



SUMMARY
North Pacific Research Board – Fall Science Panel Meeting
August 21-22, 2018
Approved as of March 2019

The Science Panel met August 21-22, 2018, at the North Pacific Research Board offices in Anchorage, AK. The meeting was attended by panel members: Milo Adkison, Courtney Carothers, Melissa Haltuch, Brad Harris, David Hill, Tuula Hollmen, Lloyd Lowry, Phil Mundy, Josep Planas, Chris Siddon (Chair), Leandra Sousa, Suzann Speckman, Diana Stram and Tom Weingartner. Panel members Carin Ashjian, Colleen Duncan, Matt Reimer and Polly Wheeler were absent. Courtney Carothers was absent on Wednesday. Attending staff: Matt Baker, Crystal Benson-Carlough, Danielle Dickson, Jo-Ann Mellish, and Brendan Smith. Betsy Baker joined the staff on Wednesday.

1. Call to Order/Approve Agenda (Tuesday)

After welcomes and introductions, the Science Panel (SP) Chair introduced the agenda for the current meeting and the minutes for the prior meeting were approved. New member Josep Planas was introduced. A safety briefing and travel claim procedures were provided.

The order of the agenda was modified to move the Core program to the first day. Items 2 (LTM no time required), 3b (ASGARD cruise), 5 (Budget Overview) and 6 (Strategic Planning) were shifted to Wednesday.

MOTION: Approve the agenda as modified above.

Action: Motion passed with no objections.

MOTION: Approve spring meeting summary.

Action: Motion passed with no objections.

2. Long-term monitoring program awards (information only, materials on electronic agenda)

Staff notified the Panel that in spring 2018 the Board renewed funding for the existing three LTM Program projects for another five-year term as the SP recommended.

3. Arctic Integrated Ecosystem Research Program (Tuesday)

The Arctic IERP program manager provided a summary of the 2018 research activities, highlighting new additions to the sampling design and new collaborations. The full cruise report was made available as part of the memo materials. The ASGARD cruise update provided by the Communications and Outreach Director was moved to Wednesday after lunch.

4. Gulf of Alaska Integrated Ecosystem Research Program (Tuesday)

The GOAIERP program manager provided a program update. The Gulf of Alaska synthesis project officially ended July 31, 2018, and their report is due at the end of September. The team has been asked to accelerate their timeline to allow staff to present the report to the Board at the fall meeting. Highlights of the anticipated report were presented.

Staff described recent outreach activities that the PIs have engaged in to share the results of the synthesis, including presentations in Cordova, Homer, Seward, Port Graham, and Nanwalek.

5. Budget Overview (information only, materials on electronic agenda)

6. Strategic Planning (Wednesday)

The Executive Director provided an overview of NPRB budget status and strategic planning. The Strategic Planning Working Group (SPWG) has met several times since 2016 due to projected funding limitations. We are anticipating roughly \$4.5M to fund both the Core and IERP programs annually. The Board reached a decision in May 2018 to set aside \$1M for the Arctic synthesis but to wait on any additional movement on new IERP development to follow the Arctic IERP. A workshop may be scheduled for January 2020 to solicit ideas from the scientific community. Rolling submissions is one way that the Board is hoping to address the funding situation and improve the success rate of submitted proposals. The SPWG is recommending the Board participate in a broader strategic planning exercise outside of the regular meeting cycle. The Executive Director requested that any SP member with experience with a strategic planning group share their perspective.

7. Science Plan Update (Tuesday)

The Science Director presented the last update on the science plan before completion. The timeline leading up to the completion of the plan was reviewed. The plan will be posted online to become more of a living document than a static reference. Major future updates will likely take place on a 10-year rotation instead of every five years.

8. Graduate Student Research Awards (Tuesday, information only, materials on electronic agenda)

9. Core Program (Tuesday & Wednesday)

The Core program manager provided a summary of the spring 2018 funding decisions and a review of the draft 2019 RFP work period process. The Science Panel subgroups edited the items of particular interest under each of the four major categories, reviewed the narrative for the four approaches, interdisciplinary studies and a proposed focus section. It was suggested that LTK should be considered as an approach for future RFP considerations. The proposed focus section was well received and supported by the panel. The draft RFP will move forward for review by the Advisory Panel and Board. A brief review of the upcoming rolling submissions process was provided.

Tasking: The SP would like to spend 30min in breakout groups at each meeting to develop focus sections, with historical focus section information to be provided by Staff as reference. Focus sections could be included in the new RFP or banked for future use.

10. Research on research (Wednesday)

The Science Director informed the SP that NPRB staff will be welcoming a new Alaska Sea Grant Fellow, Marguerite Tibbles (University of Alaska Fairbanks). Marguerite will be performing a retrospective review of NPRB-supported research over the next year. The Panel provided suggestions on additional metrics and management groups that could be included in the review. The panel supported the process as a necessary and welcomed evaluation of NPRB's research portfolio.

11. Communications and Outreach (Wednesday)

The Communications and Outreach director provided details on the evaluation process for the outreach proposals at the end of the Tuesday meeting in preparation for Wednesday. Each Panelist was asked to champion one of the 13 proposals and to provide a 2-3 sentence evaluation to present to the full panel the following day. The restriction of applicants to only those who were successful in obtaining Core proposals decreased the number of proposals and increasing the success rate of outreach funding. The Outreach RFP timing is also now more accommodating for proposers and helps to better distribute the workload on the Panel and Board. The COD review replaces the equivalent of Core program peer reviews. The Executive Director and Science Director reviewed the COD evaluations.

The evolution of outreach efforts into a separate program was provided as historical reference before the evaluation discussions.

The COD presented the summary provided by the applicant, the COD evaluation and the SP comments. It was suggested that there would be no discussion for proposals that do not carry a COD or SP flag for efficiency and to mirror similar practices with other proposal review (e.g., not discuss Tier 3s). Eight proposals were flagged by the SP (1778, 1779, 1781, 1784, 1785, 1786, 1787).

Tasking: The SP would like early proposal assignments and have access to the COD review but not the flags. The flags should be revealed immediately prior to the SP discussion (e.g., after the SP reviews have been completed).

It was asked if there was a conflict or vulnerability where there were Board members involved and the COD provided direct assessments. The SP in general appreciated the insight of his evaluation and do not necessarily feel that they need to agree with his assessment. There was a distinction made between the Core review process because peer reviewers are external and SP members are not named when the reviews go to the Board level. There was also discussion on whether the SP feels comfortable making evaluations on outreach. It was clarified that all proposals would be presented to the AP and not just the flagged selections. For future RFPs, if you propose work in the school system, it may be necessary to provide evidence of the collaborative plan. The term assessment goals may also be changed. Clarification was requested on whether the text provided by the SP was to be forwarded to the proposer, and it was related that the RFP did specifically state that the reviews would be returned. It was also suggested that the assignments for future proposals could be linked to those SP members that had also reviewed the science project proposals.

Outreach proposals will be accepted after each funding decision by the Board for a similar period of time before closing. However, all proposals will be reviewed at one meeting (fall) rather than at both meetings.

There will also be efforts to foster relationships with outreach professionals and PIs through a workshop at AMSS.

The Social Media plan that redesigns the current passive approach to an active engagement was presented with a request for SP endorsement. There was unanimous support for the plan, with some concern expressed that there would be additional drain on COD time.

12. Partnerships in the Core Program

The spring AP meeting raised an idea for partnerships that would be a larger consortium of pooled funding that would fund NPRB research in general without any expectation from the partner to influence proposals. This would allow some organizations to participate in both the pooled funding and the RFP in any given year. It could also fund some of the administrative costs of the organization to offset the efforts to manage the additional funds. It was asked if specific organizations could identify specific categories that their funds would be applied to, as they may be more likely to contribute if they had that ability. It limits the conflict of interest but allows for some direction of funds. What would be the advantage to the consortium partners if they are supplying funding but have no influence on the direction of the funds? Feedback from specific groups may be more beneficial. NPRB could be a research set-aside repository with industry-provided funding, as we are already set up with an RFP process. There is wide-spread limited funding capacity for most organizations. It was questioned if the fishing industry could join efforts to input into a consortium similar to the collaborations for oil leases. The focus section could be used as a vehicle to attract partners with a specific topic of interest.

13. Other Matters

The Executive Committee filled the Bering Sea region seat on the Advisory Panel with Harley Sundown.

The Executive Director provided an update on the operations and governance evaluation, with the full outcome as yet uncertain but that the MOU with the fiscal agent, Alaska SeaLife Center, will be renegotiated.

There have been no additional requests for funds to support outside meetings and the panel were reminded that there are funds available.

Upcoming meeting dates: March 26-29th, Seattle WA and August 20-21, Anchorage AK.

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