



www.nprb.org

NORTH PACIFIC RESEARCH BOARD

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

1007 West 3rd Avenue, Suite 100 | Anchorage, AK 99501 | tel 907.644.6700, fax 907.644.6780

**North Pacific Research Board
Meeting Summary
September 19-22, 2016
Westmark Sitka Hotel, Founders Conference Room
Sitka, Alaska**

The North Pacific Research Board met from September 19 through 22, 2016 in Sitka, Alaska. In attendance were Dan Hull (chair), Tara Riemer (vice chair), Dorothy Childers, John Gauvin, Katrina Hoffman, Jan Jacobs, Mike Miller, Doug Mecum, Gerry Merrigan, Bradley Moran, Caryn Rea, Brad Smith, Charlie Swanton, Capt. Phil Thorne, and Dee Williams.

Seats for representatives from the State of Oregon, the Department of State and the Office of Naval Research were vacant, and David Benton and Paul MacGregor were absent.

The meeting was staffed by Denby Lloyd, Matt Baker, Danielle Dickson, Jo-Ann Mellish, Brendan Smith, and Susan Dixon.

Other attendees for various portions of the board meeting included Tuula Hollmen (Science Panel vice chair), Chris Siddon (Science Panel chair), and Jeff Stephen (Advisory Panel chair). Also, Dr. Betsy Baker participated during the first day of the meeting.

1. Call to Order/Approve Agenda

Chairman Dan Hull called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm, and it was determined that a quorum was present. Staff provided a safety briefing. Dee Williams, new board member from the Department of the Interior (Alaska Region of the US Geological Survey), and Bradley Moran, new board member from the University of Alaska-Fairbanks, College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences were introduced. Also, Betsy Baker, the finalist for the position of NPRB Executive Director, was introduced.

MOTION: Approve agenda, with minor additions as discussed.
Action: Motion passed with no objections.

The following additions to the agenda were included: The Strategic Planning Working Group's report is to be given Tuesday morning, building upon the discussion under Item 2. Budget Review; discussion of membership on the Advisory Panel, membership of working groups, and expiration of board member terms to be listed under Item 10. Other Matters.

The board next moved to approve the meeting summary for the spring 2016 board meeting:

MOTION: Approve summary from May 2016 Board meeting as written (draft of May 25, 2016).
Action: Motion passed with no objections.

Staff then provided a summary of NPRB's travel reimbursement regulations, including the need for submission of zero-balance receipts for lodging.

2. Budget Review

Staff provided information about NPRB's operating budget and projections for declining revenues in future years. The Board had earlier convened a Strategic Planning Working Group which recently began to consider strategies for funding the various programs that NPRB supports; the working group provided an update on Tuesday morning.

From information gathered from contacts in Washington, DC, the Executive Director told the Board that the NPRB grant awards should not be subject to sequestration for the next two years, [which would be Grant 8, Years 1 and 2].

At approximately 2:30 pm, Monday afternoon the Board suspended its open meeting and entered executive session to conduct an in-person interview of Dr. Betsy Baker, the finalist candidate for Executive Director. At approximately 5:00 pm, Dr. Baker was excused, and the Board continued its executive session to consider the final selection of Dr. Baker. When the Board came out of executive session, it was announced that the Board had unanimously selected Betsy Baker to become the new Executive Director, subject to agreeable negotiation of salary and other employment conditions by the Executive Committee.

The Strategic Planning Working Group reported on their initial conversation that took place during a teleconference on September 14. The working group acknowledged that NPRB cannot continue with business as usual, given the projection for declining funds in future years. The working group discussed the idea that funds from outside partners could provide support for administrative costs because NPRB has reached the 15% cap for administrative expenditures on the Environmental Improvement and Restoration Fund (EIRF) grant from Department of Commerce (DOC). The working group also expressed a desire to seek partners for funding a future IERP.

The working group determined that fundraising (i.e., seeking collaborative funding partners) should be a board function; staff are prohibited from fundraising because staff salary is paid by a federal grant. (The Board clarified that staff are permitted to leverage NPRB resources and seek partners for a specific purpose such as developing IERPs.) The working group suggested that the Board should consider the intended focus of the next IERP and begin seeking partners. Another approach might be to solicit partners broadly and focus a future IERP on areas that are of interest to those partners. The working group expressed a preference for strategic planning Option 5 presented by staff during the Spring 2016 meeting, which relies on funding partners to contribute to IERPs and drops Core Program funding every third or fourth year.

During the working group report, a desire to seek partners to contribute to NPRB's administrative costs was noted as desirable, to allow funding an additional staff member to manage a new IERP. The Executive Director clarified that another staff member would not be required for a new IERP if the IERP programs are reasonably staggered.

Asking Congress for a larger percentage (currently at 20%) of the annual interest generated by the EIRF is not a direction the Board feels is prudent to pursue.

The Board acknowledged that they will need to decide if they want to invest in another IERP, whether that should be done at the expense of the Core Program, what the priorities for research direction should be, the desired timeline, and whether the Board will commit to fundraising.

The Board recognized that industry may be interested in contributing to NPRB programs, especially the Graduate Student Research Awards, because contributions could be written off as an educational tax credit.

The Board discussed whether fundraising efforts should focus on support for administrative costs or for research programs. A board member raised concerns about perceptions of conflict of interest if outside funds were used to support staff salaries and the Board agreed that outside funds that support administrative costs might best be applied towards travel for board meetings and items other than staff salary. Regardless of how outside funds are applied, the Board will need to be mindful of maintaining a policy-neutral stance. Some board members felt it would be wise to focus first on support for administrative costs given that NPRB has reached the 15% administrative cap on grant proceeds from the EIRF fund, and the magnitude of funding needed for administrative support is far less than what would be required to fund a science program like an IERP. Other board members argued that efforts should be focused on seeking partners for the science programs and suggested that NPRB should present potential partners with a vision for a given program and seek funding partners whose missions align with that vision.

The Board recognized that staff was successful in developing partnerships for the Arctic IERP, and encouraged similar efforts in developing any future IERP. The Board asked staff to update the strategic planning scenarios to illustrate realistic timing for a future IERP, given the existing timeline of the ongoing Arctic IERP. Once the Board has a vision for a future IERP, staff can focus on seeking partners for the IERP, and board members can focus on fundraising to support administrative costs. Partners are likely to ask if NPRB has minimized operating costs, and board members need to be better informed in order to answer such questions.

Board members shared ideas about potential partners, including large private foundations. Board members volunteered to approach potential partners in their respective sectors.

The Board tasked the Strategic Planning Working Group with the following actions that should be completed by the Spring 2017 meeting:

- Brief the new Executive Director and bring her into the discussion as soon as possible.
- Develop an information packet for potential partners (include information about the scope of research NPRB has funded, the variety of institutions that have received NPRB funds, and perhaps a sampling of GSRA awardees).
- Identify some potential research questions for the focus of a future IERP.

Strategic Planning Working Group members included: Jan Jacobs (presiding member), Tara Riemer, Phil Thorne, John Gauvin, Dee Williams, Diana Stram, and Jeff Stephan; staffing was provided by Denby Lloyd and Jo-Ann Mellish.

3. Graduate Student Research Awards

Staff reviewed the Board's previous funding decisions for the 2016 GSRA competition. The Board had selected three master's-level and three doctoral-level students in May 2016, from an initial pool of 49 applicants.

Announcements for the 2017 GSRA competition are expected to be released in October, 2016 and the online application system will be live in December.

Staff will develop and maintain a database to track the future success of GSRA awardees and will provide the Board an annual update each fall.

The Advisory Panel had suggested that the language in the GSRA application be more clear in highlighting community and stakeholder engagement, and provided specific language for the Board's review (see AP minutes). The Science Panel Chair agreed with the AP's suggestion. A board member questioned the AP emphasis on "innovative" as opposed to "meaningful" outreach because innovative seems to imply a requirement to do something new that has never been done before, and that may be going too far. The Board accepted the AP language with a substitution of "meaningful" for "innovative".

The Board briefly discussed the idea of restricting funding to U.S. citizens and U.S. institutions, recognizing that federal agencies like National Science Foundation restrict awards to U.S. applicants. The NPRB enabling legislation provides for grants to international scientists and institutions, and the Board directed the Executive Director to communicate with Department of Commerce to determine if NPRB would have the option to restrict disbursement of funds to U.S. citizens if it so desired. Several board members voiced concern over restricting eligibility to only U.S. applicants.

4. Core Program

Staff reviewed the Board's funding decisions for the 2016 Core Program awards from the May 2016 board meeting. A total of 22 projects were awarded a total of \$4.2 million dollars. This included 17 Tier 1 proposals, one Tier 2 proposal, and four proposals with the newly-introduced Tier E (Exceptional) rank. The Advisory Panel had recommended 17 of the 22 proposals selected.

The Science Panel vice chair reported that the panel appreciated the use of Tier E in 2016 to rank proposals. The Science Panel expressed disappointment in the Board's decision to fund few proposals in the Human Dimensions category in 2016 despite an abundance of strong proposals.

Staff provided an update on active NPRB projects and the close-out of projects that have come to an end. Currently 59 Core Program projects are active, not including the 22 new projects awarded funds in 2016. A total of 19 projects have been closed out during the past year, and an additional 19 are expected to close shortly.

Staff explained that the Ocean Workspace implemented by Axiom Data Science is now used to upload and review progress reports for new projects and is working well.

A board member asked staff to pull out statistics on how much money has been allocated to research in the Aleutian Islands specifically. Currently the statistics report Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands as one category.

5. 2017 Request for Proposals

Staff presented the draft 2017 request for proposals (RFP) developed by staff and the Science and Advisory Panels. The format of the 2017 RFP has been streamlined compared to those of previous years. Staff and panel members felt the streamlined format makes it easier for proposers to determine where their research interests best fit within the various categories of the RFP.

Staff provided detailed background information about the substantial input received from federal and state agencies, universities, industry, and individuals, all of which was taken into consideration when drafting the 2017 RFP.

Staff explained that three additional groups have expressed interest in co-funding proposals using the same or similar approach as the Oil Spill Recovery Institute (OSRI): NOAA National Center for Coastal Ocean Science, Center for Sponsored Coastal Ocean Research; Pollock Conservation Cooperative Research Center; and Bering Sea Fisheries Research Foundation. The panels suggested that a minimum commitment of \$100,000 be required for new partners.

The Board expressed discomfort with the idea that proposals that are best positioned for co-funding would have a competitive advantage. The Board acknowledged the need to be careful to rely on the Science Panel to ensure that NPRB is only funding strong science regardless of the opportunity for co-funding. The Board recognized that OSRI is purely a funding entity that does not compete for research dollars. Perhaps partners that might also compete for funding themselves should be approached differently.

A hazard of exploring additional funding partnerships is aligning funding cycles and the timing of funding decisions. NPRB would require partners to conform to the NPRB timeline. Ideally partners would receive proposals following Science Panel review, but that may not allow sufficient time for review by partners, so staff may need to share proposals as soon as they are received and follow up with the reviews once they become available.

The Science Panel chair reported that the panel appreciated the streamlined, bulleted format of the 2017 RFP. He felt that it was more user-friendly for the scientific community, and that it would require much less wordsmithing by the panel.

The AP chair reported that the advisory panel also appreciated the streamlined format. The AP suggested changing the term Local Traditional Knowledge to Local and/or Traditional Ecological Knowledge. The AP chair also presented the views of the AP on the proposed focus section.

The Board discussed the streamlined format and noted some concern that the format limited the opportunity to communicate to the scientific community detailed areas of interest. The Board also expressed concern over seeking detailed input from agencies and others and developing an RFP that does not include such specifics. It was noted that the new section in each category on 'areas of particular interest' might accommodate these concerns.

The Board reviewed the draft 2017 RFP and made comments throughout. The Board stressed the importance of communicating the priorities of the Board to the scientific community, and added language to the introduction of the RFP to identify the NPRB mission: "The enabling legislation states: The Board shall seek to avoid duplicating other research activities, and shall place a priority on cooperative research efforts designed to address pressing fishery management or marine ecosystem needs."

The Board discussed two ideas for a Focus Section that were included in the draft 2017 RFP (Arctic coastal lagoons and issues related to anticipated sea level rise). A separate idea was suggested by a board member, and specific language was developed during the meeting by board members and staff (Pacific cod in the Aleutian Islands).

It was noted that President Obama recently established a coastal resilience fund that will address issues such as sea level rise. Therefore, this topic may not warrant an NPRB focus section at this time.

MOTION: Remove the topic of sea level rise from possible Focus Sections in the 2017 RFP.

Action: Motion passed with no objections.

MOTION: Select the topic of Pacific cod in the Aleutian Islands as the sole Focus Section topic in the 2017 RFP.

Action: Motion passed with no objections.

This focus section topic addresses a pressing fishery management issue identified by the NPFMC and NOAA AFSC. Board discussion clarified that the topic could include aspects of cod migration and seasonal movement, habitat use, survey design, trawlability, etc.

The Board then proceeded to discuss the total amount to offer in the 2017 RFP, the distribution of funds among the various funding categories in the RFP, and proposal caps for each category.

MOTION: Reduce the total amount to be offered in the 2017 RFP from \$4.55 million to \$4.25 million.

Action: Motion failed, with a vote of 1-4 (yea-nay) of the Executive Committee and a vote of 1-9 (yea-nay) of the remainder of the board.

The Board has the ability to reduce the amount of funding awarded during the Spring 2017 meeting when funding decisions are made, particularly in light of commitments for co-funding from potential new funding partners. Grant 7 funds need to be obligated before the grant expires, and saving \$300,000 now would not provide NPRB additional funds for a future IERP or address administrative cap constraints.

The Board discussed the fact that less than \$200,000 was allocated to funding Human Dimensions proposals in 2016 despite a proposal cap of \$600,000 and an abundance of proposals ranked Tier 1 by the Science Panel. The Board has worked hard to emphasize Human Dimensions in recent years and the 2016 funding decisions may send a negative message to the social science community. The Board discussed the intent to bear this in mind during review of proposals in this category in 2017 and make an effort to fund strong proposals.

MOTION: Shift \$100,000 from the Fishes and Invertebrates category and add it to the Human Dimensions category, in the 2017 RFP.

Amendment 1: Shift \$100,000 from the Other Prominent Issues category to the Human Dimensions category.

Action on 1: Amendment failed, with a vote of 0-5 (yea-nay) of the Executive Committee and a vote of 2-8 (yea-nay) of the remainder of the board.

Main motion action: Motion passed with no objections.

A Board member noted that some important issues that are captured under Other Prominent Issues would not be adequately addressed by other funding categories, and therefore objected to zeroing out the Other Prominent Issues category. It was clarified that the intent of the amendment was to instead capture the topics listed under the Other Prominent Issues category under the other categories.

The Board discussed category caps and decided not to impose a category cap under the Focus Section but suggested setting a cap of \$500,000 for all other categories. The Board then discussed the idea of striking all funding caps. A board member wondered if higher caps diminish emphasis on leveraging resources such as cooperating with industry. The Board expressed concern that high caps may disadvantage proposers with smaller, focused research questions. The RFP could state that the Board intends to fund more than one proposal in each funding category (with the exception of the Focus Section) or specify this for those categories with large allocations.

MOTION: Approve the revised 2017 RFP with an advertised total funding target of \$4.55 million, remove funding caps on proposals submitted under all categories, and insert language underneath the table that illustrates funding level by category to state that the Board intends to fund more than one proposal under the Fishes and Invertebrates category.

Action: Motion passed with one objection.

MOTION: Add a bullet under items of particular interest in the Fishes and Invertebrates category and under the Human Dimensions category to capture studies of Arctic coastal lagoons.

Action: Motion passed with no objections.

MOTION: Approve the draft 2017 RFP with the revisions noted above.

Action: Motion passed with no objections.

Staff explained the 2017 proposal submission process and highlighted updates to the electronic proposal submission system. The Board recognized and appreciated the progress that staff have made in improving efficiency in proposal submission, review, and administration.

6. Science Plan Update

Staff described recent progress on the Science Plan update, including recommendations from the External Review Committee for significant changes to the structure of NPRB's funding categories, and a proposed timeline for completion. Staff intends to have a final version of the updated Science Plan ready for the Board to approve in Fall 2017 so that it may be referenced in the 2018 Core Program RFP when it is released in October 2017.

The chairs of the Science and Advisory Panels provided the perspectives of the panels on the proposed new categories (see minutes of the Fall SP and AP meetings, respectively).

A board member asked if the panels discussed long-term monitoring or climate change. The panels had not discussed it, and staff noted that the External Review Committee had discussed this and noted that NPRB has a Long-Term Monitoring Program to accommodate long-term observations. A board member asserted that NPRB should allocate resources to studying the impacts of climate change and none of the proposed structures make any progress in that regard.

A board member raised a concern about integrating separate categories like Seabird and Marine Mammals into broader groups like a combined Marine Birds and Mammals category, because some areas are likely to get more funding than others, and separating them ensures funding for each. This board member also expressed concern over integrating approaches such as Cooperative Research with Industry or Community Development into other funding categories and wondered if that would dilute emphasis on those approaches.

A board member expressed concern over setting aside funds for multi-disciplinary research in a separate category and wondered if it could be treated as an approach that could be welcomed under any category. The Science Panel chair suggested an option for proposers to submit stand-alone proposals under separate categories and explain how funding them as a package would strengthen the research. A board member noted that the linked package approach was tried when full proposals were solicited for the Arctic IERP,

and reviewing them was very confusing for the panels and board; therefore, this approach was not desired.

The Board agreed that NPRB should not feel obligated to align funding categories with the North Pacific Fishery Management Council. NPRB's mission is broader than the Council's and NPRB can contribute to addressing Council priorities without changing NPRB's research categories.

A board member agreed with the AP that defining metrics of success for NPRB funding is important and the Board needs to work in that direction. NPRB should determine how to develop metrics that would articulate how NPRB funds contribute to addressing resource management needs identified by groups like NPFMC. Proposals could be tagged by applicants to note that they are relevant to various optional priorities. If metrics are to be developed there should be a good reason for it, and one such reason may be to attract funding partners. A variety of metrics should be developed, not simply those that are relevant to the scientific community, such as the number of peer-reviewed publications.

A board member expressed hesitation about defining Cooperative Research with Industry, Community Involvement, or Technology Development only as approaches and removing separate funding categories for them. This board member argued that these categories were developed to encourage more research along those lines, and sufficient capacity has not been built to justify wrapping them into other categories. The Board agreed that Data Rescue does not warrant a separate category.

Recognizing that the Board needs to provide direction to the External Review Committee, Science Plan Working Group, and staff, the Board tentatively endorsed the following funding categories: Oceanography & Productivity; Fishes & Invertebrates; Marine Birds & Mammals; Human Dimensions; and Ecosystem and Multispecies Interactions. Under each of these categories, proposals would be encouraged that address resource management, cooperative research with industry, community involvement, technology development, and data rescue. The proposal submission system would be designed to accommodate these designations and classifications, and the review process should provide a mechanism for giving added weight to proposals that use these approaches. The existing requirements for those approaches should be retained.

A board member suggested a sub-category for Cooperative Research with Industry or Communities within the other categories.

A board member expressed concern over encouraging technology development and novel applications under other categories. The intent of that category was the development or application of novel technology, and those proposals will be very expensive when competing under other categories. Another board member argued that the higher proposal cap under a category like Oceanography may attract more technology development proposals than the original \$300,000 cap for that category would have allowed. Another board member lent support to the position that it is important to keep Technology Development and Novel Application in a separate category.

A board member suggested inviting multi-disciplinary proposals under a Focus Section before including a standard category for it. This would allow the Board to review proposals to see what investigators propose and how they will provide useful products. The board member was hesitant to welcome mini-IERPs under the Core Program.

The Board consensus was to direct the External Review Committee, Science Plan Working Group, and staff to discuss the original categories versus the categories that would consolidate among them (Oceanography & Productivity; Fishes & Invertebrates; Marine Birds & Mammals; Human Dimensions; and Ecosystem and Multispecies Interactions). Under each of these categories,

proposals would be encouraged that address resource management, cooperative research with industry, community involvement, technology development, and data rescue. Drafts of the Science Plan should allow the Board a choice during their Spring 2017 meeting.

The Board agreed to support an additional in-person meeting of the External Review Committee during the 2017 Alaska Marine Science Symposium. Board members would be welcome to attend.

7. Communications and Outreach

Staff presented a proposed change to the outreach requirements for Core Program projects. Under this change, applicants to the 2017 RFP would have the option of submitting an outreach proposal alongside a science proposal that would allow for up to \$15,000 to create strong outreach products. If a proposer chooses not to submit a separate outreach proposal, he or she would be required to select one of several standardized outreach options that have been defined by the Communications and Outreach Director, and allocate \$2,500-5,000 towards outreach.

The Science and Advisory Panel chairs provided the perspectives of the panels on the proposed change to how outreach is solicited. Both panels viewed it favorably.

The Board appreciated the effort that staff devoted to developing the proposed revision to how outreach is solicited, and endorsed the proposed approach. A board member argued that the proposed increase in funds from \$2,000 to \$2,500-\$5,000 for standard options is insufficient to change the direction of outreach to reach the most important audiences. Outreach by the scientists should be considered an advertising arm of NPRB and should be directed towards the most appropriate audiences.

Staff unveiled the new NPRB website that went live on September 10. The new design consolidates content in a more user-friendly manner, and navigation is more intuitive. Whereas the old website included over 300 pages, the new website communicates the same information in approximately 60 pages. The Board acknowledged that the new website is easier to navigate.

Staff described plans to produce "spotlight" webpages to highlight given projects, tell a story about the research and the scientist, and present their results. This would augment outreach initiatives while complementing the current production of printed synopses.

Staff also described plans to produce a biennial report in 2017 that will be distributed in print and electronic form. A dedicated web presence will be developed that will be dynamic and interactive.

NPRB projects that were highlighted in the media were showcased and links to articles provided.

The Board acknowledged the efforts of the Communications and Outreach Director.

8. Arctic Integrated Ecosystem Research Program

Staff reviewed the Board's previous funding decisions on the Arctic IERP proposals and the scope of the funded program. A kickoff meeting for the funded Principal Investigators (PIs) was held in late June and included representatives of twenty projects listed in Appendix A of the RFP (two were missing due to schedule conflicts). A logistics planning meeting will be held in November 2016 to prepare for the 2017 cruises. A Steering Committee comprising the lead PIs of the five funded projects is already working closely with staff to manage the program.

During the kickoff meeting, some gaps in the funded program were identified, and NPRB received proposals to fill such gaps. The Steering Committee reviewed the proposals and presented a consensus-based recommendation to the Board to provide additional funds for primary production, microzooplankton, and springtime fish sampling. The Board discussed at length all five proposals recommended by the Steering Committee. The Board expressed concern that in funding these proposals the contingency funds available to deal with unforeseen circumstances that may arise in the future are greatly reduced. Any future expenditures will need to be accommodated by the balance of the contingency funds.

MOTION: **Approve all five proposals, totaling \$588,000, to address gaps in the Arctic Program, with the understanding that NPRB's intention is to remain within the original \$1,000,000 limit on contingency funds [balance now equal to \$412,000].**

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

Staff were asked to prepare several items for the Board to review at their Spring 2017 meeting, including a table illustrating the various sources of funds for the Arctic IERP and their allocation, a cruise schedule that illustrates days devoted to science versus transit, and an updated budget for the contingency funds illustrating expenditures and expected expenses. Staff was also asked to prepare some options for the timing of the Arctic IERP synthesis, and were encouraged to explore opportunities for partnerships for funding the synthesis, including modeling. The Board suggested approaching the National Science Foundation, the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis, and others.

Staff was encouraged to prepare a brief (e.g., two-page) brochure describing the Arctic Program that board members could use to share information with interested parties, including the governors of Washington and Oregon.

Staff presented a Communications Plan for the Arctic IERP developed with the help of the Arctic IERP Communications Working Group that the Board established in May. Presentations about the Arctic IERP have already been given to the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission, the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee, and others. Several presentations for other mammal co-management groups are planned for later this fall, as well as a series of hub meetings in Barrow, Kotzebue, and Nome that will include tribally-nominated representatives from surrounding communities. Board members recognized that the efforts of staff and the PIs to communicate with communities and stakeholders about the Arctic IERP thus far is a success story.

The Arctic IERP will be highlighted during the Arctic Science Ministerial that will take place at the White House on September 28, 2016.

9. Gulf of Alaska Integrated Ecosystem Research Program

Staff provided an update on closing out the main projects associated with the Gulf of Alaska IERP, and shared some results that were presented in the final reports. Staff then discussed the progress of the ongoing synthesis phase, as well as briefly described five related projects that had been funded this past summer with funds from Grant 5 that would otherwise lapse from the GOAIERP. The first of four special issues will be published in *Deep-Sea Research II* this fall, and a second volume is currently in production.

10. Other Matters

- a. Executive Director search process:

The Board interviewed the final candidate on Monday afternoon and decided to offer Betsy Baker the position. NPRB will announce the outcome next week after salary negotiations have been completed.

b. NPRB policy review:

The Board discussed standard operating procedures and approved the drafting of an updated version of the Statement of Organization, Practices and Procedures (SOPPs). This was timely given the turnover in Executive Director and several panel and board members.

Staff reviewed the SOPPs and determined the origins of several inconsistencies that the Board had questioned during their Spring 2016 meeting. The SOPPs that appeared on the NPRB website dated back to 2005, and an updated version of the SOPPs that staff maintained on the NPRB server was dated 2008. Staff was directed to bring the SOPPs up to date in a consistent fashion.

With respect to board meeting participation, the SOPPs state that an ex-officio board member or his designee can name an alternate with voting privileges if the Board is notified before the meeting. Only one individual for each board seat may attend the meeting during closed sessions. The same individual will attend the entirety of the meeting. Board members appointed by a governor can name an alternate but, according to the SOPPs, the alternate will not have voting privileges; the Board affirmed that this policy will stand. Board members or their alternates will not be allowed to attend closed sessions of the Science or Advisory Panel.

c. Strategic planning:

The NPRB Strategic Planning Working Group had an initial conversation on September 14, 2016, and reported on their plans to proceed in the coming year. (See notes above under Item 2. Budget Review).

d. Panel membership:

Laura Morse was appointed last spring to the AP as a representative of the oil & gas industry but recently separated from Shell and is no longer working for the industry. She was the only nominee for that seat and is interested in serving out her three-year term. The Board agreed to allow her to retain her seat.

Ann Vanderhoeven resigned her seat on the AP before attending her first meeting because she has taken a new job and moved out of state. Her Bering Sea seat should be advertised in the next solicitation for panel members.

e. Working group membership:

Staff recommended that the following working groups disband: Arctic; Graduate Student Research Awards; Small Grants; Social Science; and the Executive Director review and selection committee. The Board concurred.

Membership of remaining working groups was discussed, and volunteers solicited for seats vacated by former board members:

- Science Plan Working Group - Mike Castellini left the board and Gerry Merrigan is interested in stepping down if another board member volunteers.
- Strategic Planning - Aimee Devaris left the board and Dee Williams volunteered to replace her; Dave Witherell left the SP and Dan Hull will invite Diana Stram to replace him on the working group.

- Arctic IERP Communications - there are currently no vacancies on this working group.

Staff was asked to provide an updated list of working group memberships at the Spring 2017 meeting.

f. Panel and Board membership:

Several board members' terms expire just prior to the Spring 2017 Board meeting. NPRB staff will remind the governors' offices of Alaska, Washington (and Oregon) of the correct process to submit nominations to the Secretary of Commerce. This process should be initiated as soon as possible.

Seven AP members' terms expire next spring and one seat remains vacant. Many of them are not eligible for reappointment. Four SP members' terms expire next spring and none of them are eligible for reappointment. The SP has expressed the desire to seek an economist. The due date for panel nominations will be the end of February 2017; solicitation of nominations will begin in December 2016 and will be advertised during AMSS.

g. Meeting schedule for 2017:

The Spring 2017 Board meeting will be held May 1-5, 2017 in Anchorage. The Fall 2017 meeting will be held September 18-22, 2017 in Cordova.

The 2018 meetings will be April 30 – May 4 and September 17-21. The Board will need to determine a location for the Fall 2018 meeting, hopefully during the Spring 2017 meeting in order to allow for suitable planning.

h. Panel and Board reception at 2017 Alaska Marine Science Symposium:

Staff was asked to organize a reception for NPRB board and panel members and staff during AMSS 2017.

A motion to adjourn was introduced at 2:00 PM on September 22, and it passed without objection.