



[www.climatechange.alaska.gov](http://www.climatechange.alaska.gov)

## **MEETING SUMMARY**

### **ALASKA CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION ADVISORY GROUP**

#### **Health and Culture Technical Working Group (HC TWG)**

Meeting #13, 11 February 2009, 8:30 – 10:00 AM

#### **Attendance:**

Technical Working Group members: Jeff Demain, Bob Gerlach, Erin Harman, Henry Huntington, Joe McLaughlin, Don Callaway, Rose Barr, Father Thomas Weise, Kristie Ebi, Jason Vogel

Public Attendees: Sally Schlichting, Fran Sussman

#### **Background documents:**

- Meeting Notice and Agenda
- Summary of Meeting #12
- Benefits and Costs Guidance
- Overarching Option

#### **Procedural items:**

1. Jason Vogel called the meeting to order, completed the roll call, and reviewed the agenda and plans for the call.
2. The summary for meeting #12 was approved.

#### **Discussion items, key issues, and agreements:**

1. Review of the AAG meeting from February 6
  - a. In general: Each policy option was discussed and then voted on. The vote was meant to signal whether to move forward, not to move forward, or change the option in some way. All five of our options received approval to move forward.
  - b. Discussion of the Ombudsman option: This option clearly had some cross cutting components to it, including questions about how do you create a mandate and ensure reliable long-term funding. These items appeared similar to the Immediate Action Work Group (IAWG) and suggestions were made about merging this option with that group, but the IAWG is only an 18 month process. Suggestions were also made that this option

was similar to elements in the Public Infrastructure (PI) TWG and the two TWGs should work together to avoid redundancy and contradictions. Recommendation 9, on subsistence activities, should coordinate with the Natural Systems (NS) TWG (Option 1). There were some substantive differences on having a building and staff of its own versus using part of an existing agency as well as potentially focusing on information versus implementation. It was commented that subsistence might not fit well in this option, and that some reluctance might exist to tackle subsistence due to differing perspectives between urban, suburban, and rural communities. Ultimately it was decided to take a hard look at this option to see if it is appropriate here and how to coordinate with NS.

- c. Discussion of the Surveillance and Control option: There was not too much discussion on this topic. Mike Brubaker is working on a web-based monitoring system, so his input was welcomed. Conducting an educational effort to support such a system would be easy through existing medical networks. While there was some potential overlap with a cross cutting data gathering option, particularly with the NS TWG, it seemed likely that the NS TWG effort would work through universities, the state, and school systems, which could take a lot of time. Some items within this option, such as vector borne disease monitoring needs support, especially staff, to work with other agencies and monitor for pollutants not on our initial list. This is a potential area of overlap, but likely does not merit eliminating either option or combining them, entirely.
- d. Discussion on Health Assessments: There was little discussion on this topic except to emphasize the need to spell out how such assessments would be implemented. Since the “implementation” section of the template was not yet filled out, this item had not yet been addressed, but was of clear importance to the AAG.
- e. Discussion of Sanitation and Wastewater option: The highest risk was identified to clean water and wastewater containment. While rural areas often face the greatest risks and have the most problems, the AAG suggested and TWG members generally agreed that urban areas should also be included. This is especially useful for data recording and educational efforts, but there may need to be some prioritization of rural sanitation and wastewater infrastructure to tackle to most serious problems first. There might be some overlap with the PI TWG on this option.
- f. Discussion of Archaeology and Gravesites: This option met with general approval by the AAG. Dave McMahan has this option well under control and provided an excellent summary to the AAG. Some issues that were brought up include potential sources of funding and the relationship of this effort to the traditional councils.

## 2. Discussion on crosscutting issues

- a. While some of the cross cutting issues may require cooperation, some TWG members felt that some issues were a better fit in one TWG or

another. In such cases, perhaps putting the option in just one TWG report and simply referencing that option would be sufficient. In other cases the differences between seemingly crosscutting issues were so great that the issues probably merit being separated at least for the time being.

- b. Two TWG members have plans to speak with Michael Black about the IAWG and potential synergies and lessons learned with regard to the ombudsman option.
  - c. Some concern was expressed that if coordination is codified that one loses the camaraderie of volunteer coordination efforts. We should remain mindful of this pitfall.
3. Future process questions
- a. Several TWG members asked about the process of the final AAG or Subcommittee recommendations. Jason Vogel and Kris Ebi told the TWG that this process has not been formally established yet, but they would keep the TWG informed as information became available.
  - b. Schedule and meeting: Jason Vogel described the timeline for producing the adaptation options, including drafts due 3/20 for the AAG meeting on 4/3.

**Next steps:**

1. The next conference call will be Wednesday, March 4 at 8:30-10:00 am Alaska time.
2. In the interim, subcommittees will continue their work to flesh out their policy options.
3. Jason Vogel agreed to speak with the facilitators of groups with potentially crosscutting issues to assess what we might do on these options.