



**North Pacific Research Board
Meeting Summary
Fall Advisory Panel
September 10-11, 2019**

The Advisory Panel met September 10-11, 2019, at the NPRB offices in Anchorage, Alaska. The meeting was attended by panel members: Reid Brewer, Ruth Christiansen, Dave Gaudet, Nagruk Harcharek, Mitch Kilborn, Brian Lynch, Harley Sundown, Ernie Weiss, Verner Wilson, and Caitlin Yeager. Attending staff: Betsy Baker, Danielle Dickson, Jo-Ann Mellish, Brendan Smith, and Kayla Wagenfehr.

1. Call to Order/Approve Agenda

After welcomes and a safety briefing, the Executive Director introduced proposed changes to the agenda. It was noted that conflict of interests for the Core program had been received from all members prior to the meeting. The Executive Director noted the three-year review of the Conflict of Interest Policy would be discussed later in the meeting. The travel claim process was reviewed by the Program Support Specialist.

MOTION: Approve amended fall meeting agenda to address items 1, 2, and 6, followed by the remaining agenda items in chronological order.

Action: Motion passed with no objections.

MOTION: Approve spring meeting summary.

Action: Motion passed with no objections.

2. Budget Overview

The Executive Director provided a brief update on the current status of the budget. This year's grant was the smallest NPRB has received to date, \$6.8 million compared to a high of \$9.9 million in 2011, and grants through 2025 are expected to remain in this lower range. The ED is in regular contact with the Office of Natural Resources Revenue to discuss investment options and gave a briefing on the meeting with NOAA officials in September to discuss options for augmenting current grant levels.

6. Core Program

The Senior Program Manager provided a review of the submissions to date and the evaluation process, noting that this was the second half of the first year with a rolling submissions RFP. A total of 16 additional proposals received two or more external peer reviews in adequate time to be considered by the Science Panel, which concluded with the following distribution: Tier E (2), Tier 1 (3), Tier 2 (5), Tier 3 (6).

The AP discussed Tier E and Tier 1 proposals before considering other proposals for flagging.

MOTION: Approve the star status for proposals 1876, 1871, and 1871.

Action: Motion passed with no objections.

MOTION: Approve the second star status for proposal 1869.

Action: Motion passed with no objections.

The Panel reviewed and edited the 2020 RFP. The panel self-selected into expertise areas for the 'Issues of Particular Interest' under the Oceanography & Productivity, Fishes & Invertebrates, Marine Birds & Mammals, and Human Dimensions categories.



Staff shared the draft focus sections that were written by the SP at the request of the Board. The Advisory Panel supported all four RFP topics but with the strongest collective support for the cold pool topic.

3. Communications and Outreach

Proposals funded in the spring Core program were given until July 31 to submit for a companion outreach award. Two outreach proposals were received, for a total request of just under \$40,000. For comparison, \$60,000 was awarded in 2017 and \$130,000 in 2018. The review process does not include peer review but, at the Board's request, does include a Staff review. After hearing the COD's and Science Panel's assessments of the two proposals, the panel members reviewed both using the criteria set out in the Outreach RFP.

RECOMMENDATION: The AP recommends neither proposal 1883 nor 1884 for funding.

Rolling submissions has had an impact on Outreach proposal submission rates in 2019. Staff shared ideas for using funds set aside for outreach proposals in the event they are not spent on schedule:

- rolling over funds into 2020 for outreach proposals
- adding to the outreach budget for the Arctic IERP
- increasing efforts in Alaska-based science engagement and outreach training
- Supporting the project to evaluate NPRB's research impacts
- revitalizing the Spotlight program for select Core research projects
- Developing a website upgrade

The AP suggested NPRB consider focusing these funds on active outreach endeavors. Focusing on reaching communities whether through attending conferences or traveling directly to communities.

RECOMMENDATION: The SP recommends the Board use any future non-allocated outreach proposal funds to engage external expertise to facilitate and prioritize Alaskan-related engagement and outreach opportunities. The SP reiterated the importance of outreach, considering it imperative to ensure such funds be used for outreach activities.

The Chair reported back to the panel that he and the AP chair had, at the Board's spring 2019 meeting, conveyed both panels' concern with the Board's earlier decision to fund an outreach proposal that the review bodies had not flagged.

The Engagement Strategy Guide, requested by the AP and still in development, was briefly presented, as was the Strategic Plan 2019-2024 adopted by the Board at its spring 2019 meeting.

4. Arctic IERP

The Senior Program Manager provided an update on the Arctic IERP, explaining that the NOAA survey that is currently underway is the final field data collection opportunity for the program. Several papers have



been submitted for publication in the first special issue and will be published in the journal Deep-Sea Research II later this year.

Staff described recent outreach to potential partners for the Arctic IERP synthesis and suggested some potential directions for the synthesis. Staff discussed the opportunity for the Arctic IERP synthesis to use the data collected by the Arctic IERP field program and other research initiatives (e.g., Distributed Biological Observatory) to inform the development and validation of Arctic ecosystem models. Staff also explained that the Arctic IERP field program has been well-positioned to document unprecedented warming of the waters in the northern Bering and Chukchi Seas and the northward shift of subarctic species, including commercially-important fishes. Potential partner organizations (e.g., NOAA, USARC) have expressed interest in renewed research in the northern Bering Sea. Staff identified the opportunity for the Arctic synthesis to double as the assessment phase for a potential future IERP centered in the northern Bering Sea and invited the SP to comment on this idea.

The Panel expressed strong support for the idea of using the Arctic IERP synthesis as a mechanism to support an assessment phase for a potential future IERP centered in the northern Bering Sea, noting that recent observations in the region are unprecedented, and if there were ever an example of the need for an IERP approach, this is it. Such a study would address both the pressing fishery management needs and the ecosystem information needs aspects of the NPRB mission and would address fishery ecosystem considerations as well as human dimensions. The SP recommended that a future IERP should be centered in the northern Bering Sea and ideally the geographic scope should be large to welcome study in the adjacent southern Bering Sea and Chukchi Sea. The SP recommended including collaboration with Russian scientists and suggested that NPRB engage with USARC to apply political pressure at the State Department level for formal agreements with Russia. The Panel also recommended international collaboration broadly, especially with respect to synthesis, and mentioned that collaborating with the Chinese may draw in Russian collaboration.

MOTION: The Science Panel recommends the use of the synthesis phase of the Arctic IERP as the first phase of a new IERP centered on the northern Bering Sea.

Action: Motion passed with no objections.

5. Graduate Student Research Awards (information only)

Staff reported that the Graduate Student Research Award program is due for a comprehensive review and solicited a volunteer from the AP to serve on a review committee to comprise one member each from the SP, AP, and Board. Dave Gaudet volunteered to serve on behalf of the Advisory Panel.

7. Evaluation of NPRB Research

Staff provided information about work that NPRB has supported to date to evaluate the impacts of NPRB-funded research and shared a draft scope of work for continued investment. The SP noted that NPRB should take care that the evaluation not lose sight of both components – ecosystem information and pressing fishery management needs. It was recommended that NPRB track the development of scientists as a metric of success, building on efforts already underway with GSRA recipients. It was also suggested that an intern with library science background may be particularly skilled in the type of literature and data mining that could be useful to NPRB.



Staff requested that the SP share examples of impact brochures published by other organizations. The SP Chair tasked Panel members with noting NPRB research contributions at meetings like the NPFMC.

8. Strategic Planning

The Executive Director shared the Strategic Plan 2019-2024 adopted by the Board at the spring 2019 meeting. A draft one-year Implementation Plan that will be considered by the Board at the fall 2019 meeting was also presented for discussion, particularly as it related to the activities of the Panel.

The Science Panel Chair, who also serves as the Science Panel representative on the Strategic Planning working group, will provide the working group's requested definition of basic and applied science.

Regarding efforts to better incorporate local, traditional and indigenous knowledge, the Science Panel felt it would benefit from the addition of a member who is an Alaska Native scientist. An extended discussion of other options resulted in many additional fruitful ideas (which staff is ready to provide to the SP chair for the working group's consideration), and in the following recommendation:

SP Recommendation: Use additional or any outreach funding to reach groups through opportunities outside of AMSS such as AFN or a traveling presentation approach to provide an incubator program vetted by the Board pairing SP advisers with non-western science proposers.

There was extended discussion about how this approach would allow staff to remain neutral but for the Panel to engage more proactively in assisting proposals before they are submitted.

9. Governance Update and MOU review

Staff reported that NPRB is working with NOAA lawyers and Venable law firm to revise the NPRB-ASLC-NOAA MOU. The Board will review the revised MOU during either the Fall 2019 or Spring 2020 meeting.

10. Partnerships

The Science Director updated the Panel on the Board's discussion of partnerships and discussed recent developments with respect to potential new partnerships.

The Bering Sea Fisheries Research Foundation remains interested in discussing partnership and staff plan to attend the BSRF board meeting in September 2019. The Pollock Conservation Cooperative Research Center may be interested in an Oil Spill Recovery Institute-type partnership, contributing to a consortium approach, and/or developing a partnership to co-fund an IERP in either the northern Bering Sea or Aleutian Islands.

The Chair suggested that NPRB could host a gathering that coincided with either plan team meetings or included CDQ groups to promote partnerships. Other groups suggested for contact included: sport fishers, Army Corps of Engineers, Sea Grant, and the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute.

It was noted that the tax credit will sunset in a couple of years, however, the corporate tax credit applies to all industries, not just fisheries (e.g. cruise ships, oil and gas), and there is emphasis on supporting initiatives that include Indigenous perspectives.

11. Nominations



The SP considered the Nominations Committee report and identified recusals and disclosures as required under the NPRB Conflict of Interest policy. The SP comments will be provided to the Board for consideration at its Fall 2019 meeting.

12. Other Matters

Staff invited comments on the NPRB Conflict of Interest Policy prior to the meeting and received no input. There were no concerns with the existing policy or implementation.

NPRB has \$7,500 remaining in the outside meeting request budget for the calendar year.

The spring meeting dates were shifted earlier to March 17-19, 2020, in Seattle. The shift was to avoid a conflict with a Council meeting. A three-day meeting was requested to allow for sufficient discussion time in advance of knowing the proposal review load.

Staff informed the Panel that the Board is likely to disband some working groups whose tasks have been accomplished, including the Arctic Program Communications/Outreach Working Group and the Science Plan Working Group.

MOTION: Brad Harris is nominated to be the vice-chair for a one-year term.

Action: Motion passed with no objections.

Panel members thought it was a good idea to stagger the chair and vice-chair nominations.

Motion: Adjourn meeting. 4:02pm.

Action: Motion passed with no objections.