



Alaska Climate Change Adaptation Advisory Group
Meeting #6a
Friday, May 15, 2009 9:30 AM–11:30 PM
Draft Meeting Notes

Attendees

AAG Members Present:

Elaine Abraham, Steve Weaver, Amy Holman, Taunnie Boothby, Greg Magee, Stan Foo

On Phone:

Fran Ulmer, Bruce Botelho, Jeff Short, Michael Cerne, Randy Hagenstein, Mike Coffey, Larry Hinzman, Tony Nakazawa, Billy Connor

State:

Larry Hartig, Jackie Poston, Kolena Momberger, Brian Rogers

ICF:

Fran Sussman, Jason Vogel, Nancy Tosta, and Barbara Sheinberg (all on phone)

UAF:

Brian Rogers

Welcome, Introductions & Objectives for the Day

Brian Rogers, Co-Facilitator, Chancellor, University of Alaska Fairbanks

Review and Approve Technical Working Group (TWG) Option: [Public Infrastructure-2](#)

Barbara Sheinberg (Sheinberg Associates), Facilitator and Steve Weaver (ANTHC), TWG member

PI-2: Promote Improvements that Use Current Best Practices

Option PI-2 was re-presented. At the previous meeting all of the options were supported by the AAG with the exception of the title of Option #2. The AAG requested the moniker “No Regrets” be changed to reflect the fact that building to avoid mistakes of the past while building in resiliency should encourage innovative and sometimes unproven techniques which may fail and result in “regrets” and that should not be perceived as a bad thing. It was described in the overall context of all three PI options because they work together to develop a system wherein we collect data, and while we do that we move forward for the near term with what can be accomplished - “Build To Last”, and at the same time build resiliency for the longer term based on what we learn.

Discussion

One member commented that the option is well-done and clear and makes a lot of sense. The member then posed a question related to implementation. Regarding the idea of a center clearinghouse on p. 6 of the option description, would it fit within an existing agency or be

standalone? And could the best information be used? Answer: there are two distinct purposes. The first is the information clearinghouse, which is tailor-made for something University of Alaska—who can analyze and make analysis/information available when needed. Second, to make this effective and useful to others a knowledge center is important which would serve more as an outreach arm and a portal to groups who need to access information.

Option is tentatively approved, no objection.

Review and Approve Technical Working Group (TWG) Option: [Health and Culture-1](#)

Jason Vogel (Stratus Consulting), Facilitator

HC-1. Community Climate Impact Assistance

Option HC-1 was presented. There are synergies with other options, such as the IAWG option. This option is about supporting communities—communication is not unidirectional, but interactive.

Discussion

Function 1: Develop a Process for Prioritizing and Addressing Climate Challenged Communities. One member pointed out that there will be winners and losers and asked whether we can say that every community will get some attention, some minimum amount of government outreach, whether it is first or forty-third on the list. Answer: Yes, that is the intent.

Function 2: Help Communities To Adapt To Flooding And Erosion Either By Relocation Or Protection-In-Place. The facilitator raised the question of whether there are any issues with a dedicated funding source, given the state prohibition. Another member pointed out that there are ways to address that. A member asked whether the idea of designating lead agencies at federal and state levels is do-able? Answer: Yes, something like the IAWG is a good model of a way to incorporate folks from within the government in a way that encourages coordination. The agency involved would depend on the problem being solved and who has jurisdiction.

Please amend to state: “...to the extent consistent with federal/state law.”

Function 3: Develop a responsible and flexible process to regulate subsistence access under changing climate conditions. There was discussion about where this would be housed, and existing community-based systems that it would need to coordinate with or could build on. It was pointed out that it (the second bullet) could be housed in the Knowledge Network option, which will be presented later in the meeting.

Function 4: Develop principles to guide community impact assistance activities. The TWG is still working this out, and may add additional principles. The idea is that there are more of these principles that help ensure that actions taken jointly are constructive. Hope to have more for the June meeting, but are not sure.

Option is tentatively approved, no objection.

Review and Approve Priority Options Descriptions: [Common Themes](#)

Nancy Tosta (Ross and Associates), Facilitator

Option 1. Knowledge Network

Purpose is to integrate the information that is generated in a number of different places

Discussion

One member observed that if someone went on the web and typed in “climate change” it would probably come up with thousands of hits. To be useful, this service needs to serve the function of sifting through this data—giving an idea of “best practices.” Plus, don’t see the words “actionable” or “analysis” anywhere. It’s not enough for the data to be accessible, it needs to be usable. The piece “technical assistance and strategies” does suggest some of this. But this then raises the questions of “who provides the assistance” and “who pays”?

Response: the idea is that this option takes first steps. Both components are important: (1) organizing data so makes it possible to use and (2) moving in the direction of helping to understand how to use. The vision is that, ultimately, it does both (1) is a place for data to be archived and (2) support for analysis and provides “value added.”

The discussion continued on the topic of how the “value of this investment” could be maximized. One member observed that we need to prioritize the data so most important data that is needed now is available. The available data should indicate what is industry standard, preferred data, that kind of thing.

One member has a question about the language and the inclusion of the words “Provide means” as in “provide means to inventory…” or “provide means to share” rather than “inventory” or “share.” Why was that language used? Answer: A number of entities are doing some of this, and so the network is really providing the “connective tissue” – not superseding other entities and what they’re doing, but linking them up. The member then observed that we need to walk before we run. There’s a huge difference between the types of people and actions needed to do the first (provide means)—librarians, computer experts—and those needed to do the second (analyze). It might be useful to think about this function as “when this become mature enough.” Response: the targets are intended as a sequential set of options. Additional institutions will be added.

Option is tentatively approved, no objection.

Option 2: State Interagency Coordination

One member observed that it is important to interact internationally. Canada, in particular, has a lot to offer. Response: this group did not talk about international coordination. The idea was that, within Alaska, the state needs to work together. The member suggested that interactions with Federal agencies be added in. Other members observed that it is important to keep separate two types of coordination: (1) state integration and (2) broader federal/state planning commission, where a range of entities have a seat at the table (NGOs, as well).

Option is tentatively approved, no objection.

Report Outline, Overview, and Next Steps

Fran Sussman (ICF International) Co-Facilitator

Presented an overview of how the various pieces of the strategy fit together, with a focus on “common themes” and how these are addressed by the various options presented earlier today.

Discussion of the common themes identified in the presentation

A member asked why “delivery of services” is separated from “coordination.” Response: coordination goes beyond collecting and communicating information. Discussion went on to cover how state priorities get juggled, and how state can coordinate with federal agencies.

A member observed that there is a question of how regional efforts will fit into federal efforts. In particular, how will Alaska efforts fit into the NOAA national climate service and regional branches? The member pointed out that stakeholder efforts—like this one—are part of the process of setting priorities.

A DEC attendee made several observations. First, it is possible to separate out how identifying “what need to do” without talking (yet) about “how to do it.” There are many different ways of doing it. It’s important to have “one stop shopping for information” and “one stop place” for delivery of services. Second, there are different levels at which coordination occurs. It is important to be sure that the right folks are involved—those who can actually make things happen. Different folks will be involved at different levels. Last, when we’re done with the strategy, it should reflect the efforts of both the private and public sectors. The public still needs to stay engaged once the strategy is developed—the government is not the only entity engaged in adaptation.

A member reiterated an earlier comment about keeping the two coordination functions (coordination with the State of AK and interagency/interentity coordination) separate. It is also recommended that a process be established by which to keep stakeholders from all sectors engaged (gov’t, AK Natives, industry, academia, NGOs, etc.) to track and facilitate key recommendations coming out of this process. We can look at models from other states to see how they’ve done that.

Would like to see the last bullet under common themes (the broader coordination bullet) fleshed out for the June meeting.

One member said that national principles for NOAA climate service are being laid out. It has component of regional services, but should have people involved. The NOAA regional service could be the core of these actions.

Adjourn