

Draft Summary
North Pacific Research Board
NPRB Conference Room
Anchorage, Alaska
January 6-7, 2010

1. Call to Order/Approve Agenda and Meeting Summary

The Board convened at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, January 6, 2010. Present were Ian Dutton (Chairman), CAPT Michael Cerne, Dorothy Childers, Douglas DeMaster, Michele Eder, John Gauvin, John Hilsinger, Howard Horton, John Iani (via teleconference at beginning of meeting), Paul MacGregor, Steve MacLean, Heather McCarty, Gerry Merrigan (on teleconference), and Eric Olson (Vice Chairman). Clarence Pautzke, Francis Wiese, Carrie Eischens, Tom Van Pelt, Nora Deans, and Carolyn Rosner staffed the meeting. The agenda was approved and a safety briefing given. The Board approved the draft summary of the September 2009 Board meeting.

2. Conflict of Interest Procedures

The Board reviewed its conflict of interest procedures. Members individually declared whether they had any conflict of interest issues concerning the GOAIERP proposals. None did. Douglas DeMaster arrived later and declared that he would need to recuse on any vote to approve the GOAIERP because several applicants worked at the Alaska Fisheries Science Center.

3. Gulf of Alaska Integrated Ecosystem Research Program

GOAIERP Overview

Staff summarized progress on the GOAIERP, including development and approval of the upper trophic level (UTL) component last May that then provided the basis for the request for proposals for studies at the lower trophic level (LTL) and mid trophic levels (MTL) and the modeling component. The call for proposals for the LTL, MTL, and modeling components was released in early June 2009. They were due on the extended deadline of October 12, 2009. Webinars were held in July and September so that applicants could seek clarifications by speaking directly to the principal investigators involved with the UTL component. In the end, five proposals were submitted; one to the MTL component, two to the LTL component, and two to the ecosystem modeling component. All proposals were sent out for external technical review and then submitted to Science Panel review. The Ecosystem Modeling Committee reviewed the two modeling proposals and their chair participated in Science Panel discussions.

Budget Review

The Executive Director presented a brief budget report, explaining that the extended budget projections for NPRB incorporate funding the GOAIERP at \$9 million, and the latest earnings estimates indicate the Board will have a \$1 million buffer during 2010 and beyond as long as the annual RFPs do not exceed about \$3.8 million in 2010, and \$4 million in 2011 or 2012.

Review of Other GOAIERP Component Proposals

Staff summarized each of the five component proposals and their external technical reviews. Science Panel recommendations were presented by Tom Royer and Bill Wilson (serving as an ad hoc panel member). They reported on the technical merits of the proposals, responsiveness to the UTL component specifically and the RFP in general, and deficiencies or gaps that must be addressed to ensure a

reasonably complete program under current funding limitations. As requested, the Board received the views of applicants on their need for sampling along the Seward Line.

Discussion Points and Motions by Board

A motion was made to accept the Science Panel recommendation to return the two modeling proposals to the applicants and ask them to respond to the issues raised by the Ecosystem Modeling Committee, as vetted through the Science Panel. These included revising the proposals to focus on factors up to and including recruitment of young-of-the-year (YOY) fish for the focal species. The Science Panel also recommended that modeling beyond recruitment be taken up later in a future iteration of the GOAIERP. The phrase “in a future iteration of the GOAIERP” was removed through friendly amendment. The revised motion eventually was incorporated into the larger motion considered by the Board. The Board discussed adding ocean acidification as a variable to be examined in the IERP, but later concluded it was beyond the scope of the IERP.

There was extensive discussion of the need for two years of full field seasons for LTL and MTL studies, (rather than just one year as proposed in the LTL proposal), the need for spring surveys by the MTL component, and whether iron should be measured to determine if it is limiting primary production. Two LTL field seasons and spring surveys were felt necessary to characterize the physical oceanographic driving forces of the gauntlet that larval fish experience as they grow to the young-of-the-year (YOY). Only one field season was proposed by the LTL component because of limited funds and lack of a large enough vessel to do the work and accommodate all the investigators in a year other than 2013. The Board discussed the vessel issue at length and through its NOAA representative pointed out that there was a good chance the Freeman could be made available for 2012 and that applicants should re-write their proposal based on that assumption. Other issues debated by the Board included: (1) timing of the single LTL field season proposed for 2013 which would be too late in the overall program, (2) need for a pilot year to establish sampling protocols, (3) importance and relevance of the proposed sea bird and Steller sea lion research to establish potential top-down impacts on larval fish survival, and (4) whether a sufficiently robust ecosystem program could be accomplished with only \$8-9 million.

Final Decision

After considerable discussion, the following motion was made:

- A. The Board directs the staff to meet with the PI's of the LTL, MTL and UTL components to determine the appropriate scope, structure, timing and integration of these components, including consideration of filling the gaps identified by the Science Panel, and consideration of modifying the seabird and Steller sea lion elements of the UTL component within the timeframe of the current GOAIERP. Total budget for the GOAIERP is not to exceed \$9M.
- B. Contingent on agreements with the PI's, the Board's intent is to:
 1. Fund the Hopcroft LTL proposal, with the addition of a second field year. The start year of either 2012 or 2013 should be coordinated with the start year of the other components, and will be dependent on the availability of research platforms.
 2. Fund the Ormseth MTL proposal, with the addition of spring sampling.
 3. Not fund either of the two modeling proposals, but provide the Science Panel recommendations to both proposers, and ask that they resubmit revised proposals focusing

on factors up to and including recruitment of YOY fish. The cost of modeling beyond recruitment will be estimated and brought back for Board consideration.

- C. In the event that the Executive Director is unable to define a workplan that meets the criteria established above, then he should propose a course of action to the Board for next steps in the GOAIERP process.

This motion passed unanimously, with Doug DeMaster recusing.

4. Long-term Monitoring

In September 2009, Dr. Wiesenburg asked the Board to reconsider its decision to support long-term monitoring only within the IERPs. He noted that time series data are important for understanding long-term changes, and expressed concern about the potential lack of funding for the Seward Line if it is not supported within the GOAIERP. The Board placed the issue on this January 2010 meeting agenda for further discussion when considering the GOAIERP. As noted above, proposers were asked to justify inclusion of the Seward Line in their budgets. Seward Line sampling is included in the conditionally approved LTL proposal and by requesting their field season to be two years, the Board effectively decided to fund two years of the Seward line monitoring, presumably with field seasons in 2012 and 2013. If the GOAIERP goes ahead, there would be a gap in Seward Line funding for 2010 and 2011. It should be noted that the Science Panel pointed out that the IERP could live with a two-year gap, but ideally the gap would be no more than one year, especially in view of the expected ENSO in the fall of 2010. Because of the ENSO event, and if a choice between years has to be made, the SP recommended covering 2010 instead of 2011.

To address the funding gap for the Seward Line in 2010 or 2011, the Science Panel recommended a consortium approach. The Board might provide \$100,000 and remaining funds could come from other entities such as NOAA, AOOS, UAF, EVOS, etc. Possibly only one year might be funded, still leaving a long record of measurements that began in late 1970 and has involved somewhere around 150 samplings along the line.

After considerable discussion, a main motion was made to seek a consortium approach to funding. NPRB would contribute up to \$100,000 total for two years, and the Executive Director would contact other agencies for the remaining funds needed (about \$400,000 total for each of two years). The Board's contribution would not come out of the \$9 million GOAIERP. If a consortium cannot be developed to provide funds for at least one year of the Seward Line, then the Board's offer of \$100,000 will be withdrawn.

An amendment was offered to take the \$100,000 out of the proposed \$9 million for the overall GOA IERP. It failed (excom: 2-3; other members: 4-3).

The main motion passed unanimously.

5. Subaward Compliance Policy

In March 2009, the Board approved its subaward compliance policy and directed staff to append it to future requests for proposals and new subaward agreements beginning with the 900 series projects approved that spring. NOAA subsequently objected to inclusion of the policy in the standard memorandum of understanding that governs NOAA projects funded by the Board. Instead, at a special teleconference of the executive committee on July 16, 2009, Dr. DeMaster offered to send a letter to the Board stating his commitment to "...abide by the spirit of this agreement and will perform in a manner

that is consistent with the language in this agreement.” His letter was sent on July 21, 2009, thus allowing relevant 900 series projects to move forward, as well as NOAA components of the Bering Sea Integrated Ecosystem Research Program. This was considered a stop-gap measure and the issue was placed on the September 2009 Board meeting agenda for full Board discussion and resolution.

In September, the Board accepted Dr. DeMaster’s letter of commitment and requested the director of the Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory (PMEL) to sign a similar letter. Dr. DeMaster was asked to look into a blanket letter from NOAA that would cover all NOAA components that may receive awards from NPRB. The Board requested that formal resolution be placed on the January 2010 meeting agenda and that there be a detailed comparison of MOU provisions with the compliance policy provisions, plus suggested changes to the MOU as appropriate. Dr. Bernard (PMEL) sent a letter of commitment on September 23, 2009.

The issue was revisited at this current January 2010 meeting. An analysis of the MOU was provided to the Board along with staff’s recommended changes to the draft MOU language. The Board concluded that it could not proceed further on this issue without further dialogue with NOAA GC regarding proposed changes to the MOU. Thus the Board tabled action of this agenda item until its May meeting. It also will consider whether to require a NOAA-wide letter of commitment or stay with individual letters from separate NOAA components.

6. Other Matters

a. Program Review

Last September the Board requested staff to check with the National Science Foundation and the Center for Independent Experts to determine if either organization would be willing to nominate members to a program review committee. The Board also suggested that ISER be contacted to possibly conduct a survey of principal investigators and other stakeholders concerning their perception of Board programs and performance. The Board’s intention was to cap total program review costs at \$100,000.

Staff reported back on their contacts with NSF and CIE as well as with prospective nominees for the review committee. In summary, NSF likely would not be inclined to be involved in nominating members to the review committee, and the CIE would cost about \$50,000 to \$60,000 to provide 2-3 members for the review committee and to provide independent reports. ISER was contacted regarding a possible survey and its cost was in the range of \$100,000 to \$120,000, though details of the actual survey remain to be sorted out. The Executive Director also contacted Dr. Lynda Shapiro to potentially chair the review committee. She chaired the National Research Council committee in 2004 that prepared guidelines for development of the NPRB science plan.

The Board discussed the review and made the following recommendations:

1. Dr. Shapiro should be asked to chair the review committee.
2. The review committee should have a member with program administration experience. This would be in addition to members with appropriate scientific expertise.
3. The CIE would not be needed to provide nominees for the review committee. Instead, the Board’s steering committee would offer committee nominations, but Dr. Shapiro would make the final decision about membership, thus ensuring its independence.
4. The steering committee will have the following members: Ian Dutton (chair), Heather McCarty, Leslie Holland-Bartels, and the chairmen (or designee) of the Advisory Panel and Science Panel. The steering committee will help draft questions and terms of reference for the overall review, as well as provide nominations for the committee.

5. The review committee would determine if a survey is needed and how to go about it.
6. Available Board members should meet with Dr. Shapiro in Portland at the February NPFMC meeting.
7. Working with the review committee chair, the steering committee will develop a schedule that results in a final report to the Board in September 2010.

b. Arctic Planning

Last September, the Board passed a motion based on a recommendation from its Advisory Panel to consider facilitating communication, collaboration, and coordination of research as appropriate in the Arctic environment, while seeking to determine its own role in funding Arctic research. The Advisory Panel cautioned that in pursuing such a role, NPRB must be very careful to work closely with other agencies and organizations, both national and international, to build a positive working relationship, while fully recognizing their individual missions and goals. The Board would strive to develop its Arctic program in 2010 so it may be addressed in the 2011 RFP in September 2010.

At this current meeting, the Board reviewed various initiatives that have increased the momentum building for more Arctic research. These include a January 2009 AOOS-NPRB workshop on Arctic research and monitoring, NPRB's Arctic Ocean Synthesis of 2008, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council's fishery management plan for Arctic fishery resources of January 2009, and the recent Senate bill, S. 1562, titled the Arctic Ocean Research and Science Policy Review Act of 2009. The Board then briefly discussed its potential role in the Arctic and made the following observations:

1. Though NPRB most likely will be a minor player in Arctic research because of limited funds, some level of involvement is warranted.
2. The Board wants to be responsive to needs of the Council fishery management plan, but there is not much going on in fisheries in the Pacific side of the high Arctic beyond minor amounts of arctic cod and some salmon species. This likely will be true for some time to come.
3. The Board's emphasis should be on building partnerships with major agencies, including NSF.
4. The U.S. Arctic Research Commission will publish a paper this spring on new Arctic initiatives and will know potential funding amounts for Arctic research by NSF by September.
5. NOAA will publish an Arctic Action Plan in April 2010.
6. The State of the Arctic conference in March 2010 also will provide further input.
7. Staff should brief the Alaska Marine Ecosystem Forum when it meets on January 25th.
8. Board members requested they be sent the research priorities identified at the International Arctic Fisheries Symposium of October 19-21, 2009.
9. The Board should continue to coordinate and collaborate with other Arctic research providers.

Staff will continue to help identify the Board's role in Arctic research, working with other agencies, and will report back in May and September with further suggestions.

c. Conference Funding

The Board approved \$10,000 each for the International Sea Duck Conference on September 12-16, 2011 in Seward, and the World Seabird Conference on September 7-11, 2010 in Victoria, B.C. For the latter, the Board is specifically sponsoring one of the receptions and wants that to be acknowledged at the conference.

The Board approved up to \$16,000 to facilitate attendance from rural communities at a Community and Subsistence Workshop (February 24-25, 2010 in Anchorage) regarding the Northern Bering Sea Research Area Research Plan. NOAA is providing matching funds up to \$16,000 for this effort to engage

community members. NPRB funds would come out of community involvement funds in the budget and the Board requested a report on protocols for governing the application process from RuralCap which is helping to organize the event.

d. Science Panel Memberships

The Board appointed Dr. Stew Grant, a molecular biologist with ADF&G, to the Science Panel.

e. Advisory Panel Memberships

The Board passed a motion to revise its Advisory Panel policy to allow for two consecutive terms for 3 years each and to split the membership into three groups with staggered terms so only one group would be refreshed each year, as is the practice of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council. This new arrangement will come back to the Board for final consideration in May.

In the meantime, five members whose terms were about to expire, Ron Hegge, Shirley Kelly, Arni Thomson, Gale Vick, and Frank Kelty, were extended one year, through March 31, 2011 (with their last regular meeting in fall 2010). They would not be eligible for reappointment without sitting out at least one year.

Michele Eder and Steve MacLean were tasked with providing nominations for the two empty seats, one member from the Aleutians and one from the Arctic.

f. Alaska Marine Science Symposium the week of January 18, 2010. Status report only.

g. Alaska SeaLife Center Marine Gala on January 17, 2010. Status report only.

h. Sendai, Japan, conference on climate change and fisheries in April 2010. Status report only.

The Board adjourned at about 2:45 p.m., Thursday, January 7, 2010.