

## OSRI Advisory Board Meeting Minutes Friday, February 6, 2009

The meeting was held in the Executive Board room of the Dena'ina Center in Anchorage. It was called to order just after 9 a.m. by Chair John Calder.

**Board members present:** John Calder, Doug Mutter, Mark Wagner, Bob Mattson, Mark Fink, Bill Lindow, George Levasseur, Doug Lentsch, David Totemoff, Susan Saupe, Joe Banta, John Goering and Eric Knudsen (alternate for Charles Meacham). **Absent:** Carol Fries, Glenn Ujioka and Pete Kompkoff.

**Scientific and Technical Committee members present:** Henry Huntington.

**Staff present:** Nancy Bird, W. Scott Pegau, and Penelope Oswald.

There were a few other visitors present during parts of the meeting.

**Approval of agenda: Motion by Totemoff**, seconded by Mutter to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed without objection.

**Public Comments:** None.

**Approval of minutes:** Several corrections were made to the October 20, 2008 draft minutes:

- (1) in the "Chair's Report" section: "Calder reported that the Arctic Council has now completed the Assessment of oil and gas Impacts report Arctic Marine Assessment Project, and the executive summary ..... to the Emergency, Preparedness, Prevention and Response (EPPR), a working group branch of the Arctic Council."
- (2) There are two "lunch breaks" included in the draft minutes; one needs to be deleted.
- (3) In the discussion of the Proposed FY09 Work Plan Detailed Review by Goals – Understand *continuation*," the third bullet item is corrected as follows: "...It was also noted that OSRI's support for these models is complemented by the Alaska Ocean Observing System AOOOS, Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council and Cook Inlet Regional Citizens' Advisory Council RCAC. There is continuing concern....."

**Motion by Mutter**, seconded by Mattson to approve the October 20, 2008 minutes as amended. **Motion passed** without objection.

### Chair's Report

Calder stated that the United States will be promoting an Arctic-wide emergency response agreement at the next Arctic Council meetings. He expects that this will likely result in the Coast Guard and others being enlisted to draft the terms of this agreement.

### Executive Director's Report

Bird reviewed the highlights of her written report which was included in the meeting packet and is attached to the official record of these minutes. In response to the list of 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary events of the Exxon Valdez oil spill (EVOS), Totemoff noted that Chugach Alaska Corporation will be hosting an event on March 27 commemorating this event.

In review of the Strategic Plan adopted at the October 2008 meeting, a few members expressed a desire to slightly reword the "Understand" goal. Huntington offered to wordsmith this goal statement and return a revised goal to the Board for approval later in this meeting.

### Research Program Manager Update – Part 1 (*Technology Scholarship and InnoCentive Challenges*)

Pegau presented his report through a powerpoint presentation, the slides of which were included in the meeting packet and are attached to the official record of these minutes.

- In response to questions Pegau posed regarding next steps for the InnoCentive project, the discussion focused on the need for additional partners to contribute toward challenges that can follow up on the theoretical solutions received to date. It was also noted that it can take time to find partners (as it requires time to include new projects into budgets) and that the Coast Guard might be interested in new R&D ideas.

## **Mid morning break**

### **Research Program Manager Update – Part 2 (*Model Validation Exercise*)**

Pegau described the current plans for the 2009 Model Validation exercise (also called the field experiment). This project is being jointly organized by OSRI and the Alaska Ocean Observing System. Pegau explained that very recently an opportunity has arisen to include two autonomous underwater vehicles (glider and powered) in the exercise for collection of oceanographic and some biological data. These vehicles can be brought to Prince William Sound this summer by a researcher from California Polytechnic University; the total cost proposed by the researcher is \$57,000; Pegau said the normal cost would likely be over \$100,000 for these vehicles' use.

At the end of his report, Pegau requested Board approval to transfer funds from within the FY09 Work Plan in order to partially fund the AUV proposal. He noted that the sources for the transfer of these funds are not likely to be spent in FY09. In discussion, Pegau was asked who would do the analysis of the data collected by the AUVs and he responded that he expects to make time for that analysis.

**Motion by Saupe**, seconded by Banta, to approve the transfer of \$25,000 from the scholarship fund to the model validation exercise, and also the transfer of up to \$17,000 from the Joint Industry Program (JIP) support fund to the model validation exercise. These transferred funds will be used to contract AUV operations during the field experiment. **Motion passed without objection.**

### **Project presentations**

Two presentations were made by students supported by OSRI fellowships/scholarships.

**Matthew Druckenmiller** presented on his project titled "Promoting Sustainable Oil and Gas Development on Alaska's North Slope through Local-Scale Integration of Geophysical and Traditional Knowledge." Matthew is a graduate fellow working on his Master's Degree at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. See [www.gi.alaska.edu/BRWICE](http://www.gi.alaska.edu/BRWICE) for further details.

**Brian Reith** presented on his work to offer solutions for improving the performance of the VAB Foxtail skimmer in icy conditions. Brian was supported by OSRI as a technology student at Kenai Peninsula College; as part of his education, he gained on-the-job training for one summer as an intern through the Cook Inlet Spill Response, Inc.

### **Lunch break**

### **Financial Reports**

The Prince William Sound Science Center had its FY08 audit conducted by the well-known accounting firm Mikunda, Cottrell of Anchorage. OSRI staff reported that this audit resulted in a clean "bill of financial health," and includes no findings or management report.

Oswalt highlighted the First Quarter Financial Report for FY09 (Tab 4 of the meeting packet).

## **OSRI Research Plan Discussion, Part 1**

Pegau made some introductory comments about the planning process and said final approval by the Board of the new 5-year research plan should be targeted to occur at the February 2010 meeting. That timeline will mean that the FY11 work plan could proceed in the spring/summer of 2010 based on the new research plan. He emphasized that this plan should reflect the Board's views on where to focus its research programs. Flexibility is a strength and has performed particularly well in allowing OSRI to support equipment tests and workshops. Pegau noted it's also important to have just a few "focus" areas and recommended a mix of long and short-term projects. While OSRI might be the minor partner on some projects, it would be nice to have OSRI taking the lead in a few areas. The plan will also be driven by what is available budget-wise; currently, we estimate the total revenue will be about \$700K for the next two years. If amendments requested and pending before Congress are passed, the OSRI revenue would increase to about \$1 million annually.

Pegau posed the question of whether the Board wants to continue building on previously supported work, such as the Nowcast-Forecast Systems and the models. He noted that this is his first time preparing a 5-year plan and he encourages the Board to give him guidelines and/or direction on timelines and process.

In discussion, it was noted that the new 5-year Research Plan should align with the new Strategic Plan (found on page 29 of the FY08 Annual Report, in Tab 6 of the meeting packet). Calder suggested that consultations should occur with the PWSSC, AOOS and perhaps others to be sure we understand what these past partners might contribute or implement. He emphasized final recommendations for the plan should come from the OSRI STC.

Budget discussions resulted in consensus to target \$700K as the base budget for each of the five years and prioritize additional projects to add if/as revenues increase.

Pegau asked for additional broad guidance from the Board on how to achieve the goals of the revised Strategic Plan in the new 5-year plan; he intends to take this guidance to the STC and get their recommendations to further define potential projects in the new 5-year plan.

Discussion ensued on partnering with others including the oil companies and to consult with entities like the North Slope Science Initiative. Calder suggested a letter might be sent to a wide group of organizations and direct their attention to the new Strategic Plan and ask for their suggestions/input regarding focus areas that would address our goals and also which they might partner with us on.

Saupe noted that new tools are now available for response efforts, particularly in mapping and database areas. She suggested some small pilot projects that demonstrate the application of these new tools be supported by OSRI. Another area OSRI might support is for compiling the plans of the various agencies into one document. Mutter suggested the latter would fit under "best practices" tools/documents OSRI has previously helped support. Pegau suggested a potential focus area be fresh water input and circulation. In the response area, he suggested detection and tracking is an area to consider and ice processing as another area needing to be addressed. Another area where there seems to be a gap in knowledge is that of fate and behavior of oil spills in Arctic conditions (ice). Discussion continued regarding satellite and other aerial technologies for tracking oil spills, particularly in ice conditions. Lindow stated his strong support for an emphasis on "prevention" technologies, an area too often overlooked or not emphasized. Fink suggested that on the biological side, baseline information is needed, such as fish assemblages seasonally in the nearshore environment. Pegau noted that there may still be opportunities to partner with the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council on herring investigations. Further discussion on herring projects ensued.

Mattson noted the importance of any OSRI response project tying back to the fate and effect of oil spills and mitigating and/or preventing such spills. Knudsen asked about the ongoing synthesis project and whether it will provide gaps in knowledge that might assist the STC. Pegau clarified that the current project will result in a proposal to actually fund the synthesis project itself so results in the form of research gaps will not be available in the coming year. Saupe encouraged continued support for the ocean observing system because of the need for better information on circulation, particularly with regard to hard decisions on use of dispersants and pre-approval zones, etc.

Fink asked about allocation of the budget among the various focus areas and also short-term versus long-term studies.

## **Afternoon break**

### **OSRI Research Plan Discussion, Part 2**

The Board reviewed notes drafted during the break attempting to capture focus areas to include in the new 5-year Research Plan. They are noted below:

- **Application of research data to improve response tools** (Research and Understand)
- **Best Practices** (Respond and Inform)
- **Improve knowledge of surface circulation and freshwater input** (Understand and Respond)
- **Retain support for some component of the ocean observing system** (Understand Respond and Inform)
- **Detection and tracking of oil spills** (Respond)
- **Increase our knowledge of biological aspect in the nearshore regions** (Understand)
- **Oil fate and behavior under Arctic conditions** (Understand and Respond)
- **Act upon current response technology ideas** (Respond)
- **Education component** (Inform)
- **Assessment of restoration options** (Understand)
- **Natural resource damage assessment** (Respond)
- **Prevention, prevention, prevention** (Respond and Inform)

### **Review of Revised Strategic Plan**

Huntington suggested new language for the “Understand” goal; there was further discussion and final agreement reached to approve the following verbage:

“Attain an interdisciplinary understanding of: the fate and effects of spilled oil in Arctic and sub-Arctic marine environments; and the recovery of those environments following a spill.”

Below this statement will be the bullet items previously approved.

### **Election of Officers**

**Motion** by Saupe, seconded by Fink to elect Mutter as Vice-Chair. **Motion passed** without objection.

**Motion** by Saupe, seconded by Mattson to elect Fries as Treasurer. **Motion passed** without objection.

**Motion** by Calder, seconded by Banta to elect Saupe as Secretary. **Motion passed** without objection.

**Motion** by Fink, seconded by Lindow to elect Mattson and Lentsch as the two at-large positions on the Executive Committee. **Motion passed** without objection.

### **Committee Appointments**

**Motion** by Lindow, seconded by Banta to appoint Fries, Fink and Levasseur to the Finance Committee. **Motion passed.**

Calder asked for volunteers and appointed Lentsch, Banta, Saupe, Fink and Lindow to the FY10 Work Plan committee.

Pegau reported that Astrid Scholtz' and Tom Royer's terms on the Scientific and Technical Committee are expiring; Royer is interested in being re-appointed and Scholtz is not.

**Motion** by Saupe, seconded by Mutter to re-appoint Tom Royer to the Scientific and Technical Committee. **Motion passed.** Staff was also directed to advertise for an additional member to the STC.

#### **Review Calendar / Schedules for Committee and Board meetings**

- OSRI Scientific and Technical Committee meets in Seattle **April 13-14, 2009**; since at least one day of this meeting will focus on developing a new 5-year science plan for OSRI, several Board members are invited to join the committee.
- The STC (or a subgroup of it) will continue to meet **April 15-17** in Seattle with the Science Panel for the North Pacific Research Board for review of the proposals submitted for joint funding by OSRI and NPRB.
- **FY10 Work Plan Committee** will meet with the **STC** in Cordova in June, date to be determined.
- **10<sup>th</sup> Annual Copper River Nouveau**, a benefit gourmet salmon dinner and auction for the Prince William Sound Science Center, is Saturday, June 13, 2009 in Cordova.
- **Fall Annual Meeting – OSRI Advisory Board** will be **Thursday, October 8, 2009** in Cordova.

#### **Adjournment**

At 4:25 p.m., there was a **motion to adjourn by Lentsch**, seconded by Saupe.