



# 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."*

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## MEETING NOTES

### North Pacific Research Board– 2018 Fall Meeting

September 18-19, 2018

NPRB Board Room | Anchorage, Alaska

The North Pacific Research Board met from September 18 through September 19, 2018 in Anchorage, Alaska. In attendance were Dan Hull (Chair), Tara Riemer (Vice Chair), CDR Patrick Barelli, Forrest Bowers, Bill Britt, Dorothy Childers, John Gauvin, Becca Gisclair, Heather Mann, Doug Mecum, Gerry Merrigan, Mike Miller, Brad Moran (joined Wednesday morning), Matt Robinson, Cheryl Rosa (alternate for Dave Benton), and Dee Williams. Absent: Katrina Hoffman, Brad Smith.

The meeting was staffed by Betsy Baker, Matt Baker, Jo-Ann Mellish, Danielle Dickson, Brendan Smith, and Crystal Benson-Carlough, and NPRB Sea Grant fellow 2018-2019 Marguerite Tibbles.

Panel member attendees for parts of the board meeting were Chris Siddon (Science Panel Chair) attended 9/18 only. Ruth Christiansen (Advisory Panel Chair) on 9/18 by phone for item 1 only; no AP members attended in person.

Guest: Dave Witherell (NPFMC)

## Tuesday, September 18, 2018

### 1. Call to Order/Approve Agenda

The Chair called the meeting to order at 8:34 am. After introductions, a safety briefing, and comments on the agenda, two motions were entered:

**MOTION:** Approve the agenda.

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

**MOTION:** Approve the minutes of the Spring 2018 Board meeting

**Action:** Passed with no objection.

The Science Panel Chair provided a summary of the panel's Fall 2018 meeting. He emphasized that compiling the new bulleted Core RFP and having an applied work period during the meeting provide a much more productive and engaging approach to this tasking than in prior years. The SP suggested that ideas for the Focus section might be solicited earlier in the annual meeting cycle, to have a list of potential ideas available when the RFP is finalized.

### **1. Call to Order/Approve Agenda, continued**

The Advisory Panel Chair summarized by phone the Fall 2018 AP meeting: The AP wishes to continue its current Core Program proposal review process for engagement strategy but is interested in enhancing its input to the Board to better draw on the panel's range and depth of expertise. The AP would continue flagging proposals with the best engagement strategies and proposes also using regional groups to identify exceptional proposals that deserve additional recognition for reasons beyond engagement that are of special importance to the AP as a whole. Any changes to the AP's process would be iterative. The Science Panel chair pointed out that having the SP discuss Tier E nominations collectively reduces individual Science Panel reviewer bias. The Board chair observed that the AP summaries often highlight stakeholder relevance beyond the engagement strategy and suggested that the extra designation might help the Board differentiate between proposals on similar topics in a given category to have the AP identify which one the AP recommends over the other. Board members were encouraged to provide staff with input for adjustments to the AP review process prior to the next AP meeting. The Board passed a motion expressing its support for this general approach to AP review of Core Program proposals the following day, under agenda item 9, Core Program RFP Decisions (see pages 3-7 below).

### **2. Long-term Monitoring Program Awards**

Staff communicated appreciation from each of the three LTM PIs for renewed funding of projects.

### **3. Arctic Integrated Ecosystem Research Program (IERP)**

Staff reported steady progress for the Arctic IERP and invited Board members to the first day of the 2019 PI meeting on March 4 in Anchorage. Staff are seeking funding partners for the synthesis phase of the Arctic IERP. Staff described 2018 field activities and provided the 2018 ASGARD cruise report that included preliminary results. Staff highlighted new additions to field sampling efforts and new collaborations. Responding to a Board inquiry about interactions with subsistence communities, staff said no negative interactions were reported this field season and that staff and PIs continue to share information with stakeholders at every opportunity. The Arctic IERP Senior Program Manager and the Lead PI for the Arctic IES project will present to the North Slope Borough Fish & Game Management Committee on September 25. Information will also be shared at upcoming meetings of the Arctic Waterways Safety Committee and Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission, and staff continue to engage with the Indigenous People's Council on Marine Mammals and other Alaska Native organizations.

### **4. Gulf of Alaska Integrated Ecosystem Research Program**

Staff reported that the GOA IERP synthesis project ended July 31, with the final report expected by September 30. Staff highlighted synthesis products, including many that provide information to support fisheries management, e.g. enhancement of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) Gulf of Alaska Ecosystem Considerations chapter based on the synthesis group's recommendation to split management of the Gulf into eastern and western areas; the incorporation of full life cycle essential fish habitat (EFH) models and maps for the five focal species into the most recent EFH update (summary report completed July 2017); and a major synthesis of capelin spatial dynamics in the Gulf of Alaska, including estimates of spawning habitat distribution. Staff described PI outreach activities in summer 2018 to share the results of the synthesis with a broad range of audiences.

### **5. Budget Overview**

The Executive Director (ED) recapped how NPRB applies for and allocates its NOAA grant funding derived from the Environmental Improvement and Restoration Fund (EIRF) and explained the process

## **5. Budget Overview, continued**

for Secretary of Commerce review of the Board's recommendations for science funding. At its spring 2019 meeting the Board will review the budget portion of the next grant application, so the ED provided a sample one-year operating budget as an example. Jo-Ann Mellish has been promoted to Senior Program Manager/Chief Grants and Planning Officer and was recognized for her assistance in the grants and budgeting process.

**CORRECTION to Attachment 5.2:** Future Annual RFPs for 2020-2025 should be \$4.0M, not \$4.5M, which will reduce the deficits shown for "cumulative unobligated".

**Staff Task:** Staff will report to the Board on feedback received from NOAA during the BSIERP grants review process.

## **6. Strategic Planning**

The Board Chair and ED summarized the August 2018 Strategic Planning Working Group (SPWG). They highlighted the Board's need to specify the WG's mandate. The Board discussed the WG recommendation that the Board engage in formal strategic planning. The Chair invited Board members to identify the purpose and need for a strategic planning exercise (e.g., should the Board discuss potential major changes to operations or articulate justification for business as usual).

Two WG members recapped positive experiences with focused formal strategic planning in other organizations. Several other Board members reported positive outcomes from similar exercises: helping identify institutional principles and priorities to guide future lines of effort by the WG and Board. Board members agreed on the need to be very clear about objectives of the exercise. Others encouraged including consideration of the funding climate and needs of the scientific community, suggesting that AP and SP members Advisory Panels might provide input.

## **7. Science Plan Update**

The Science Director presented the revised Science Plan to the Board and the intent to share it publicly in conjunction with releasing the 2019 Core Program RFP in early October 2018. The document is intended as a living document and will be updated as needed.

Staff invited Board members to suggest individuals or organizations that should receive a hard copy, e.g. potential funding partners.

## **8. Graduate Student Research Awards**

Past GSRA awards were summarized for new members but no decisions were required on GSRAs at this meeting.

## **9. Core Program – RFP Decisions<sup>1</sup>**

Staff reviewed the Board's 2018 Core RFP funding decisions that provided \$4.6 M in funding. Roughly 25% of proposals were resubmissions in 2018; four resubmissions were funded.

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<sup>1</sup> After adjourning the business meeting for the day, the Board gathered at the Captain Cook Hotel for an informal discussion on the state of North Pacific Marine Science. Presenters: Chris Siddon, ADF&G, Tuula Holmen, UAF and ASLC; Dave Witherell, NPFMC. Guest: Ephraim Froehlich, Senior Advisor, Fish & Game; Deputy Director, Federal Affairs in the Office of the Governor, Juneau, Alaska.

## Wednesday, September 19, 2018

### 9. Core Program – RFP Decisions, continued

*Research approaches.* The Board reviewed and finalized the 2019 RFP for the Core Program, beginning with a discussion of RFP language on the four research approaches: Community Involvement, Cooperative Research with Industry; Technology Development and Data Rescue.

**Schedule note:** Discussion of the Core RFP – the narrative for approaches, bullet items for issues of particular interest, and the focus section – was extended, requiring the full afternoon on Tuesday (1:00-5:15 pm) and much of Wednesday morning (8:30-10:30am). The rolling submissions criteria discussions required an additional hour on Wednesday.

*Issues of Particular Interest.* The Board discussed the issues of particular interest in the draft RFP by category.

**MOTION:** Delete the bullets under issues of particular interest under the Interdisciplinary Studies category in the 2019 Core Program RFP.

**Action:** Motion passed with no objection and one abstention.

*Focus Section.* Staff introduced a proposed focus section on "New Approaches to Fishery Independent Survey Design and Implementation," reporting strong SP and AP strong support and noting the AP motion of support.

*Funding allocation among categories*

**MOTION:** Allocate \$750 K to the focus section.

**SUBSTITUTE MOTION:**

Allocate funding as follows: Oceanography & Lower Trophic Levels \$450 K; Fishes & Invertebrates \$1.1 M with a \$600 K proposal cap; Marine Birds & Mammals \$850 K; Human Dimensions \$500 K; Interdisciplinary Studies \$500 K; Focus Section \$600K; with a total amount of \$4M available for the 2019 Core Program RFP.

**Action:** The substitute motion passed with no objections.

The Board discussed whether to place a cap on the amount each proposal could request, by category or otherwise.

**MOTION:** Remove the proposal cap entirely in 2019.

**Action:** The motion was withdrawn.

Discussion: While the issue of capping proposal amounts is separate from the rolling submissions process, there is an advantage to working through one year (two funding meetings) with rolling submissions in place and holding all other things equal before removing category caps. It was noted that caps can encourage leveraging of other resources and in-kind support.

## 9. Core Program – RFP Decisions, continued

### *Rolling submissions process decisions*

The Board was reminded of its stated desire for transparency in rolling submissions and the need to decide and publicize (1) whether the Board will hold proposals over to the next funding meeting and, if so, define specific criteria for holding proposals, and (2) if there will be an embargo or waiting period defined for resubmission of proposals that are declined for funding.

Staff noted that the Board has already decided that a given proposal would never be held over for more than one meeting.

**MOTION:**        **The Board will not hold over proposals and there will be no embargo period.**

**Action:**         **The motion was withdrawn.**

Staff noted that proposers will be notified if a proposal is held over and individuals can withdraw proposals at any time.

**MOTION:**        **The Board may choose to hold over a small number of Tier E or Tier 1 proposals for one meeting. The Board will not hold over more proposals than add up to more than \$4M [or total funding available] between those proposals funded and those held in a given year. Tier E, 1 and 2 proposals will have no embargo period, but Tier 3 proposals will have an embargo period of three months.**

**Action:**         **None – the motion did not receive a second.**

Staff pointed out that the FAQs already say that the Board may hold over a few proposals for one cycle (one meeting). Some Board members proposed that the Board should not hold over proposals if their funding would amount to more than the funds available for the year, e.g. if they amounted to greater than \$4M between those proposals funded and those held for the Core 2019 RFP. Other Board members suggested the Board not be overly prescriptive in the first year of rolling submissions.

**MOTION:**        **The FAQs will state that the Board may choose to hold over a small number of proposals for one additional meeting. Board guidelines will state that the Board may choose to hold over a small number of proposals for one additional meeting and additional details will be deliberated with each pool of proposals as necessary. Tier 3 proposals have a three-month resubmission embargo period.\***

**Amendment 1:** **Proposals that are not selected for funding can be resubmitted at any time with the exception of Tier 3 proposals which have a three-month embargo period.**

**Amendment to Amendment 1:**  
**Proposals that are not selected for funding can be resubmitted at any time with the exception of Tier 3 proposals which have a six-month embargo period.**

## 9. Core Program – RFP Decisions, continued

**Action:**            **The amendment to Amendment 1 passed with one objection.**

**Amendment 2:** Delete "small" from the FAQ and Board guidelines in the main motion.

**Action:**            Amendment 2 passed with no objection.

**Action:**            **Main motion passed as amended with no objections.**

\*As amended the final motion reads as follows:

**The FAQs will state that the Board may choose to hold over a ~~small~~ number of proposals for one additional meeting. Board guidelines will state that the Board may choose to hold over a ~~small~~ number of proposals for one additional meeting and additional details will be deliberated with each pool of proposals as necessary. Tier 3 proposals have a six-month resubmission embargo period.**

*AP Review Process for the Core Program.* The Board returned to discussion of the AP's interest in including Core Program input to the Board, as appropriate, on more than engagement strategy. A Board member affirmed the benefit of drawing on broader AP expertise noting that the Board should not be prescriptive on how the information is provided, e.g. whether through only one phase of review combining engagement and other expertise; or two rounds of review (e.g. a star for engagement, and a subsequent review for non-engagement matters). Board members cautioned against elevating AP expectations of greater influence on Board decisions.

The Board supported the following statement:

**To better draw on the expertise of the AP, the Board should consider its input on areas other than the AP's primary focus on the engagement strategy of a Core proposal.**

After all discussion on the Core Program RFP had concluded, the following motion was introduced:

**MOTION:**            **Approve the 2019 Core Program RFP as revised by the Board during the Fall 2018 meeting.**

**Action:** **The motion passed with no objection.**

## 10. Research on Research

Staff explained the intent to work with NPRB's first Alaska Sea Grant fellow to examine how NPRB-funded research has been applied to address management concerns and to develop metrics to track this. Some topics for consideration will include:

- How are NPRB research priorities developed?
- How do these priorities align with addressing ecosystem understanding or management needs?
- How do these priorities align with other institutions?
- How does NPRB funding allocation align with its priorities?
- What are NPRB metrics for determining progress towards addressing those priorities?

The research is expected to include a statistical analysis of the Board's research investments, including what topics the Board has funded and why, where the research has occurred, and how research was

## **10. Research on Research, continued**

conducted. Results are intended to inform strategic planning and provide a useful reference to the research community, state and federal agencies, fisheries and resource extraction industries, coastal and Alaska Native communities, partner institutions and the general public.

The Board discussed the purpose of this project, acknowledging that if NPRB intends to solicit partnerships, this will help identify NPRB's unique expertise and demonstrated success and could inform any strategic planning work the Board undertakes.

Responding to an invitation to comment, a former Science Panel member observed that, based on his review of Core Program projects funded in the Fishes & Invertebrates category over many years, about one-third contributed to addressing fishery management. He suggested that the Core RFP is too broad and does not prioritize, pointing out that NPRB asks the SP to evaluate only the strength of the science and not how the research will advance ecosystem understanding or pressing fishery management concerns. He suggested that the RFP should pose specific scientific questions and the Board should ask the SP to provide a score relevant to how important the research proposed is to addressing the NPRB mission.

A Board member suggested that strong proposals should justify in their introduction why the research is important and Board review should place more emphasis on that information.

**Staff Task:** Staff plans to provide progress reports to the NPRB Executive Committee on the "Research on Research" work in November 2018 and January 2019.

## **11. Communications and Outreach**

Two Board members noted a conflict of interest on a total of three 2018 Outreach proposals.

The Board heard from the C&O Director (COD) before discussing the Outreach proposals submitted for the 2018 Outreach RFP, which they had reviewed as homework before the meeting, and on Tuesday evening. The COD recapped modifications to the Outreach Program Award and proposal process that the Board approved in Fall 2017: revising the timing for the 2018 Outreach RFP to follow Core Program decisions; raising the individual subaward cap to \$20,000; allocating an additional \$50,000 to Outreach thereby increasing the funding availability to \$130,000; consolidating outreach requirements for the 2018 Core RFP; and the review process contained in the 2018 Outreach RFP. All 2018 outreach proposals were reviewed by NPRB staff and Panels as requested by the Board based on several criteria. These criteria include but are not limited to or ordered in priority: innovation, extensiveness, applicability to target audiences, return on investment, long-term impacts, effectiveness, and evaluation metrics.

The Board heard read the title and summaries for each outreach proposal that was flagged for consideration by at least two of the three groups that provided review: Staff, the Science Panel, and the Advisory Panel, and for any other proposals Board members wanted to discuss. The Board then had the opportunity to ask questions about the proposal and the recommendations.

**MOTION:** Fund proposals 1778, 1779, 1781, 1784, 1785, 1786, and 1787.

**Amendment 1: Add proposal 1789.**

## **11. Communications and Outreach, continued**

The Chair ruled that adding a proposal to first determine the suite of proposals to be considered by the Board before making the final selection of outreach awards was in order.

### **Amendment 2: Remove proposal 1781.**

Amendment 2 was considered an amendment to Amendment 1.

### **Action on Amendment 2:**

**Amendment #2 passed with no objection.**

### **Action on main motion:**

**The main motion passed as amended with no objection and reads as follows:  
Fund proposals 1778, 1779, 1784, 1785, 1786, 1787 and 1789.**

The Board discussed the Outreach review process itself. Staff recapped its practice of providing summaries to the full Board of all projects that the Board decides to fund. Suggestions for next year included requiring a clear connection between the Outreach proposal and the Core project it supports, and a protocol for letters of support.

Staff introduced a social media plan, and the Board endorsed proceeding with it. The document will be made publicly available on NPRB's website and will be updated annually. Public availability enables NPRB to be a source for social media communication among different marine science disciplines and organizations.

## **12. Core Partnerships**

Staff reviewed the history of the Board and Core Partnerships Working Group (CPWG) discussions of such partnerships and expanded on the funding consortium approach suggested by the outgoing AP Chair in Spring 2018.

Input from CPWG members included the need to: obtain approval from the Secretary of Commerce; develop talking points to market the consortium approach to potential industry partners; and effectively address any tension between attracting partner funding and not allowing outside groups to influence NPRB funding decisions or process. The Board has made clear that any consortium model must not interfere with existing NPRB review processes. Other Board member observations included: avoiding any perception of undue connections to any particular group; ensuring reliability of partner contributions over an agreed number of years; various partners may have different legal constraints; adding funding for specific categories might result in more funding for economically strong sectors and perhaps NPRB should be seeking funding in areas where funds are not otherwise available. A Board member requested to make even more explicit the fact that in-kind support is considered in proposal decisions – as already stated in the Core RFP.

Board members suggested that the Alaska the educational tax credit, if it does not sunset, could potentially fund graduate student research awards or outreach activities, freeing up funds for NPRB to fund other research. Chris Woodley was suggested as a contact for more information. The CPWG will continue to develop the consortium funding model and the OSRI partnership model in parallel with the ongoing governance work (described under Other Matters, below).

### 13. Other Matters

*Strategic Planning.* As was agreed on day one of the meeting, the Board returned to its strategic planning discussion.

**MOTION:** The Strategic Planning Working Group (SPWG) will continue its work until the Fall 2020 Board meeting at which point the Board will decide whether to extend its charge. The WG is charged with arranging a targeted strategic planning exercise for the full Board by early 2019 and using the results of the exercise to focus the WG's efforts over the next two years. The Core Partnership Working Group will continue as a separate WG for the same period unless the Board decides earlier to merge its work with another group or committee.

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

**Staff Task:** Poll Board members for availability during AMSS and consider alternate timing if necessary, perhaps adding a day to the Spring 2019 meeting.

*SOPPs.* The ED recapped the Board's approval of extensive updates to the NPRB Statement of Operating Practices and Procedures (SOPPs) in 2016, and the need for a yearly "housekeeping" review to reflect subsequent Board decisions. The Board approved the following additional updates to the SOPPs, as recommended by the Executive Committee:

**MOTION:** Add the following language to page 5 after (March 2004): The Executive Director is also delegated authority to award other small non-meeting expenditures to outside organizations using this "outside meetings" category of funds. (May 2017)

Add the following language to page 6 as the third paragraph of Section 4.B. Conduct of Meetings (after the paragraph that begins "A quorum ..."): The regular cycle of biannual spring and fall meetings of the Board shall be conducted as in person meetings that require the attendance of Board members in order to participate. Participation at these meetings by teleconference shall not be permitted. The Board may only meet by teleconference intersessionally outside these regular meetings upon a motion by the Board or by determination of the Executive Committee to hold an emergency meeting as described in paragraph F of this section. Committees and Working Groups established by motion of the Board may meet by teleconference. (September 2018)

Delete the following language from the Table of Contents for the SOPPs, which precedes page 1: Attachment 1 SCIENCE PANEL POLICY AND PROCEDURES (Includes conflict of interest procedures for technical reviewers).

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

### **13. Other Matters, continued**

*Governance.* The ED reported on continued work with the Venable law firm to clarify NPRB's mechanisms for receiving funds, the relationship between NPRB and its fiscal agent, and related matters. The Executive Committee will discuss Venable's assessment of whether to revise the 2001 Memorandum of Understanding between NPRB, NOAA and the Alaska SeaLife Center regarding the North Pacific Marine Research Institute.

*Meeting dates.* Conflicts with proposed dates for the Spring 2019 Board meeting were identified. **\*\*The dates were later corrected to the week of April 29.\*\***

#### *Outside meeting requests.*

The ED reported on outside meeting requests and will clarify whether NPRB can fund certain requested conference travel.

#### *Other business*

The Board offered various suggestions for improving ease of access to and annotation of meeting materials.

**Staff Task:** Consult with NPFMC regarding internal document programs and revise how attachments are presented for next meeting cycle.

The Board and staff thanked Dan Hull for chairing the meeting by special agreement with the NPFMC, and for his years of service since 2014 as the Council representative to NPRB, including his excellence in chairing the Board.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:33 PM.