

Advisory Panel Meeting Minutes
September 10-12, 2013
NPRB Board Room
Anchorage, Alaska

The Advisory Panel (AP) met on September 10-12, 2013 in Anchorage, Alaska. In attendance were Jeff Stephan, Phillip Zavadil, Edward Poulsen, Gary Freitag, Helen Aderman, Steve Reifensstuhl, Vera Metcalf, Lloyd Lowry and Michael Macrander. Gay Sheffield attended via teleconference. Rex Snyder and Dan Falvey were not present. The meeting was staffed by John Hilsinger, Carrie Eischens, Danielle Dickson, and Susan Dixon.

Tuesday, September 10, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 08:30 a.m., Tuesday, September 10, 2013. The first order of business was the review and approval of the agenda for the current meeting.

A **motion** was entered to approve the agenda as it appears in electronic version.

Maker: Steve Reifensstuhl

Second: Gary Freitag

Motion passed.

A **motion** was entered to approve the minutes of the May 2013 AP meeting.

Maker: Phil Zavadil

Second: Steve Reifensstuhl

Motion passed.

Staff provided a safety briefing.

Lloyd Lowry was welcomed as a new member of the AP and all panel members introduced themselves. Six people were congratulated on their reappointment to the AP.

The AP chair recognized the recent work of the staff.

Staff provided a staffing update, noting that one candidate for Executive Director will be interviewed at the Board meeting next week. The full Board will decide whether or not to offer the candidate the job. Two Science Director candidates will be interviewed for the second time once the new Executive Director is hired. Staff noted that in the event that a permanent Executive Director was not hired in the near future, the interim ED and the hiring committee would proceed with the Science Director process.

2. Executive Session (*this a Board item, no AP action*)

3. Conflict of Interest

Staff provided a summary of the discussion that the Science Panel had about the NPRB conflict of interest policy at their recent meeting. SP members suggested changes to the policy to improve the efficiency of

the practical application of the policy. The SP had a discussion about whether or not SP members should be prohibited from submitting proposals in response to the RFPs that they help to craft. They recommended delaying such changes because new rules governing SP membership terms may solve the issue, therefore officially disallowing proposals from SP members may not be necessary.

The AP trusts NPRB to develop an unbiased RFP and trusts the process to deal with any conflicts that may arise.

A **motion** was entered to approve the recommendations of the Science Panel.

Maker: Michael Macrander

Second: Lloyd Lowry

Motion passed.

With respect to the language that the SP recommended for cases in which a panel member is instructed how to vote by superiors within his/her organization, the AP discussed the language and accepted the language recommended by the SP.

With respect to the language regarding institutional conflicts for consortia partners for long-term monitoring proposals, the AP recommended clarifying the unit or division definitions for recusal.

One AP member voiced his opinion that the AP should not work under a rigorous COI policy because the nature of the AP is to represent an industry or stakeholder. Staff noted the distinction between conflict of interest and bias. AP members are free to bring their own biases associated with the stakeholder group that they represent to the table. The conflict of interest policy ensures that individuals who could directly benefit from the outcome of a vote cannot inappropriately influence the decisions of NPRB (e.g., an individual has a significant financial interest in the success of a given proposal, etc.).

4. Social Science Working Group

Staff explained that a social science working group was convened to address the manner in which NPRB funds social science and projects associated with the Humans section of the NPRB Science Plan. Based on the recommendation of the working group, the Board commissioned a white paper on the integration of social and natural sciences and how NPRB could better address social science. The revised final report has been received and will be made available on the NPRB website before the 2014 RFP is released. The social science working group co-chairs are drafting a brief (2-page) introduction to the report in layman's terms that will be posted on the website with the paper. Seth Macinko, a social scientist who serves on the SP, will attend the Board meeting to summarize the report. Staff will urge discussion of the Board's desire to address social science and consideration of the staff/contract resources necessary to do so.

The working group suggests that the lead author of the white paper be invited to attend the 2014 AMSS and that she be encouraged to facilitate a workshop that would provide a forum for the discussion of the ideas raised in the report. The report did not provide guidance about the next steps that NPRB should consider to better address social science and perhaps such a workshop could address this issue. The SP was in favor of such a social science workshop at the 2014 AMSS.

The working group proposed language for the 2014 RFP. The main focus was on the application of existing social science data to management issues rather than the collection of new social science data.

The AP entered a **motion** to support the concept of the workshop at the 2014 AMSS described in the action memo, noting specifically that it should be organized under the framework of the mission of the NPRB. The workshop should address the questions: “What is the role of NPRB in funding social science as it addresses the NPRB mission?” “What would be the anticipated outcomes?” “What are the priorities?” A full-day workshop was advocated.

Maker: Steve Reifensstuhl

Second: Gary Freitag

Motion passed.

In the discussing the workshop the AP recommended that the mission of the NPRB be at the center of the focus of the workshop. One AP member noted that it would be nice if the workshop defined the role of a social scientist in the eyes of NPRB (what types of research should social scientists address?)

The AP suggested that the Board discuss how/whether they want to fund the *integration* of social science with the natural sciences. The AP recommended that NPRB clarify the definition of social science in the Science Plan and articulate the differences between local and traditional knowledge (LTK) and social science. The AP questioned whether the NPRB definition of LTK includes the knowledge of fishermen and others, or only members of the Alaska Native community.

Anything NPRB funds should address the mission of the organization (i.e., NPRB should avoid mission creep). NPRB ought to do a better job of doing what we should have been doing all along in terms of hearing from local people who have traditional knowledge to share. However, the AP felt that NPRB should not insist that every project have a social science component. The incorporation of traditional knowledge is different from social science despite the fact that social scientists typically lead the effort to collect LTK data. LTK observations represent valid data points and there is a need to get those data incorporated into fisheries management. Furthermore, NPRB should include “wisdom” that recognizes the knowledge of generations and the spiritual connection to the ecosystem. The AP recommended that based on the outcomes of the workshop that will potentially be held at the 2014 AMSS, NPRB should consider how to better integrate social science into the projects funded under the natural science categories of the RFP as opposed to funding social science projects separately.

The AP recognized that staff does not have social science expertise and SP members with social science backgrounds are overburdened. The AP recommended that the Board consider allocating resources to resolve this issue. The AP recommended hiring a contractor to organize the workshop and, depending upon the outcomes of the workshop, consider allocating additional resources to address any follow-up in terms of a revised Science Plan section on social science. The AP acknowledged that as NPRB moves toward the greater integration of social science, additional staff resources will be necessary, either in the form of contractors or staff. The Executive Director noted that the budget for additional staff is limited, therefore a contractor would be the more feasible option. The AP recognized that there are budgetary considerations that will need to be addressed.

5. Bering Sea Integrated Ecosystem Research Program

Staff provided an update on the BSIERP program, noting that project close-out and review of final reports and metadata are progressing well. An open science meeting and a special session dedicated to BEST-BSIERP will be held in association with the Ocean Sciences meeting in February 2014 and the project awards for some PIs have been extended so that they can apply their travel funds to this meeting.

NPRB was awarded an NSF grant in the amount of \$325K for project close-out and outreach.

Staff expects at least four special issue publications to result from BEST-BSIERP. Additionally “headlines” are being produced as stand-alone stories about the project and a magazine is in production that should be completed in time for the 2013 AMSS. Francis Wiese and Nora Deans will work on the magazine on contract this fall and Abigail Enghirst will serve as the editor.

A Bering Sea photo contest was held this year and the focus of the 2014 calendar will be the Bering Sea Project.

With respect to the modeling component of the project, the objectives were ambitious. The long-term hindcast model has proved difficult to complete but will be achieved. The modeling team will not be able to complete the forecast of pollock recruitment as planned, but they have made significant progress toward that end and NOAA plans to continue some of this work.

NPRB plans to write a lessons learned document regarding the development of integrated ecosystem research programs.

In terms of the next step, it is unclear when NPRB may initiate a BSIERP 2. The Science Advisory Board (SAB) for the program has identified items that are important to continue in the interim such as the Bering Sea moorings. The AP recommended that NPRB should consider writing a document urging NOAA and others to fund the items identified as important.

6. Gulf of Alaska Integrated Ecosystem Research Program

Staff provided an update on the status of the GOAIERP. Panel members were directed to the field blog and the News and Events page on the program’s website. Staff informed the AP of the recent involvement of Andre Punt (SP member with ecosystem modeling expertise) with the modeling component of the program. A contract was pursued in light of the departure of former Science Director, Francis Wiese, whose responsibility it was to oversee the progress of the modeling effort. Dr. Punt will serve as an advisor and ensure that the validation of the models developed by the program is robust.

PIs continue to participate in monthly calls and the Gulf of Alaska Board of Investigators (GABI) continues to meet monthly to discuss program integration.

Manuscripts are already being produced and Deep Sea Research II has agreed to publish the first special issue (expected Jan. 2015). The first GOAIERP paper has already been published.

Sitka Sound Science Center was contracted to handle some of the outreach for the program. They have developed a Facebook page for the project and they are producing four videos. NPRB staff will begin developing a close-out plan for the program soon.

In response to a question from the AP about next steps, staff explained that the final season is wrapping up now and synthetic analyses will continue throughout 2014 and may extend into 2015. It remains unclear when NPRB may dedicate funds to a second iteration of GOAIERP. NOAA is invested in this program and will likely continue some of the measurements/stations sampled in GOAIERP as part of their regular surveys.

7. Long-term Monitoring

Staff explained that thirty-six pre-proposals for long-term monitoring (LTM) were received requesting \$26 million. The SP reviewed the proposals and placed 5 pre-proposals in Tier 1 (requesting \$3.3M), 6 pre-proposals in Tier 2 (\$4.9M) and the remaining 25 pre-proposals in Tier 3.

Staff provided a brief summary of each Tier 1 and Tier 2 proposal and AP members asked for more information about pre-proposals as they were interested. The AP highlighted eight pre-proposals as having a high degree of stakeholder relevance. Individual panel members wrote brief statements to justify their highlighting of pre-proposals and the AP worked as a group to review these statements before forwarding them to the Board as their recommendations.

A **motion** was entered to adopt the pre-proposals the AP has chosen to highlight for stakeholder relevance.

Maker: Gary Freitag

Second: Vera Alexander

Motion passed.

Staff reviewed the draft invitational RFP for full proposals and the AP had no comments on it.

8. Budget Review

Staff explained that the annual audit was successful and a copy of the audit report is available to AP members upon request.

NPRB had ~\$465 K remaining in Grant 3 and much of that money will be devoted to outreach (website redesign, etc.).

Staff provided a detailed summary of the budget and projections for future years based on a variety of possible federal interest rate scenarios. AP members asked if NPRB is earning interest on grant money after it is disbursed from the Department of Commerce. Staff raised the question with NPRB's fiscal agent, the Alaska SeaLife Center, and learned that NPRB cannot earn interest on grant money after it is disbursed from DOC.

9. Previously Funded Projects

Staff reported that the Board provided \$4.2 M in response to the 2013 RFP. Two of the funded proposals were ranked Tier 2 by the SP, all others were ranked Tier 1.

Since 2008 the Board has not funded any proposals ranked tier 3 by the SP and in 2011 the Board set a policy explicitly disallowing the funding of tier 3 proposals.

The AP requested that staff provide a summary of the Board's record of funding proposals highlighted for stakeholder relevance by the AP during future fall meetings.

Wednesday, September 11, 2013

10. 2014 Request for Proposals

Staff provided a brief history of the RFP, including an overview of research themes and inputs for research priorities and noted that 2014 represents the second year in the 2013-14 cycle.

The AP noted that they appreciate the presence of a SP member at their meetings to provide details about RFP development.

A **motion** was entered to include the "other" sub-category in the annual RFP.

Maker: Steve Reifenhuth

Second: Gary Freitag

Motion passed.

Staff noted that relatively few suggestions for RFP topics were submitted to NPRB this year via the website form. Staff plans to discuss means of better advertising the existence of the form for the scientific community.

The AP made several suggestions for minor changes to various categories of the 2014 RFP and staff tracked those recommendations in a separate draft RFP document (Appendix 1).

During their discussion of the Humans section of the RFP, the AP suggested that a sentence be added to clarify what is meant by "social science theory" as it is used in the descriptions under some sub-categories. AP members felt that some sections of the the Humans category were too prescriptive and did not agree with the inclusion of the sub-category that focused on the evaluation of catch-share programs. The AP felt the issue was too politically-charged and noted that the answers NPRB will get will be heavily dependent upon whose perspectives are addressed. Furthermore, the AP felt that this work may duplicate work already being done by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC).

A **motion** was entered to delete sub-category e.i. (evaluation of catch-share programs). If this item is deleted an "other human research" sub-category may be inserted that would allow proposals on this subject (although this is not explicitly part of this motion). There is a lot of work being done by others, this is a politically-charged issue, and there is little to be gained by including this topic. Furthermore, inclusion of this topic would take away from NPRB's ability to

address other items of higher priority. This proposed change does not preclude a good proposal on this subject from coming in under the “other human research” category.

Maker: Lloyd Lowry

Second: Steve Reifentstahl

Motion passed.

The AP recommended that studies evaluating the application of social science to fisheries management should be solicited in broad terms and solicitations should be careful to request objective analysis (e.g., research that includes the perspectives of a variety of stakeholders).

Discussion of the FOCUS section:

Staff explained the rationale that the Science Panel used for proposing a focus on either an Aleutian Islands synthesis or social science in the 2014 RFP. The SP recommended that if social science was the focus section then the Humans section should be zeroed out and \$100K each could be allocated to the technology development and seabirds categories, respectively. The AP concurred with Science Panel’s rationale for not focusing on Chinook salmon or technology development.

A **motion** was entered to support the Aleutian Islands focus section. An Aleutian Islands ecosystem synthesis is critically important to encourage at this time. The AP agrees with the Science Panel narrative in the draft RFP that describes the pressing need for this effort.

The AP notes that there is already a human component in the RFP, and that an investment in social science studies will be more clearly defined as a result of any social science workshop that may occur at AMSS in 2014. Proceeding to fund social science will likely be better done using the outcomes of such a workshop.

Maker: Steve Reifentstahl

Second: Phil Zavadil

Motion passed.

Staff reviewed the RFP boilerplate and the AP agreed with the proposed stakeholder engagement language. Staff clarified that this language will also be added to the invitational RFP for full proposals for long-term monitoring.

Thursday, September 12, 2013

11. Communications and Outreach Report

Staff provided an update on recent communication and outreach activities. Items highlighted included: the results of the 2013 photo contest, the Bering Sea photo contest, ongoing work to organize the NPRB image library, progress on synopses, review of outreach plans for new projects funded in 2013, plans for a GOAIERP outreach plan, and NPRB website redesign.

Copies of several press articles that cited NPRB work were provided.

Staff are looking for volunteers to test the beta version of the new website. Abigail Enghirst is also interested in interviewing any AP members who are willing to spend approximately a half-hour discussing their views of NPRB and suggestions for effective approaches to outreach.

12. Arctic

Staff provided an explanation of the revised timeline for the PAGES program and the hesitancy of partnering agencies. Much of this is due to the different processes or “corporate culture” of the respective agencies as well as federal sequestration and budget uncertainty. A new course of action has been laid out and there is buy-in from the potential partner agencies, however program development will proceed at a slower pace than NPRB staff initially anticipated.

One AP member from the Bering Strait region commented that quite a lot has been going on in the Arctic recently in terms of strategic planning and a slowing of the implementation of the NPRB program was appreciated. The implications of a strategic plan on the indigenous people of the Arctic need to be considered.

The AP raised a question about the role of the U.S. Arctic Research Commission. Staff indicated that the Commission's research priorities document was being incorporated into plans developed by NPRB and potential partner organizations. NPRB staff have made an effort to communicate with USARC about NPRB's progress. Danielle Dickson provided an update to USARC during their recent Board meeting.

Program update on Arctic Synthesis (PacMARS)

Staff provided an update on the PacMARS synthesis funded by Shell and Conoco-Phillips that NPRB is managing. The PacMARS team provided an interim report on time in June but it had significant shortfalls. Most importantly, it did not include overarching priorities for future Arctic marine research as promised. Staff reported that an in-person meeting is planned for late October/early November for the group to come to consensus on overarching priorities for future research. The group will also flesh out plans for the synthetic analysis phase of the program.

One AP member was very surprised about how little treatment there was of the upper trophic levels in the interim report, especially considering the reliance of local people on the upper trophic level animals for subsistence.

The AP asked what the mechanisms are for bringing this synthesis together. Program management will be very important and the PIs appear willing and to work with NPRB staff towards meeting the goals of the project. NPRB will support collaborators' attendance at the in-person meeting this fall.

Arctic Plan – Phase 2

Staff gave a presentation on the progression of Phase 2 of the Arctic Plan that was alluded to earlier. Most discussions have been with federal agencies/partners although local partners have also been approached. Staff is working closely with the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee (IARPC) on a strategy for developing and implementing a coordinated research program. Development of a framing document is the first step, which is planned for completion by the end of the calendar year.

NPRB and IARPC partners are working on developing this document that will define the scope of a coordinated program. Partners will then determine which projects they are already planning to fund that fit the scope of the coordinated program and then solicitations will be written for new research projects that will be needed to fill the gaps. There will be a real need for coordination and collaboration (e.g., annual meetings and monthly PI phone calls; data sharing agreements and data management support; special issue publications, outreach support). Each partner organization should identify a dedicated program manager for this project.

One AP member was encouraged to hear that NPRB is discussing partnership with the MARES program funded by BOEM.

Another AP member noted that in terms of outreach it will be important to engage all coastal communities in the North Slope and Northwest Arctic Boroughs and the communities in the Bering Strait region.

Motion: The Advisory Panel (AP) recognizes the import and immediacy of the need for an integrated ecological research program for the Alaskan Arctic. The AP encourages the board to continue and progress efforts to develop a program within the NPRB and endorses the effort to work with stakeholders, including Federal Agencies, local governments, local communities, private entities, and non-governmental organizations to establish a collaborative mechanism for the design and funding of such an integrated program. The recommended organizational meeting proposed for a 1st quarter timeframe is an appropriate step toward achieving this goal.

Maker: Michael Macrander
Second: Lloyd Lowry
Motion Passed.

Update on Arctic Legislation

Staff provided an update on the legislation introduced by Senator Begich and reviewed its potential implications for NPRB. The AP asked questions regarding the potential success of this bill. Staff noted that Begich seems responsive to concerns about the bill and committed to moving the bill forward.

13. Other Matters

a) Advisory Panel memberships, attendance, and nominations committee

Staff reviewed the terms of AP members.

b) Graduate Student Research Award update

Staff reported the results of the 2013 GSRA competition and noted that the Board concurred with the AP recommendations for awards.

c) Outside funding requests

Staff summarized the outside meeting requests received since the spring meeting and reported the amount of support that NPRB has provided to date.

d) Alaska Marine Science Symposium and associated events

Staff provided information about the 2014 AMSS and noted that AP travel will be supported by NPRB and panel members are strongly encouraged to attend.

e) Goodman Symposium

Staff explained that NPRB has agreed to provide support for a symposium planned in honor of the late Dan Goodman, who was an NPRB science panel member and led the Ecosystem Modeling Committee.

f) Meeting schedule for 2014

The AP decided on the following dates for upcoming meetings:

April 22-25, 2014 (or the following week if the Board pushes their meeting back)

Sep. 9-11, 2014 (the week prior to the tentative dates for the fall 2014 Board meeting)

g) Travel claim information

Staff provided guidance and instruction on filing of travel claim information.

There was a brief discussion of the small grants working group (which is on hold for the time being) and a suggestion from the AP to borrow the framework of the cooperative research with industry RFP category and create a cooperative research with communities category in the 2015/2016 RFP.

A **motion** was entered to adjourn.

Maker: Ed Poulson

Second: Gary Freitag

Motion passed, meeting adjourned at 11:20 am.