ACTION: Motion withdrawn.**

**FINAL ACTION: Motion withdrawn.**

**Amendment 12**

**MOTION: Remove proposals 112 and 118.**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objections.**

Actions to this point resulted in a main motion amended to a funding level of \$4,278,982 for 23 projects. It was noted that with the Oil Spill Recovery Institute \$100,000 contribution to the funding of proposal 22, the amount of NPRB funding for this RFP would be \$4,178,982.

**FINAL ACTION: Main Motion to fund projects under the RFP at the level of \$4,178,982 for 23 projects passed with no objections.**

The SP Chair asked for the Board's opinion of the importance of asking the SP to rank Tier 1 proposals into categories "a" and "b." Some Board members thought it would be useful to have this information,

but others were concerned that ranking “a” and “b” within a category may introduce another opportunity for the SP to rank proposals based on the budget cap for a given category. Staff noted that in order to have time to add “a” and “b” designations the SP would likely need an additional half-day of meeting time.

The Board discussed the balance of funding projects with immediate management applications and projects that address ecosystem information needs. In the past the Board has viewed its contribution to integrated ecosystem research programs as support of projects related to ecosystem information needs. The Board discussed rebalancing the portfolio to ensure that adequate funds are allocated to IERP-type programs and perhaps emphasizing applied projects through the annual RFP process. They returned to this discussion during the strategic planning section of the agenda under Other Matters.

#### 9. Arctic Program

Staff provided an update on the status of the PacMARS program. A substantial interim report is expected on June 15, 2013, which will list priorities for Arctic research and will inform development of an Arctic research program. The PacMARS Advisory Committee provided a statement to the Board regarding its view of the project’s progress to date.

Staff also provided an update on development of the PAGES program (an Arctic IERP) and the evolution of the PAGES Science Plan. Staff have been collaborating with Dr. Brendan Kelly, Executive Director of the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee (IARPC), and have been working on building partnerships with other entities funding Arctic marine research. Staff summarized discussions with potential partner organizations to date, including National Science Foundation (NSF), the Office of Naval Research (ONR), Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM, North Slope Borough-Shell Baseline Studies Program, Shell, ConocoPhillips, Alaska Ocean Observing System (AOOS), Arctic Landscape Conservation Cooperative (Arctic LCC), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and others. Building these partnerships has been ongoing for a year. While no one has committed a dollar amount, staff believes it is likely that they will and that could move fairly quickly, especially with people inside each agency championing Arctic work through this cooperative.

Board members requested a review of the PAGES Science Plan in more detail, focusing particularly on what has changed since its presentation in the fall; staff provided that review noting that the PAGES is a framework for how to move forward with an integrated program that helps tie everyone together and that the PAGES Science Plan is still very much a work in progress. Staff noted that this document has served as an invitation to other organizations to build a partnership using a common Science Plan.

Funding partners need a common conceptual framework. Staff described its participation in organizing a recent workshop in Washington, D.C. to develop such a framework. This was seen as a successful process and included many helpful discussions regarding framing questions for a future program.

Staff explained that it plans to combine the outcomes of the PacMARS and SOAR syntheses with the recommendations that came out of the Workshop in Washington, D.C. and PAGES, and to work with potential funding partners to organize an intellectual and logistical partnership to craft an RFP for a research program. It remains to be seen whether the RFP will be a combined, coordinated, or collaborative effort. Staff plans to organize a meeting of the funding partners in late June or early July. The Board will need to decide at its September meeting what role NPRB will play in this Arctic research effort.

The Board expressed concern about the impact this program will have on NPRB funding and staffing resources. The Board asked for clarification of the staffing needs for an Arctic Program. Staff explained that Danielle Dickson will continue to serve as the NPRB Program Manager for the Arctic program. As



the Gulf of Alaska IERP will be winding down by the time the Arctic Program gets started, she will be able to dedicate more of her time to the Arctic program starting in 2015. NSF is likely interested in creating a program office dedicated to PAGES and staff expects that other funding partners will commit staff time to the effort as well.

Concern was expressed on the part of the Board to be sure there was broad outreach to groups and individuals interested in the Arctic and to be sure the Board had a chance to review draft research plans before any decisions were made to move forward. Particular concern was expressed for seeing that the State of Alaska and the oil and gas industry are included in planning. Staff noted that it has reached out to both and will continue to do so. While there was strong sentiment among the Board members that NPRB can play a very valuable role in Arctic research, there was also concern about stretching NPRBs declining resources, as well as its staff, too thin. In particular, there was concern among board members about the impact of the Arctic program on other NPRB research priorities in the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska.

There was discussion about the level of involvement by NPRB. Can NPRB play a purely coordination role versus actually spending money? There was recognition that NPRB could play a strong leadership role in coordinating Arctic research, but that it would probably have to invest its own money in order to have credibility and get other groups to commit their funds. Another suggestion was to investigate Dept. of Defense interest in PAGES.

The discussions concluded with recognition by the Board that staff has done a lot of work on PAGES, but that funding and staffing issues remain a concern. The Board reaffirmed that no decision has been made to commit to funding PAGES at this time, and these issues would be reviewed in the fall. With that, the following motion was made:

**MOTION: Continue the path we've set for NPRB as far as developing an Arctic Program and revisit it in September. Staff should reach out to a broader range of partners, including Stephanie Moreland with the state, the oil and gas industry, and the NPFMC.**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objections.**

For reference, the action the Board took at the September 2012 meeting is as follows: "A motion was introduced and seconded to direct staff to pursue partnerships for Arctic phase 2, with a \$3 million to \$6 million possible range for NPRB investment, but without guarantee of funding. The USARC is to be included in planning. The strategy will be revisited in May. (Passed with no objection)."

Caryn Rea, Sue Aspelund, and Leslie Holland-Bartels volunteered to serve on a Board working group that staff can consult for advice on Arctic Program development. Dave Benton was asked to participate but made no firm commitments at the time.

Staff provided an update on the Arctic legislation introduced by Senator Begich and its implications for NPRB and noted that there is no indication that there will be action on it anytime soon. Important points about the bill related to NPRB are that it raises the NPRB share of the EIRF interest from 20% to 25%; it raises the cap on administrative expenses from 15% to 20%; and it does away with the Executive Committee of NPRB. It also provides 25% of the EIRF to the U.S. Arctic Research Commission (USARC) for Arctic research, 10% of the EIRF to support the Alaska Ocean Observing System (AOOS), and directs that NPRB, USARC, and AOOS meet together not less than once per year. It also mandates a COI process consistent with the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Management Act. The current version was not co-sponsored by Senator Murkowski.

#### 10. Bering Sea Project

Staff updated the Board on the status of the Bering Sea Project. Tom Van Pelt remains involved as a contractor and Susan Dixon has been working on the outreach component absent a Communications and Outreach Director.

Staff expects the project to be wrapped up by February 2014. Individual projects are submitting their final reports and all of them are expected to be in hand and reviewed by the end of the 2013 calendar year.

NPRB plans extensive outreach activities to publicize the outcomes of the program, including regional outreach activities associated with the 2014 AMSS and a full-day open science meeting and special session at the Ocean Sciences meeting in February 2014 in Hawaii which will reach the international community. One of four special issues has already been published and another is expected soon.

“Headlines” articles showcasing the results of individual projects will be circulated to local and regional media outlets and published on the BSIERP website and will be combined to produce a magazine about the program. NPRB was awarded an NSF grant for \$325,000 for BEST-BSIERP program close-out and the SAB will hold its final in-person meeting in early November in Washington, D.C. to plan for final outreach products. The 2014 calendar will be based on a Bering Sea Photo Contest that is open to project participants.

Data are being submitted and archived by the data management team and DOI tagging is taking place.

The modeling aspect of the program was very ambitious and has produced important outcomes. The PIs have been able to produce a complete hindcast; however, producing forecasts has proven more problematic. In terms of the management scenarios models, the work done by this program will serve as a proof of concept. An outcome of this project will be a comparison of outputs from the more complex coupled models to the outputs of simpler models to assess the need for very complex models.

The Science Panel Chair noted that this project has exceeded all of his expectations and that of the SP. This example should support development of the Arctic program. Board members congratulated staff on this project and encouraged extensive outreach to publicize this success.

#### 11. Gulf of Alaska Project

Staff updated the Board on the status of GOAIERP and handed out the new brochure produced over the winter. The update included information on the March 2013 PI meeting, ongoing modeling and field efforts, and the recent award of a contract for outreach to Sitka Sound Science Center. Staff noted that concerns were raised about the ability of NOAA to commit the leveraged resources promised in its proposals, but explained that the issue has been resolved.

#### 12. Graduate Student Research Awards

Staff summarized the number of applications received and the results of the Science and Advisory panels' discussions of the proposals. Staff then provided a summary of each application the panels recommended for funding. The chairs of the Science and Advisory panels provided comments before the Board deliberated.

The Science Panel recommended the following three Master's level awards:

- Alex Godinez. A seascape genetics approach to resolving population structure in Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands blackspotted rockfish (*Sebastes melanostictus*).
- Erin Fedewa. Interannual variation in pre- and post-settlement processes of the northern rock sole (*Lepidopsetta polyxystra*) in relation to temperature variability in the Gulf of Alaska.
- Three-way tie for the third award:

- Sarah Traiger. Assessing the impact of climate induced changes in glacial discharge on recruitment and succession in coastal rock communities.
- Matthew Fowler. Salmon blood plasma to control texture softening of surimi and fresh salmon filets.
- Courtney Shuert. Steller sea lion survivors: A retrospective on the impact of alternative research methods on an endangered species.

The Science Panel recommendations for the Doctorate level awards were as follows:

- Carley Schacter. Behavioral ecology and migration of two North Pacific planktivorous seabird species.
- Jonathon Whitefield. Analysis of freshwater and heat pathways between the Pacific, Arctic, and North Atlantic oceans.
- Suzanne Teerlink. Combining traditional and innovative monitoring methods to describe humpback whales population structure near Juneau, Alaska.

The Advisory Panel comments in support of Matthew Fowler's application broke the tie for the third award at the Master's level. Additionally, some Board members noted that they liked the applied nature of his proposal. The Board concurred with the recommendations of the Science Panel for all of the other awards.

Board members who were recused left the room.

**MOTION: Fund GSRA proposals by Alex Godinez, Erin Fedewa, and Matthew Fowler at the Master's level and Carley Schacter, Jonathon Whitefield, and Suzanne Teerlink at the Ph.D. level.**

**ACTION: The motion passed with no objections.**

### 13. Communications, Education, and Outreach Report

Abigail Enghirst was welcomed as the new Communications and Outreach Director.

Staff summarized the outreach products that have been generated since September, including the 201 – 12 Biennial Report, the general NPRB brochure, several synopses for regular projects, and the 2013 calendar.

Staff distributed the 2011–12 Biennial Report and highlighted inclusion of new sections that note the application of NPRB-funded work to resource management and the impact of the GRSAs. A recommendation was made that this report be distributed to the other AMSS sponsor organizations.

Winners of the annual NPRB photo contest were announced. In the youth category, first place went to *Day is Done* by Lione Clare, second place went to *Golden Light* by Lione Clare, third place went to *Chick on the Tundra* by Hannah Beutler. In the adult contest, first place went to *Herring Eggs on Shoreline* by Janet Berlin, second place went to *Gulls Take Advantage of Surfacing Shoal of Herring in Hells Hole Port Gravina* by Richard Brenner, and third place went to *Last Known Sighting of Alaska Lesser Ice Dragon in Ice Bay, PWS* by Gerry Sanger.

### 14. Long-term monitoring

Staff provided background on the evolution of the long-term monitoring program and presented a summary of recent activities of the long-term monitoring working group, including development of a request for pre-proposals that staff expects to release in June, with the Board's approval.

The Board complimented the staff and the long-term monitoring working group on the comprehensive and clear draft pre-proposal RFP.

It was noted that the Board needs to discuss how to evaluate leverage when they receive proposals. Staff mentioned that the effectiveness of the budget was one of the pre-proposal evaluation criteria and that this would be further developed in the invitation for full proposals.

Staff also clarified that there is no need to stipulate any annual funding caps in the RFP, as there is enough flexibility in the current budget to deal with this.

**MOTION: Endorse the release of the pre-proposal RFP for long-term monitoring.**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objections.**

15. Other Matters

a) *AOOS Update*

Molly McCammon updated the Board on the recent activities of AOOS.

b) *Upcoming RFP development*

The Board discussed how NPRB might better handle RFP development and proposal selection to avoid a situation in which responsive and highly-rated proposals are not funded. The Board considered removing topics from the RFP that are not a priority for funding and also think about including only specific topics, rather than more general topics, if that is what the Board is truly interested in.

Staff pointed out that 16 of the 23 proposals funded this year had budgets under \$200,000, and suggested that the Board review the intended funding level for individual proposals within each category without adjusting the funding cap. This may avoid a situation in which individual highly-ranked proposals do not compete well because they are too expensive. Board members requested that staff provide an analysis of the average, median, and range of proposal costs by research category for the September meeting.

Staff was directed to draft a 2014 RFP using the \$4million target laid out in the current budget and keeping with the cyclical approach to funding in 2013–14 as laid out in the 2013 RFP. The Board was asked to send suggestions for RFP topics to the Science Director by the end of June.

Chinook salmon research was suggested as a possible focus section topic and staff was encouraged to communicate with the State of Alaska about its plans for funding research on Chinook. Technology development was also suggested as a focus section topic, and staff pointed out that because that category already exists in the RFP, money could simply be shifted to that category if the Board so desired. The Board confirmed that it is open to other suggestions for focus section topics.

c) *Perkins Coie/governance*

Staff noted that due to turnover in Executive Directors and personal issues at Perkins Coie with Lorri Dunsmore, this work has been put on hold. Perkins Coie was supposed to deal with the MOU between NPRB, ASLC, and NOAA. However, most of Lorri's time was devoted to COI. The way the MOU was written, it was assumed that NPRB staff would be federal employees, and the fact that they are not has caused difficulty in interpretation of the MOU language.

The Foraker Group has a consultant who is a CPA and attorney, and Tara Jones will be meeting with Steve Mahoney (from Foraker) to discuss the relationship between ASLC, NPRB, and NOAA. Following this meeting, the Executive Committee may consider changing legal support to help navigate this relationship and develop a new MOU between the three organizations.

The Board directed John Hilsinger to contact Lorri Dunsmore to check on the status of the work that the Board contracted her to complete.

*d) Advisory Panel (AP) Appointments*

Staff explained that several seats on the AP are vacant or open for reappointment. Phil Zavadil and Michael Macrander both wish to continue on the AP and are automatically reappointed without having to reapply. The nominations committee recommended that Lloyd Lowry be appointed to the at-large seat because of his forty years of experience working in many parts of Alaska, familiarity with marine mammals, subsistence hunting, and communities; Jeff Stephen and Gary Freitag were recommended for reappointment to the Gulf of Alaska seats. George Hart was not considered a good fit for the Bering Sea or Arctic seats and therefore, was not recommended for appointment. Helen Aderman was recommended for reappointment to the Bering Sea seat and Vera Metcalf was recommended for reappointment to the Arctic seat.

Staff suggested that the Board stipulate exactly how attendance should be calculated (80% is required, but by meeting, by days? Does participation via teleconference count?). The NPFMC calculates attendance by day and NPRB staff agrees with this approach.

Staff noted that AP representation is currently balanced by region, but perhaps sector representation should also be considered. Communities are not currently well represented as compared to industry sectors.

**MOTION: Reappoint Gary Freitag, Jeff Stephan, Helen Aderman, and Vera Metcalf to the AP.**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objection.**

**MOTION: Appoint Lloyd Lowry to the vacant "at large" seat on the AP.**

**ACTION: Motion passed with one objection.**

**MOTION: Change the way that AP attendance is taken to include meeting days attended, rather than whole meetings.**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objection.**

*e) Strategic Planning*

Cynthia Suchman was the previous staff member tasked with leading the Strategic Planning working group and the Board members listed as members do not recall ever having had a meeting or any communication on the matter after September 2012.

Staff clarified that it can do the work that was already anticipated, but can't take on additional tasks, such as the update of the Science Plan, unless something else is dropped. The Board was reminded that three of the seven staff members are new and the unusual amount of turnover this year has caused disruption.

Tom Van Pelt, former Program Manager, has left the staff and is now solely focused on Bering Sea Project close-out and is no longer committing time to administrative and general NPRB tasks.

The Science Panel Chair reported that it recommended not updating the Science Plan until a permanent Executive Director is hired. Staff explained that if the Science Plan update was to move forward, it recommends skipping release of an annual RFP in order to make the workload manageable for staff and the Science Panel. The annual RFP represents an activity that could be postponed for one year without losing momentum and potentially deleteriously affecting a long-term program. The RFP funding level in future years could be increased and the scientific community could be given notice in advance.

The Board suggested that a retired Science Panel member might be approached to help lead the update of the Science Plan.

**MOTION: Defer action on revision of the Science Plan for at least one year until a permanent Executive Director is hired and, in the meantime, engage the strategic planning.**  
**ACTION: Motion passed with no objections.**

A Board member expressed concern about inclusion of the social sciences in NPRB's portfolio; the Board clarified that the Social Science working group will continue its work and will eventually contribute to the Science Plan update.

The Board discussed the balance of NPRB's portfolio in terms of meeting the two missions of the organization: funding research related to pressing fishery management needs and marine ecosystem information needs. The Board discussed the idea of making a policy of funding ecosystem science through the Integrated Ecosystem Research Programs and focusing the annual RFP on applied science. An alternative would be to commit to funding a balanced portfolio on an annual basis. The point was made that IERP-type programs do develop applied products because ecosystem-level information is often relied upon for making management decisions. Through IERPs, the Board has been allocating approximately \$4 million per year to ecosystem information science since BSIERP began. One Board member suggested that the Board commit 50% of its annual funding during the coming five years to ecosystem science (IERPs in the Arctic or elsewhere or the annual RFP) and this will provide guidance in terms of an upper limit for funding of the Arctic IERP as it is developed.

*f) Updates on other working groups – GSRA, Small Grants, Stakeholder Engagement*  
Staff provided updates on the status of several working groups.

GSRA – Working group members compiled a list of potential partners who might fund additional GSRAAs. Sue Aspelund noted that Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association is interested in contributing, but that a number of other industry entities already contribute to other scholarship programs. John Gauvin and Edward Poulsen approached the fishing industry and learned that the industry feels that NPRB has enough money. They will try again. Shell noted potential interest. Staff is concerned that ASLC will take overhead if the money goes through NPMRI and prefers that we hold off on soliciting donations until this is resolved. It was brought to the attention of the Board that funds disbursed to NPMRI are eligible for a sizeable tax credit due to the non-profit status of the ASLC.

**Direction from the Board was for the GSRA working group to stand down until the mechanism for accepting funds is resolved.**

Small grants – The working group intends to solicit proposals for small grants from communities in January and February and review them in March and April. The working group proposes to review proposals internally and not through peer review. The group proposes to spend up to \$100,000 per year (5 awards at \$20,000 each) and seek Board approval. The working group has been inactive recently and staff is seeking direction from the Board in continuing this work.

**The Board recommends that staff reactivate this working group as time allows and ask it to present a scalable approach that allows for a changing budget. Expect a budget of <\$100 K. The working group may want to consider rotating the focus between LMEs and should discuss whether this approach would substitute the community involvement section in the RFP or be an additional program.**

Stakeholder engagement – The Board directed staff **not to continue** the working group, but to add language to the RFP boilerplate, template, and review criteria to address stakeholder engagement based on conversations the working group has had to date.

*g) Director's and officer's insurance*

NPRB currently is covered up to \$1 million excluding legal defense fees. The policy does cover Science and Advisory panel members. Coverage covers the time that a claim is made, not the time that the incident occurred. Therefore, coverage should never be allowed to lapse. Tara Jones provided information about the cost of increasing coverage if the Board desires. One million dollars coverage costs approximately \$3,000 per year; \$2 million coverage would cost about \$4,000; \$3 million coverage costs about \$4,900.

**MOTION: Increase Directors and Officers Insurance coverage to \$3 million.**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objections.**

*h) Outside funding requests*

Staff summarized the commitments of the Board and noted that it has committed the entire \$50,000 outside funding request budget for FY2013.

For FY2014, we have already committed \$5000 each for the Dan Goodman Symposium, the Society for Marine Mammalogy biennial conference, and Sitka WhaleFest. We recently received a request from the Pacific Seabird Group for an Alaska-based conference and the Board was asked to consider funding this at the \$6000-level. If the Board approves this request, it will leave \$29,000 available for future FY 14 requests.

**MOTION: Provide support of \$6,000 for the Pacific Seabird Group meeting in Juneau.**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objections.**

*i) Dan Goodman Symposium*

Science Panel Chair, Tom Royer, explained that Dan Goodman, who was a member of the Science Panel and Ecosystem Modeling Committee (EMC), passed away last fall and a symposium will be held in his honor March 20 – 21, 2014 in Bozeman, MT. The Science Panel nominated Andre Punt to speak at the symposium and five members of the Science Panel requested travel support in addition to the \$5000 already committed to support the symposium.

The Board was not in support of covering the travel costs for all five Science Panel members.

**MOTION: Fund travel for Andre Punt and the Science Panel Chair, Tom Royer.**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objections.**

The Board Chair would like to send a strong message that this type of request will not be supported in the future and would prefer that requests of this nature not come before the Board again because it puts the Board in the awkward position of refusing funding.

*j) Meeting Schedule and location for 2013 and 2014*

The next Board meeting will be held in Nome, AK Sep. 16 – 20 (the meeting will begin 1:00 pm Monday and end in the afternoon on Friday). Board members should plan to travel to Nome on Monday morning, arriving no later than noon, and should plan to travel home on Friday evening.

The Science Panel has requested that its spring 2014 meeting be held in Nanaimo, B.C. to honor Dick Beamish, SP member since Dec. 2002, since that will be his last meeting. The travel costs will be similar

to that of past spring meetings, but foreign travel requests will need to be completed. The Board supported this.

The Board will tentatively plan to meet the week of April 28, 2014. (This will be Eric Olson's last meeting because he is the NPFMC representative and his term on the NPFMC will expire in August 2014.)

**MOTION: to adjourn was made at 10:35 am on Friday, May 17, 2013.**

**ACTION: Motion passed with no objections.**