

Summary: 2018 Annual North Slope Studies Review Meeting (ANSSR)

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1.0 Introduction

The North Slope Science Initiative (NSSI) held its Annual North Slope Studies Review Meeting (ANSSR) on March 20, 2018 at the Federal Building in Anchorage. The purpose of the meeting was to share information about ongoing/upcoming 2018 field studies on the North Slope that address the effects of past, ongoing or anticipated development activities and climate change. Meeting objectives included:

1. Identify collaborative opportunities that increase the efficiency or effectiveness of North Slope studies through coordination of field operations, integration of study designs, sharing of data, or other means.
2. Identify priority information needs for decision making that are not being addressed by ongoing / upcoming studies and discuss potential strategies for satisfying these needs.

2.0 Attendance

Attendees included federal, state and local agencies as well as industry representatives (see Appendix 1 for list of attendees) and presentations of project activities were provided by:

Matt Whitman – BLM Arctic District Office
Wendy Loya – U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Grant Hilderbrand and John Pearce – USGS Alaska Science Center
Jeremy Littell – USGS Alaska Climate Science Center
Melissa Head – Alaska Dept. of Natural Resources
Robyn McGhee – ConocoPhillips
Chrissy Pohl – BP Exploration
Brien Reep – ExxonMobil
Beth Sharp and Kate Kaufman – Hilcorp
Heather Crowley – Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
Ron Heintz and Robyn Angliss – NOAA Fisheries
Lois Dalle-Molle – National Park Service

3.0 ANSSR Project Tracking Presentations

Presentations varied in detail as presenters chose to group or highlight aspects of programs they felt were most relevant. A summary of each of the 107 projects that were described by participants is provided in a separate ANSSR 2018 Project spreadsheet and projects are compiled according to topic in Table 1. These project descriptions will be used by NSSI in the continuing update of NSSI Catalog project tracking records.

The Chukchi Sea Environmental Studies Program (CSESP) was presented by Sheyna Wisdom (Vice Chair, NSSI Science Technical Advisory Panel) as an example of industry collaboration and communication with North Slope communities. The importance of communicating research activities and results with North Slope communities was emphasized by meeting participants.

3.1 Data Sharing: While agency participants emphasized that the public distribution of non-sensitive science-based data and information products was a priority, public distribution needed to accommodate

the process of investigator analysis and publication. Data distribution by agencies is generally accomplished through agency websites and/or large government repositories. Industry acknowledged the value in public distribution of data however issues associated with competitive advantage and the proprietary nature of contracted data collection complicates their making data more generally available. Agency permit stipulations currently do not require data sharing by industry.

Publications and reports are a common format for distribution of results that is used by both agency and industry. Access to these reports has previously been identified as a constraint to general communication of results. NSSI Catalog can facilitate distribution of reports and data by serving as a central repository for data and reports.

3.2 Collaboration: Existing collaboration among organizations is noted in the ANSSR 2018 Project spreadsheet and was described by participants. It was suggested that having the ANSSR meeting occur earlier in the project planning cycle (i.e. Fall) might facilitate more collaborative engagement by organizations.

The importance of data collection at various levels of resolution was emphasized. General data collection over a large area such as conducted by agencies provides a context for more detailed site-specific data collection that might be required of industry in a permit stipulation or be necessary for a specific research experiment. These data collection efforts may be complimentary given adequate collaboration and data sharing.

3.3 Information Needs: The identification of priority information needs for decision making that are not being addressed by current and proposed studies was another objective of this meeting. During the course of the meeting, additional areas of concern were mentioned including: gravel availability, remediation, UAV operations and airspace control, noise, community well-being, timing and location of Arctic cod spawning, plastic accumulation in oceans, red-throated loon population decline in northern Alaska, and raven predation on ground-nesting birds. The need for long-term monitoring of condition for trend needs to be better understood within stipulations.

Project Primary Topic	Count
Birds	30
Climate	2
Coastal Erosion	3
Cultural Resources	4
Fish	9
Geology	2
Infrastructure	4
LTK, Subsistence	2
Ocean Condition	9
Response/Restoration	1
Sea Ice	3
Soils, Vegetation, Permafrost	5
Subsistence	1
Water Resources	8
Marine Mammal: Polar Bear	4
Marine Mammal: Other	8
Terrestrial Mammal: Caribou	6
Terrestrial Mammal: Other	6
Grand Total	107

Table 1: ANSSR 2018 project topics.

North Slope Science Initiative Sign-In Sheet

Meeting: ANNUAL NORTH SLOPE STUDIES REVIEW - 2018

Date: 3/20/2018 - VERNAL EQUINOX

Name	Affiliation	Title	Email Address	Cell Number
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Matthew Whitman	BLM	Arctic District Fish Bio	mwhitman@blm.gov	(not cell) 474-2249
JEREMY GITTEN	USGS	Lead Scientist	jiffelle@usgs.gov	907 360 9416
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PHONE ↓

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