
North Slope Science Initiative Science Technical Advisory Panel Meeting Summary and Minutes

The North Slope Science Initiative Science Technical Advisory Panel (NSSI STAP) met on November 7-8, 2017, at the Robert B. Atwood Building in Anchorage, AK. Other meeting participants included NSSI staff, members of the NSSI Senior Staff Committee (SSC), invited subject matter specialists, and members of the public.

Meeting Objectives

- Review past NSSI products and charges from the NSSI Oversight Group (OG) to STAP.
- Receive background information pertinent to OG charges and other issues under consideration by NSSI.
- Make decisions and/or provide the OG with recommendations relative to charges and other issues under consideration.

Meeting Summary and Outcomes

The following topics were discussed:

- STAP Operating Guidelines and administrative requirements relative to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) and Federal ethics rules.
- Outstanding requests for STAP advice and recommendations from the OG on issues including (1) aircraft disturbance of North Slope subsistence resources and activities; (2) needs for systematic consideration of North Slope indigenous knowledge in decision making for resource management; (3) needs for integrating multiple data sets and activities to support effective long-term monitoring of focal wildlife and habitat conditions relative to North Slope oil and gas development activities; and (4) needs for greater communication and translation of research and monitoring activities and results to North Slope residents.

Key Outcomes

- For each of the four issues identified above, STAP working groups (subcommittees) were created and charged with gathering and synthesizing information to aid the full STAP in preparing advice and recommendations for submission to the OG. Working group chairs were selected and general work plans were developed.

- STAP members voted to adopt new Operating Guidelines and to select a new Chair and Vice Chair.
- Members tentatively scheduled the next STAP meeting to be held in Anchorage during 20-22 March 2018.

Meeting Materials

Following is a list of materials provided to STAP members prior to or during the meeting (to be posted online with meeting minutes):

1. NSSI STAP 7-8 Nov 2017 Meeting Agenda, 5 Nov 2017
2. NSSI STAP FACA Overview, 14 Nov 2017
3. NSSI STAP Operating Guidelines, 8 Nov 2017
4. BLM Aviation Rules and Actions to Reduce Disturbance, 2017
5. Presentation (Angliss) – Overview of NSSI STAP Past, Present, and Future
6. Presentation (Brooks) – BOEM Application of Traditional Knowledge
7. Presentation (Miller) – BLM Actions to Address & Understand Aviation Impacts
8. Presentation (Nawrocki) – Data Harmonization Overview
9. Presentation (Angliss) – Recommendations and Thoughts on 2011 Barrow Workshop
10. Presentation (Hintz) – Ethics and FACA Overview

Minutes, Day One

1. Welcome and Introductions

Mark Miller, NSSI Deputy Director and Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the STAP, opened the meeting at 8:30 a.m., welcomed participants, and initiated a round of introductions. Mark noted that six former STAP members whose appointments expired in April 2017 were invited to participate in the meeting as subject matter specialists, including three in attendance (Robyn Angliss, Bob Meyer, and Jerry McBeath; see Appendix A for full list of meeting participants). Of nine STAP members with current appointments, seven were present (Lorene Lynn, Dave Cairns, Sheyna Wisdom, Jim Hemsath, Linda Brewer, Bob Bolton, and Martin Robards) and two were absent (Robert Suydam and Scott Pegau). Mark reminded meeting participants that during the March 2017 STAP meeting in Fairbanks, Scott Pegau agreed to serve as STAP Chair upon termination of Robyn Angliss' (former STAP Chair) and Bob Meyer's (former STAP Vice Chair) three-year appointments in April 2017. As Scott was unable to attend this meeting in Anchorage, Lorene Lynn volunteered to serve as Acting Chair in his place. Mark reviewed the meeting agenda, and pointed out that selection of a new Chair and Vice Chair was the last business item on the agenda for day two of the meeting.

2. Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) Refresher

Mark introduced the topic by noting the importance of STAP familiarity with FACA requirements for advisory committee activities. Mark reviewed key FACA definitions and policies, referring to a FACA overview document that he had distributed to STAP members, NSSI staff, the SSC, and invited subject matter specialists prior to the meeting (see 11/14/2017

version posted with meeting materials). The discussion focused on open meeting requirements, the role of working groups (subcommittees) in conducting research and preparing materials for consideration by the full STAP, and duties of the DFO and committee Chair. In conjunction with this discussion, meeting participants reviewed the current STAP charter (filing date June 20, 2016), specifically considering the objectives, scope of activities, and duties specified for the STAP. It also was noted that the charter will need to be renewed and filed prior to June 20, 2018 (date on which the current charter will expire) to prevent a lapse in STAP activity due to the lack of a valid current charter, and that it is possible to amend the charter during the renewal process.

Outcomes of Discussion

- STAP and SSC members were invited to consider whether to offer suggestions for amending the STAP charter during its renewal in 2018. Mark asked that suggestions for charter amendments should be provided to him before the end of January 2018 to allow time for consideration.
- During participants' review and discussion of the charter, STAP members noted the importance of keeping STAP's designated scope of activities and duties in mind when deliberating on their advice and recommendations to the OG and when considering potential STAP involvement in particular activities or issues.

3. STAP Operating Guidelines and Roles of the SSC

Mark introduced the topic by saying that advisory committees are not required to have operating guidelines (bylaws), but that such guidelines can facilitate smooth and effective conduct of advisory committee meetings and other activities. In advance of the meeting, a document with draft operating guidelines was distributed to the STAP, SSC, invited subject matter specialists, and NSSI staff, and this document was used as the basis of the discussion. A final version of the document is posted online with other meeting materials, and also is included in the minutes as Appendix B.

The discussion focused primarily on sections of the guidelines pertaining to membership, officers, and meetings. There was considerable discussion of language in the draft section entitled "Membership Criteria" that specified "To be selected, members must possess a minimum of five (5) years of experience in the Arctic in their field of expertise." Robyn noted that the requirement for five years (or any specific extent) of experience may exclude good candidates who lack that specific extent of experience, but that otherwise would be good STAP members because of other relevant expertise and experience. There was general agreement among the participants on this point. Mark noted that the language and criterion were inherited from the nomination form that was used during past nomination periods, and that the form being used during the current nomination period (open through 11/24/2017) was modified slightly to avoid excluding nominees / applicants who are holders of traditional and/or local knowledge. (This modification, which changed "...five (5) years of work experience..." to read "five (5) years of experience," was made in response to review comments received from a staffer in BLM's Office of Regulatory Affairs in Washington.)

The decision about whether to adopt or further revise the Operating Guidelines was deferred to allow members more time to review and consider the document, but this discussion of membership criteria led to a change in the final document that was adopted on day two of the meeting. The section previously entitled “Membership Criteria” was renamed to read “Expertise,” and the language specifying the minimum requirement of five years of experience in the Arctic was omitted (see Appendix B).

Sara Longan noted that, for purposes of transparency, there is a need to ensure that stakeholders understand the process that is used to review, rank, and recommend applicants for STAP appointments. Mark responded that the process is determined in part by internal BLM and Department of Interior (DOI) policies regarding federal advisory committee management. Other discussants noted that in the past, existing STAP members have not reviewed applications but have offered suggestions regarding the type(s) of expertise needed on the committee, and that the OG has played a role in reviewing or approving applicants that are recommended for appointments.

Following the discussion of the operating guidelines, Mark led a brief discussion of the roles of SSC members as senior subject matter experts assigned by their respective agencies to participate in STAP meetings and other NSSI activities.

As NSSI contributors, SSC members serve to:

1. Provide subject matter expertise and substantive input to NSSI activities including STAP discussions and deliberations;
2. Contribute to STAP working groups as working group members;
3. Individually advise their respective OG members regarding issues and information needs that NSSI is addressing or should be addressing through STAP or otherwise; and
4. Facilitate communication, mutual understanding, and engagement between NSSI and other staff in SSC members’ respective agencies and work groups.

Outcomes of Discussion

- STAP Operating Guidelines were edited to omit language regarding a minimum requirement for STAP members to have five years of experience in the Arctic.
- STAP Operating Guidelines were edited to reference a separate SSC guidance document to be prepared by Mark before the end of January 2018.
- Mark will provide STAP and SSC members with more information that describes BLM policy and procedures for recommending and vetting nominees for STAP appointment, with intent to ensure that the selection process is understood by NSSI stakeholders.
- Sara and Mark will engage SSC members in further discussion about how best to perform their role as advisor to their agencies’ respective OG member.

4. Overview of Recent Past, Current, and Potential Future Activities of NSSI STAP & SSC

Robyn introduced discussion of this topic with a presentation that provided an overview of three major NSSI efforts that resulted in research recommendations. (See presentation posted with meeting materials.) These efforts included the Emerging Issues Summaries (2009-2012, updated in 2014; see [NSSI Emerging Issues](#), also see [Streever et al. 2011 InfoNorth](#)), the 2011 Barrow Workshop (see [NSSI Barrow Workshop Report](#)), and the Scenarios Development Project (2014-2016, see [NSSI Scenarios Final Reports & Data](#)). She identified differences between the efforts, highlighted overlaps among their resulting recommendations, and described STAP / SSC efforts to identify progress towards meeting recommendations and to prioritize recommendations of all efforts. In preparation for the OG strategic planning retreat in October 2016, the OG requested that the list of the prioritized recommendations be further distilled to be focused on the results of the Scenarios Development Project. Robyn presented this distilled list to the OG, and of the 38 highest priority recommendations from the Scenarios Development Project, the OG selected three recommendations as the new focus of the STAP / SSC. As of the March 2017 OG meeting, the short list of priorities from the OGs strategic planning meeting resulted in three charges being issued to the STAP / SSC (items 1-3 below; items 1 and 2 were initially combined, but were separated by the OG at the March 2017 meeting). A fourth charge related to aviation impacts on subsistence resources and activities was added on the basis of discussions during the March 2017 STAP and OG meetings, resulting in the current list:

1. Ecosystem-based habitat status and trends monitoring is necessary to understand the relationship between development and habitat quality in order to differentiate from other change agents.
2. Need to monitor species distribution patterns, displacement and demographics relative to human infrastructure.
3. Document TK [traditional knowledge], local knowledge about hunting success, hunting areas, and effects/impacts from climate change and industrial activities (oil/gas, shipping, etc.) on marine mammals.
4. Pursue an improved understanding of the issue of harassment of animals, birds and hunters by low-flying aircraft on the North Slope
 - Identify a subcommittee to take action.
 - Draft agendas for 2 meetings: 1) identify/collect existing guidance & develop new guidance for pilots of small aircraft operating on the North Slope; 2) solicit input from NS residents about the existing (or new) draft guidance.

During considerable discussion, participants noted that further work was necessary to clarify and reframe these charges (particularly the first two) so to ensure that STAP / SSC members understand exactly what they have been tasked with accomplishing. Discussants generally agreed that the most effective approach would be for STAP / SSC members to reframe the charges in a logical manner and submit these to OG for their consideration and endorsement.

Outcomes of Discussion

- STAP / SSC agreed to address and begin reframing the three charges as necessary during working group meetings scheduled to be held during the afternoon of day two.
- Sara noted that outcomes of initial reframing should be ready for consideration by the OG prior to their next meeting, tentatively scheduled for the first quarter of 2018.

5. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) Applications of Indigenous Knowledge / Traditional Knowledge in Alaska

Jeff Brooks, BOEM Sociocultural Specialist, provided the group with a presentation regarding BOEM's approach to apply indigenous knowledge / traditional knowledge (IK/TK) to resource management decision making in Alaska. (See presentation posted with meeting materials.) Jeff was invited by Mark to address the meeting on this topic because of its relevance to one of the STAP's current charges from the OG (charge no. 2 above). The presentation itself was largely based on a recent conference paper (currently in press) co-authored by Jeff and several other staff of BOEM Alaska.

Lunch Break

6. Updates on Recent Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Actions to Address and Understand Aviation Impacts on North Slope Subsistence Resources and Activities

Mark provided the group with a presentation providing an overview of recent BLM actions to address and understand aviation impacts on North Slope subsistence resource and activities, a topic pertinent to one of the STAP's current charges from the OG (charge no. 3 above; see presentation posted with meeting materials). The presentation included information about the document "BLM Aviation Rules and Actions to Reduce Disturbance" prepared and posted online (see [NPR-A Subsistence Advisory Panel](#), also included with meeting materials) by the BLM's Arctic District Office in Fairbanks, which has management responsibility for NPR-A. The presentation also included material obtained from BLM Arctic District Wildlife Biologist Debbie Nigro that provided an overview of aircraft take-off and landing data collected in association with permits issued by BLM for activities involving aircraft landings in NPR-A. Types of permitted activities that involve aircraft use and landings include various types of resource studies and assessments, work related to regulatory compliance, clean-up of winter exploration sites and access routes, and guided recreation and hunting trips. Finally, the presentation provided a brief overview of a "passive acoustic monitoring" (PAM) project conducted in NPR-A by University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) graduate student Taylor Stinchcomb and UAF Assistant Professor Todd Brinkman. This project involved the collection of sound recordings at 20 monitoring sites located in the Colville River drainage in 2016, with the objectives of characterizing aircraft noise (e.g., the loudness, duration, and frequency of occurrence of aircraft noise events attributable to helicopters, propeller-driven aircraft, and jet aircraft) and establishing baseline conditions to support potential future monitoring. This work was conducted in partnership with BLM's Arctic District Office, and some PAM data have been used by BLM to describe the acoustical environment and existing noise conditions in documents prepared for

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance (see [DOI-BLM-AK-F010-2017-0031-
EA](#)).

7. Overview of BLM-Funded Data Harmonization Project

Timm Nawrocki, Alaska Center for Conservation Science (see [ACCS](#)), provided the group with a presentation regarding ACCS's BLM-funded work on the North Slope "data harmonization" project. (See presentation posted with meeting materials.) Timm was invited by Mark to address the meeting on this topic because of its relevance to one of the STAP's current charges from the OG (charge no. 1 above). The following tasks are identified in the scope of work for the project:

1. Characterize current vegetation and soil properties in NPR-A on the basis of data from BLM's Assessment Inventory & Monitoring (AIM) project in NPR-A;
2. Examine management questions posed by BLM in the North Slope Rapid Ecoregional Assessment (see [North Slope REA](#)) through analysis of NPR-A AIM data; and
3. In addressing items 1 and 2, identify minimum indicators necessary for measuring environmental change, data limitations, and future monitoring needs.

In conjunction with these tasks, Timm and ACCS colleagues will compile other pertinent vegetation data sets for the North Slope and integrate these data with AIM data in a common, accessible database (hence the "data harmonization" descriptor). NSSI's Jess Grunblatt, Mark Miller, and BLM Resource Specialist Scott Guyer are engaged with Timm and others at ACCS as members of the project team.

8. Recommendations from the 2011 Barrow Workshop and Potential Follow-Up Actions

Robyn introduced a discussion of recommendations from the 2011 Barrow Workshop and identified potential NSSI follow-up actions, referencing previous requests and acknowledgement of the need for NSSI to re-engage with North Slope communities and residents. (See presentation posted with meeting materials.) As an example, she reminded the group that Gordon Brower (SSC member and Director of North Slope Borough Department of Planning and Community Services) noted several North Slope needs that NSSI might be able to address (excerpted below from the March 2017 STAP Minutes):

- Residents would like to have fewer meetings. Use resources like a community calendar to coordinate meetings with each community.
- Consider AEWK [Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission] concerns about areas that should be protected from human use.
- More coordination among groups doing research: for example there are 10 entities conducting caribou studies and surveys. Are these being coordinated?
- Provide a way for industry or the communities to find studies that have already been done that relate to their projects so that fewer industry studies have to be done.

Sara confirmed that NSSI has been asked to organize another workshop in Utqiagvik. Mark noted that planning had been underway to have a STAP meeting in Utqiagvik in June 2017, possibly in combination with a community meeting to discuss concerns about aviation impacts

on subsistence. This meeting was canceled when activities of DOI advisory committees were suspended temporarily.

Robyn proposed that STAP and SSC members present at the meeting together review tables of detailed recommendations included in the 2011 workshop report, identify actionable items for which there is a clear NSSI role, and prepare a draft list of NSSI action items. There ensued a discussion of the relative roles of NSSI versus those of the STAP as an advisory committee, as well as the question of whether a future Utqiagvik workshop should be framed as follow-up to the 2011 workshop or as a response to current issues and needs such as those expressed by Gordon Brower and others. There was no specific outcome of this discussion before it became necessary to break in preparation for the public comment period scheduled for 3:30 p.m. Further discussion was deferred until after the public comment period.

9. Public Comments

At 3:30 p.m., Lorene asked whether any members of the public on the phone or in the room wanted to offer any public comments to the STAP. The only response was from Denny Lassuy, former NSSI Deputy Director who had joined the meeting as a member of the public. Denny indicated that he was encouraged by the two afternoon presentations (updates on action relative to aviation impacts, and the data harmonization project) and that they may provide useful content for a future workshop. He also highlighted the importance of SSC members as contributors to NSSI activities and as advisors to their respective OG members regarding NSSI matters.

10. Review of Day One and Plans for Day Two

After the public comment period, discussion continued about how best to address the need for NSSI to re-engage with North Slope communities. Wendy Loya noted that all three of the current OG charges to STAP (listed above) logically should include a community engagement component, and that working groups established to address these three topics can consider how best to include community engagement in their work. [Note that establishment of working groups already was on the meeting agenda for the afternoon of day two.] Participants generally agreed that further planning is required prior to scheduling a meeting in Utqiagvik, and that the scope of such a meeting (or meetings) would not necessarily be framed as a response or follow-up to results of the 2011 workshop.

Outcomes of Discussion

- It was agreed that further discussion of NSSI engagement with North Slope communities (including a potential Utqiagvik meeting) would be addressed by working groups established during the afternoon of day two. The following list of prospective working groups was identified:
 1. 2011 Barrow Workshop Follow-Up;
 2. Ecosystem & Focal Species Status and Trends Monitoring;
 3. TK Documentation & Integration in Management Decision Making; and
 4. Aircraft Disturbance of Subsistence Resources & Activities.
- It was agreed that working groups established during day two should begin by:

1. Ensuring that each has a clear and agreed upon charge from STAP, specifying the working group's purpose and objectives.
2. Identifying a Chair of the working group.

The meeting adjourned for the day at 5:00 p.m.

Minutes, Day Two

11. Review of Outcomes from Day One

Lorene reconvened the meeting at 8:30 a.m. Mark followed by reviewing outcomes of day one and the agenda for day two.

12. Annual Ethics Training for STAP Special Government Employees (SGEs)

Kim Hintz (Attorney-Advisor, Departmental Ethics Office, U.S. Department of Interior) joined the meeting by phone at 8:45 a.m. to provide ethics training as required annually for all advisory committee members appointed to serve as Special Government Employees (SGEs). (All nine current STAP members serve as SGEs.) After STAP members and Mark introduced themselves to Kim, she proceeded to provide an overview of Federal ethics rules pertinent to SGEs. (See presentation posted with meeting materials.)

Outcomes of Training

- Mark will consult with the BLM Ethics Officer to determine how best to satisfy the training requirement for STAP members who were not present during the meeting.

13. Overview of North Slope Studies Review Meeting

Sara summarized the context and outcomes of a meeting held in Anchorage on 1 Nov, in which representatives of North Slope oil & gas operators and staff from Federal agencies, the state, and the North Slope Borough met for a preliminary discussion of issues associated with compliance-related studies (primarily) and other research activities conducted on the North Slope. In addition to NSSI staff (Sara, Mark, and Jess), other NSSI-affiliated participants included Lorene, Robyn, Heather Crowley (BOEM / NSSI SSC), Brian Person (NSB / NSSI SSC, by phone), Gordon Brower (NSB / NSSI SSC), Dee Williams (USGS / NSSI OG), Jim Kendall (BOEM / NSSI OG), David Rogers (ADF&G / NSSI OG Chair), Cheryl Rosa (USARC / NSSI OG), and Amy Holman (NOAA / NSSI OG). Meeting notes will be distributed to STAP / SSC when finalized. Below, the background and motivation for the meeting are described in an edited excerpt from the notes:

- Context – There has been a repeated expressed need to address issues as they relate to data sharing, data availability, data centralization, and increased efficiency surrounding North Slope monitoring, studies, and environmental regulatory compliance efforts, etc. These same topics, interests, and data needs have been a prominent priority discussed at past NSSI STAP, SSC, and OG meetings. NSSI participated in an industry outreach

effort back in May 2017, where NSSI was asked to bring key NSSI members, partners, agencies and stakeholders together, and initiate a focused conversation to plan next steps to help address these issues. Specifically, NSSI has been asked to facilitate the conversation in order for agencies, the science community, and industry to initiate a plan and take the necessary steps to identify duplicate efforts, enable coordination of studies with similar goals, and increase consistency and standardization as it relates to the current suite of North Slope studies. NSSI brought the industry outreach request to the July 2017 OG meeting, summarized similar input and interest received from multiple NSSI stakeholders. The OG granted NSSI permission to advance planning efforts to hold meetings and discussions to further explore the topics.

A primary outcome of the meeting was a proposal for NSSI and NSB to discuss options for considering a task force to focus on data sharing needs and opportunities, including the following (excerpted from meeting notes, with minor edits for clarity):

- Data Sharing Agreements: development of standardized data sharing agreements for use by multiple agencies for the purpose of ensuring broader availability and dissemination of data and study results to the public and other partner groups. Potential limitations should be addressed, such as agency confidentiality, sensitive or protected information, sharing costs, data protection, data quality & review, data storage, and handling, managing issues as they relate to industry competitiveness [and data sharing], etc.
- Cost sharing programs (e.g. [provide example]);
- Third party “keeper” and distributor of NS study data;
- Third party science entity to collect, manage, and disseminate data/information;
- An alternative model whereby industry funds government studies and collection of data;
- Joint Industry Program (JIP) examples; and
- Placing greater emphasis on synthesizing data and disseminating outcomes/trends.

Outcomes of the meeting, including the NSSI-NSB task force proposal, were on the agenda for discussion during the OG meeting scheduled for 11:00 a.m.

Following Sara’s summary of the meeting, there was discussion about potential STAP involvement and whether synthesis efforts such as a science symposium might contribute to addressing issues under consideration. Robyn pointed out that the NSB seems to be asking for a “review” of the science and stated that that a programmatic review of studies would have a very different format than a science symposium (others agreed). There was noticeable interest in the science synthesis / symposium topic among some participants. There was acknowledgement that it will be important to be clear about the goals of the “review” before deciding whether a National Research Council-type activity or a science symposium is the best option.

[As a follow-up to this discussion after the meeting, STAP member Martin Robards shared a 2014 [workshop report](#) that recommended organization of a North Slope Science Symposium, held on a recurring basis at 3-5-year intervals, as a means of facilitating communication and sharing of data and information produced by research and monitoring efforts.]

Outcomes of Discussion

- Meeting notes will be circulated to STAP & SSC members once finalized, along with list of studies submitted by industry representatives for discussion during the 1 Nov meeting.
- NSSI staff will keep STAP and SSC informed as this effort continues to develop.

14. Update on NSSI Communications Plan

Lisa Gleason provided an update on the status of the draft NSSI Communications Plan, which was discussed last during the March 2017 STAP meeting. Based on input received during that meeting, Lisa prepared a preliminary draft plan and received feedback from Lorene and Mark during the May-July time period. Much work remains to be done by Lisa and Mark to refine key messages and methods to meet the needs of different NSSI audiences, ranging from North Slope residents to agency staff, decision makers, scientists, and industry representatives.

Outcomes of Discussion

- Lisa will have a follow-up discussion with Leanna Mack, North Slope Borough, regarding communication needs relative to North Slope communities.
- After further work by Lisa, Mark, and other NSSI staff, the next iteration of the draft plan will be distributed to STAP for input on audiences and methods of message delivery.
Target date for distribution to STAP: 1 Mar 2018.

15. Break for NSSI OG Meeting

At 10:45 a.m., there was a break in the meeting to enable a subset of STAP / SSC participants to join the NSSI OG meeting that was to be held in Room 1270 of the Atwood Building from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. In addition to Sara Longan, those who joined the OG meeting included Mark Miller, Lisa Gleason, Jess Grunblatt, Lorene Lynn, Wendy Loya, Matt Whitman, Brian Person, and Robyn Angliss.

Lorene asked remaining STAP (Wisdom, Cairns, Hemsath, Bolton, Brewer, and Robards) and SSC (Heintz and Coon) members to prepare draft charges for the four prospective working groups during the break as a means of facilitating the afternoon working-group session.

Lunch Break

16. Report from NSSI OG Meeting

Sara provided a brief report on key outcomes from the OG meeting that concluded at 1 p.m., listed below.

Outcomes of Discussion

- The OG agreed that NSSI staff should move forward on the studies review topic (see topic no. 13 above for more information), engaging in further discussions with the North Slope Borough and other stakeholders as appropriate.

- The OG asked that STAP provide reframed versions of the priority charges (i.e., the three charges listed under topic no. 4 above) for their reconsideration, to be presented and discussed in the presence of STAP if possible during the next OG meeting.

17. Establishment of STAP Working Groups

During the break, those who were not in the OG meeting accomplished initial framing of assignments for STAP working groups (WGs), including tentative identification of WG chairs, members, charges, and general work plans. After others rejoined the STAP meeting following conclusion of the OG meeting, the full group worked together to further develop the WG concepts and assignments. Six groups were established upon discussion and approval by STAP members present, SSC contributors, and Mark Miller as DFO. Two separate WGs (WG 1 and WG 2 below) were formed to consider follow-up actions relative to the 2011 Barrow Workshop and prospective plans for a future Utqiagvik workshop. Two separate WGs also were formed to address habitat (WG 3) versus species (WG 4) aspects of the OG's charge concerning status and trends monitoring relative to North Slope oil and gas development activities. (It was recognized that these two groups will need to coordinate their efforts.) The remaining two WGs will address the issue of aviation disturbance of subsistence activities (WG 5) and the issue of TK consideration in management decision making (WG 6).

Outcomes of Discussion

- Six STAP WGs were established:

WG 1. 2011 Barrow Workshop Follow-Up

Chair: Sheyna Wisdom

Members: Lorene Lynn, Bob Bolton, Robyn Angliss, Mark Miller

Charge: Evaluate how/if follow up is needed with Utqiagvik to close out any incomplete activities that are not addressed in subsequent studies in 2011 report, and provide recommendation on those activities to full STAP for consideration and potential forwarding of recommendations to OG.

Process: Two teleconferences with full working group, provide a summary report (no analysis, update only) with recommendations to STAP (what recommendations from Barrow report have been completed or not and how we recommend moving forward); full STAP would then vote on whether to forward recommendations to OG.

Timeline: By March 2018 STAP meeting.

WG 2. Future Utqiagvik Workshop

Chair: Brian Person

Members: Linda Brewer, Dave Cairns, Robyn Angliss, Leanna Mack, Jess Grunblatt, Bob Bolton, Scott Pegau, Bob Meyer, Mark Miller; suggested additional members: Taqulik Hepa.

Charge: Plan future Utqiagvik workshop, establishing objectives (desired outcomes), considering timing in relation to community activities, preparing draft agenda, and providing recommendation to full STAP for consideration about whether to forward recommendations to OG.

Process: Hold 2-3 teleconferences to discuss objectives, timing, agenda, and logistics.

Timeline: By March 2018 STAP meeting

Budget: Travel expenses for workshop

WG 3. Ecosystem-Based Habitat Status Monitoring (coordinated with WG 4)

Chair: Jim Hemsath

Members: David Cairns, Lorene Lynn, Wendy Loya, Matt Whitman, Bob Bolton, Cathy Coon, Mark Miller; suggested additional members: Timm Nawrocki (ACCS), Gordon Brower, Kaja Brix / Amy Holman (NOAA), Jason Taylor (NPS), SSC, NEON(?), BOEM and/or industry, possibly others.

Charge: Create an approach for driving collaboration among stakeholders for ecosystem-based habitat status and trends monitoring relative to anthropogenic activities (not from natural variability or climate change, etc.) on North Slope.

Process: Identify stakeholders, existing data sources, existing processes (e.g., [Streever / BP long-term monitoring reports](#), Arctic Council), identify gaps. Prepare a report summarizing recommendations on key agencies, lead agency, and process - for STAP to consider whether to forward recommendations to OG. Working group will hold 6 teleconferences. Hold in-person meeting (leverage other meetings).

Timeline: 18-month project (extends beyond current STAP appointments)

Budget: >\$15k (travel)

WG 4. Focal / Subsistence Species Distribution, Abundance, and Disturbance-Response Monitoring (coordinated with WG 3)

Chair: Robyn Angliss

Members: David Cairns, Wendy Loya, Cathy Coon, Matt Whitman, Ron Heintz, Brian Person, Bob Meyer, Mark Miller; suggested additional members: Lincoln Parrett (ADF&G), Heather Johnson (USGS), Melanie Smith (Audubon), Tim Fullman (The Wilderness Society), Chrissy Pohl (BPX).

Charge: Create an approach (or synthesize / harmonize existing approaches) for focal species distribution & abundance monitoring relative to anthropogenic activities (not from natural variability or climate change, etc.) on North Slope.

Process: Identify stakeholders, existing data sources, existing processes (e.g., [Streever / BP long-term monitoring reports](#), Arctic Council) identify gaps. Prepare a report summarizing recommendations on key agencies, lead agency, and process - for STAP to consider whether to forward recommendations to OG. Working group will hold 6 teleconferences. Hold in-person meeting (leverage other meetings).

Timeline: 18-month project (extends beyond current STAP appointments)

Budget: Contingent on need for in-person meeting.

WG 5. Aircraft Disturbance Working Group

Chair: Robert Suydam (tentative; need to confirm)

Members: Brian Person, Sheyna Wisdom, Martin Robards, Jess Grunblatt, Bob Meyer, Robyn Angliss, Debbie Nigro (BLM Arctic District Office), Mark Miller; suggested additional members: Gordon Brower (NSB), Stacey Fritz (BLM Arctic District Office), Taylor Stinchcomb (former UAF grad student), possible NPS sound specialist, Melanie Smith (Audubon), ADF&G, FAA, helicopter vendors, Thomas Napagiak, possible industry representatives.

Charge: Pursue an improved understanding and suggest new strategies to address local concerns on the issue of harassment of animals, birds, and hunters by low-flying aircraft on the North Slope. Provide report to full STAP for consideration of recommendations to OG.

Process: Identify/collect existing guidance, evaluate efficacy, recommend development of new guidance for pilots of small aircraft and UAS activities operating on the North Slope. Identify coordination processes. Solicit input from North Slope residents about the existing (or new) draft guidelines. Hold 3-5 teleconferences.

Timeline: First teleconference by March 2018 STAP meeting, summary report by fall 2018 STAP meeting.

Budget: No travel anticipated at this time.

WG 6. Document TK specific to subsistence and impacts (climate change & anthropogenic)

Chair: Linda Brewer

Members: Jim Hemsath, Robert Suydam, Mark Miller; suggested additional members: Taqulik Hepa, Carolina Behe (ICC), Jeff Brooks / Campbell BOEM, Stephen Braund, Henry Huntington, Liz Snyder, BLM representative (possibly Stacey Fritz, Arctic District Office).

Charge: Produce a summary report that recommends a process to support the optimization of science studies and operations through the inclusion of TK and local knowledge. Also determine whether scope extends only to marine mammals or beyond.

Process: Inventory effective existing processes for integrating/complementing/assuring inclusions in design of scientific studies on the North Slope. (Determine what exists, what gaps remain, what must happen to fill the gaps.) Provide report to full STAP for consideration of recommendations to OG. Hold 4 teleconferences.

Timeline: 12 months (extends beyond current STAP appointments)

Budget: No travel anticipated at this time.

- WG Chairs will convene WG members, refine the WG charge and work process / plan as needed, and begin work as soon as possible.

- Mark will schedule a monthly conference call among him and all WG Chairs to discuss updates and progress.

18. STAP Administrative Business

Lorene led discussion and resolution of administrative tasks prior to meeting adjournment, including scheduling of next STAP meeting and final revision and adoption of STAP Operating Guidelines. Mark facilitated selection of a new STAP Chair and Vice Chair.

Outcomes of Discussion

- The next STAP meeting was tentatively scheduled for two days during 20-22 March 2018 in Anchorage, in conjunction with the annual project coordination meeting on the day before or following the 2-d STAP meeting.
- STAP Operating Guidelines, with minor revisions to the draft, were adopted by unanimous vote of STAP members present at the meeting. (See Appendix B.)
- Lorene Lynn nominated herself to serve as STAP Chair, and STAP members present at the meeting voted unanimously to approve the nomination.
- Sheyna Wisdom was nominated to serve as STAP Vice-Chair, and STAP members present at the meeting voted unanimously to approve the nomination.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

END

Appendix A – Meeting Participants

(* denotes participation by telephone)

STAP Members

Lorene Lynn, Red Mountain Consulting	<i>Acting Chair</i>
David (Dave) Cairns, Texas A&M University	
Sheyna Wisdom, Fairweather Science	
James (Jim) Hemsath, Alaska Industrial Development & Export Authority	
Linda Brewer, t-3 Strategies	
Robert (Bob) Bolton, University of Alaska Fairbanks	
Martin Robards, Wildlife Conservation Society	

NSSI Staff

Mark Miller, NSSI Deputy Director	<i>Designated Federal Officer</i>
Sara Longan, NSSI Executive Director	
Lisa Gleason, NSSI/BLM Public Affairs	
Jess Grunblatt, NSSI/UAA Data Manager	

Invited Subject Matter Specialists

Robyn Angliss, NOAA Fisheries	<i>Former STAP Chair</i>
Robert (Bob) Meyer	<i>Former STAP Vice Chair</i>
Gerald (Jerry) McBeath, University of Alaska Fairbanks	
Jeffrey Brooks, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	Day one, morning only
Timm Nawrocki, University of Alaska Anchorage	Day one until mid-afternoon
Kim Hintz, Department of Interior*	Day two, morning only

SSC Members

Lois Dalle-Molle, National Park Service*	
Ron Heintz, NOAA Fisheries	
Wendy Loya, Arctic Landscape Conservation Cooperative	
Brian Person, North Slope Bureau	
Sue Rodman, Alaska Department of Fish and Game	Day one only
Cathy Coon, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	
Matthew Whitman, BLM Arctic District Office	
Grant Hilderbrand, USGS Alaska Science Center	Day one only

Members of the Public

Leanna Mack, North Slope Borough	
Julie Lina, Caelus Energy Alaska	Day one, morning only
Melanie Smith, Audubon Alaska	Day one, morning only
Palma Ingles	Day one, morning only
Denny Lassuy	Day one, afternoon only

NORTH SLOPE SCIENCE INITIATIVE SCIENCE TECHNICAL ADVISORY PANEL OPERATING GUIDELINES

Version 1.0, 8 Nov 2017

I. INTRODUCTION

The North Slope Science Initiative Science Technical Advisory Panel (NSSI STAP, or the Panel) is a statutory federal advisory committee established under Section 348(d) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15906) and regulated by the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended (5 U.S.C. Appendix 2). The purpose of the STAP is to advise the NSSI Oversight Group (OG) through the Designated Federal Officer (DFO) on proposed inventory, monitoring, and research functions. This document supplements the STAP Charter by outlining operating guidelines intended to provide for effective conduct of advisory committee meetings and other activities, and to specify the relationship among the advisory committee members, the DFO, and agency staff.

II. MEMBERSHIP

A. Panel Structure

The STAP functions as a Scientific Technical Program Advisory Board¹ with a membership consisting of not more than 15 scientists and technical experts from a diverse range of pertinent professions and disciplines. Members serve as special Government employees (SGEs) who are appointed to perform temporary duties for not more than 130 days during any period of 365 days. “Regular” Government employees (RGEs) who are permanently employed by the federal executive branch also may serve as STAP members. SGEs and RGEs are appointed to the Panel to exercise their own individual best judgment on behalf of the Federal Government and are expected to discuss and deliberate in a manner that is free from conflicts of interest. Federal executive branch ethics provisions apply both to SGEs and RGEs².

B. Expertise

Members possess technical expertise including but not restricted to the following: North Slope traditional (indigenous) and local knowledge, landscape ecology, petroleum engineering, civil engineering, geology, botany, hydrology, limnology, habitat biology, wildlife biology, restoration ecology, biometrics, sociology, cultural anthropology, economics, ornithology, oceanography, fisheries biology, and climatology.

¹ Each federal advisory committee is classified by a functional category that best matches the committee’s purpose. See <http://www.facadatabase.gov/>.

² For more information about the applicability of ethics provisions, see [U.S. Office of Government Ethics, Advisory Committee Member Information](#).

C. Membership Recruitment

The process to recruit replacements for members whose appointments are set to expire should be initiated by the DFO well in advance of the date when appointments expire. This is to ensure that STAP functioning is not adversely impacted by a significant gap between the time when appointments expire and when replacement members are appointed. It may be necessary to initiate the recruitment process up to 275 days in advance of the date when appointments are set to expire.

D. Membership Nomination and Application

Membership nominations and applications (self-nominations) must include the following –

1. A completed nomination form that identifies the nominee's field of technical expertise, describes relevant experience and achievements related to the field of expertise, describes experience working with disparate groups to achieve collaborative solutions, and describes specific knowledge and experience on Alaska's North Slope; and
2. A signed letter of reference from someone knowledgeable of the nominee's technical expertise.

E. Membership Selection and Appointment

Membership selection and appointment will follow policies and procedures established by the Department of Interior (DOI) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for management of federal advisory committees. Members will be selected and appointed to ensure that STAP membership is balanced in terms of scientific and technical expertise pertinent to current and anticipated future needs for advice concerning proposed inventory, monitoring, and research functions. In selecting members, consideration should be given to advisory needs pertinent to biological, physical, and social sciences; indigenous knowledge; and technical aspects of North Slope development activities.

III. OFFICERS

STAP will have a Chair and Vice Chair who are elected annually by current STAP members. Terms are for one year, or until such time as a new election can be held after one year. Both the Chair and the Vice Chair may be re-elected and serve for multiple terms. If the Chair leaves STAP before completion of their term, the Vice Chair will act until a new election can be held for Chair. A new election will be held as soon as possible if the Chair or Vice Chair leaves STAP before completion of their term. STAP members whose appointments are set to expire within one year of the election date will not be eligible for election as Chair unless the Vice Chair's appointment is set to expire on a date after expiration of the Chair's appointment. Exceptions may be allowed when appointments for all current STAP members are set to expire simultaneously within one year of the election date.

In partnership with the DFO, the Chair calls STAP meetings, develops meeting agendas, and plans and manages meetings and other STAP activities. The Chair must certify the accuracy of meeting minutes within 90 calendar days of the meeting to which they relate. With the DFO and NSSI staff, the Chair also participates in strategic planning activities as needed to periodically assess the functioning and effectiveness of STAP.

The Vice Chair assists the Chair with specific tasks as requested, serves as Acting STAP Chair if the elected Chair leaves STAP or is otherwise absent or unable to participate in STAP activities, and participates in strategic planning activities as needed to periodically assess the functioning and effectiveness of STAP.

IV. WORKING GROUPS

Much of the work that STAP undertakes will be conducted by topic-specific working groups (also referred to as subcommittees). Subject to approval by the DFO, working groups may be formed for the purposes of compiling information or conducting research in support of STAP activities. STAP working groups must include at least one STAP member but otherwise may be composed by subject matter experts who are not STAP members, including but not restricted to agency representatives who serve on the NSSI Senior Staff Committee (SSC)³. Working groups must act under the direction of the DFO, must have a Chair elected by working group members, and must report their recommendations to the STAP for consideration and further action. Working groups must not provide advice or work products directly to the OG or the designated DOI Decision Making Official unless all working group meetings are conducted in compliance with FACA regulatory requirements for openness. In partnership with the DFO, the working group Chair will be responsible for coordinating working group activities directly or through delegation to other working group members. Working groups do not require charters, but at the time of formation each group should prepare a statement of purpose and objectives that clearly articulate the working group's charge from STAP. Working groups generally will be dissolved upon completion of their assignment, but STAP may determine a need for the formation of standing working groups to work on recurring topics or tasks.

V. MEETINGS

STAP meetings may be called by the DFO or by the STAP Chair with approval of the DFO. Such meetings may be held in-person, or may be conducted in whole or in part by a teleconference, videoconference, the Internet, or other electronic medium. Whether conducted in-person or by electronic media, all STAP meetings except *preparatory work* and *administrative work*⁴ must meet FACA regulatory requirements for openness (see 41 CFR Part 102-3).

A *quorum* must be present at a meeting for valid transaction of STAP business. For STAP, a quorum is defined as a simple majority of STAP members with current appointments, whether the number of current appointments is 15 or less than 15. Full STAP and working group meetings will operate following an abbreviated set of Robert's Rules of Order (Appendix 1). Motions must pass by a majority vote of current STAP members (i.e., not by a majority of members present at the time of the vote).

Meeting minutes must include⁵:

1. The time, date, and place of the meeting;
2. A list of the persons who were present at the meeting, including STAP members and staff, agency employees, and members of the public who presented oral or written statements;
3. An accurate description of each matter discussed and the resolution, if any, made by the STAP regarding such matter; and

³ See separate SSC guidance document.

⁴ *Preparatory work*. Meetings of two or more advisory committee or subcommittee members convened solely to gather information, conduct research, or analyze relevant issues and facts in preparation for a meeting of the advisory committee, or to draft position papers for deliberation by the advisory committee.

Administrative work. Meetings of two or more advisory committee or subcommittee members convened solely to discuss administrative matters of the advisory committee or to receive administrative information from a Federal officer or agency. (See 41 CFR Part 102-3.160.)

⁵ See 41 CFR Part 102-3.165.

4. Copies of each report or other document received, issued, or approved by the STAP at the meeting.

VI. REPORTING AND RECORDKEEPING

The DFO, with assistance from other agency staff as needed, will be responsible for reporting on STAP activities and for all recordkeeping tasks. Within 30 calendar days of each STAP meeting, documentation of STAP decisions and recommendations must be submitted by the DFO according to agency procedures. Within 90 calendar days of each STAP meeting, minutes must be certified as accurate by the STAP Chair and posted on the NSSI website for public access, although the DFO and Chair will strive to circulate draft minutes for review within 10 days and to post final meeting minutes within 30 calendar days. Records of STAP and STAP working groups will be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 6.2 and other approved agency records management procedures and disposition schedules.

VII. REVISING THE OPERATING GUIDELINES

Operating guidelines can be revised by a majority vote of STAP members. A Revision Log is included as Appendix 2.

Appendix 1 – Robert's Rules of Order (abbreviated for STAP)

After discussion, if a decision point approaches, the meeting Chair shall assist the group in the following steps:

- a.** Introduce a motion (the issue to be decided and action to be taken);
- b.** Determine if a quorum (a simple majority of the current STAP membership) is present to vote;
- c.** Move to approve, dismiss, or postpone the motion (any voting member may do this);
- d.** Second the motion (any voting member may do this to bring it to a vote);
- e.** Vote (Yes/No/Abstain) (all voting members);
- f.** Determine the outcome of the vote – e.g., The yesses/nos/abstentions ‘have it,’ and
- g.** Document the vote outcome and move forward with the meeting.

Appendix 2 – Revision History Log

Prev. version no. and date	Revision date	Author	Changes made	Reason for changes	New version no.