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MEETING SUMMARY

ALASKA CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION ADVISORY GROUP

Health and Culture Technical Working Group (HC TWG)

Meeting #11, 12 November 2008, 8:30 – 10:00 AM

Attendance:

Technical Working Group members: Father Thomas Weise, Jeff Demain, Jim Berner, Bob Gerlach, Joe McLaughlin, Kristie Ebi, Jason Vogel

Public Attendees: Sally Schlichting, Lynn Zender, Mike Brubaker

Background documents:

Meeting Notice and Agenda

Summary of Meeting #11

Policy option template

Procedural items:

1. Jason called the meeting to order, completed the roll call, and reviewed the agenda and plans for the call.
2. The summary for meeting #10 was approved.

Discussion items, key issues, and agreements:

1. Discussion of Health Impact Assessment “HIA” draft policy option
 - a. **Jim Berner** offered to lead this policy option with assistance from **Kristie Ebi**. Previously, **Mike Bradley** and **Mike Brubaker** volunteered to assist in policy development.
 - b. There was discussion about the issues raised by the AAG concerning this option. Health impact assessments are well established and widely used, providing valuable insight into the possible health co-benefits and potential harms of policies implemented in other sectors. HIA can be qualitative or quantitative, and are generally quick evaluations requiring few resources. However, some AAG members apparently thought the process of conducting a HIA was similar to that for a formal “Environmental Impact Statement” and thus were concerned that conducting a HIA would require significant time and resources. It was

agreed that a different name should be chosen that accurately reflects the thinking of the TWG.

- c. It was agreed that what this policy option meant to the TWG was a reasoned assessment of the implications for population health of proposed actions (in all sectors) to avoid, prepare for, and effectively respond to climate change. This policy would not be relevant to many state actions, such as identifying, cataloging, or reclaiming archaeological sites. An HIA for any action with no significant human health impact would require limited time and effort.
 - d. It was noted that the State of Alaska and the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) have already engaged in this type of assessment and that citing these examples might be very useful for communicating the wisdom of this policy option.
2. Strengthen the ADEC watershed contamination protection laws and source water protection programs
 - a. This policy option was discussed because it appeared to have dropped out of the ballot results because of suggested revisions by the AAG. Both TWG members and project managers noticed this and commented on it.
 - b. It was decided that this option had significant overlap with the surveillance and control policy option as a control strategy for waterborne illnesses. Consequently, this issue was folded into the charge of the surveillance and control subcommittee led by **Joe McLaughlin**, **Jeff Demain**, and **Bob Gerlach**.
 3. Report from Ombudsman subcommittee
 - a. **Father Thomas Weise** and **Sally Schlichting** reported on the progress of this subcommittee, including an upcoming meeting between **Don Callaway** and Sally Cox, who is coordinating the relocation of Newtok.
 - b. When encouraged to put their insights and deliberations into the format of the policy option template, they asked for clarification on how to do this and whether there were any examples yet. It was commented that no examples yet existed for Alaska.
 - c. Subcommittee members commented on the difficulty of the size of the “umbrella” of this policy option because many things were folded into it at the request of the AAG.
 - d. It was commented that the subsistence issue is highly politically charged and could distract from other components of the ombudsman option if it was included. It was suggested that a conversation with an experienced state official like Bruce Bothelo or Fran Ulmer could shed significant light on the political aspects of this issue.
 4. Report from Surveillance and Control subcommittee
 - a. **Joe McLaughlin**, **Jeff Demain**, and **Bob Gerlach** reported on the

- b. This subcommittee described their justification for writing a one-pager (to keep it readable and pithy) and described their 7 option solutions, e.g., expanded reporting of infectious and non-infectious diseases.
 - c. This committee was also asked to put their insights and deliberations into the format of the policy option template. They asked for clarification on how to do this and whether there were any examples yet – there are not.
- 5. Sanitation and Solid Waste subcommittee
 - a. **Lynn Zender** reported on the progress of this subcommittee, which has only begun outlining the policy option.
 - b. Lynn and **Jeff Smith** plan on running some of their initial ideas by people in the state DEC and EPA to get feedback before committing them to paper.
- 6. Gravesites and Archaeology subcommittee
 - a. **Jason Vogel** mentioned that this policy option has of yet no volunteers for a subcommittee. He suggested that he wanted to bring in someone from outside the TWG that is an expert in the subject to help work on the policy option. The TWG members generally agreed that going outside the group to find the appropriate expertise was acceptable.
 - b. TWG members suggested that in addition to a professional archeologist or similar expert, that the Native Alaskan perspective will be important to deal with this issue comprehensively. TWG member suggested reaching out to Patricia Cochran or Elaine Abraham in particular.
- 7. Policy option template issues
 - a. Due to high demand by the TWG members, **Jason Vogel** agreed to take the existing policy options template and develop a version that would facilitate subcommittee members meeting the requirements of the state.
 - b. The TWG members agreed to share among themselves (between subcommittees) their draft policy option write ups to facilitate collective learning.
- 8. Next meetings
 - a. It was agreed to continue our meeting schedule through March 2009 by having teleconferences on the first and third Wednesday of the month from 8:30-10:00 am Alaska time.

Next steps:

- 1. The next conference call will be Wednesday, January 7 at 8:30-10:00 am Alaska time.
- 2. In the interim, subcommittees will continue their work to flesh out their policy options.