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MEETING SUMMARY

ALASKA CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION ADVISORY GROUP

Health and Culture Technical Working Group (HC TWG)

Meeting #2, 26 June 2008, 8:30 – 10:15 AM

Attendance:

1. Technical Working Group members:

Jim Berner, Don Callaway, Patricia Cochran, Jeff Demain, Kristie L. Ebi, Bob Gerlach, Erin Harman, Susan McNeil, Father Thomas Weise

2. Public Attendees: Sally Schlichting

Background documents:

(posted at http://www.akclimatechange.us/Health_Culture.cfm)

1. Meeting Notice and Agenda
2. Summary of Meeting #1
3. HC Draft Catalog of State Actions
4. Health and Culture Impacts List

Discussion items and key issues:

1. Kristie L. Ebi called the meeting to order, completed the roll call, and reviewed the agenda and plans for the call.
2. The summary for meeting #1 was approved, with the exception of correcting the spelling of Don Callaway's name.
3. The process and outputs of the HC TWG, and their interactions with the Adaptation Advisory Group, were reviewed. Before the July 16 meeting of the Adaptation Advisory Group, the TWG will aim to complete a catalog of possible state actions to address the risks climate change poses to Health and Culture in Alaska. In addition, for each action, there will be a short description of that action. These documents will be presented to the Adaptation Advisory Group for their input. The TWG will then revise the catalog and

descriptions based on the recommendations. Once the TWG has a complete catalog of actions, the actions will be prioritized to determine which actions the group recommends taking forward for a more detailed analysis in the next phase of work.

4. Most of the discussion focused on the Draft Catalog of State Actions. In addition to the comments submitted by members of the TWG prior to the meeting, the following issues were raised:

- The vulnerability of indigenous populations needs to be highlighted throughout the catalog, not just in one category of actions.
- Identification and use of traditional knowledge needs to be included throughout the options.
- A key problem for many rural communities is there is no central agency for addressing complex issues that cross sectors. For example, communities who need to relocate have to deal with approximately 35 agencies just to identify a new site for the community; additional agencies would be involved in order to obtain permission and financing to move. Small communities don't have sufficient human resources to effectively deal with this many agencies. The difficulties entailed can lead to mental stress.
- An action should address how to communicate the health and cultural risks of climate change. Who communicates the information can be a factor in how well the information is used. Obviously, language is also a key factor.
- Option 1.2 should include a discussion of the need for community-based monitoring networks that sample ice thickness and other environmental variables, organize surveillance programs, provide a clearing house for government coordination, monitor indicators of community stress, and other activities.
- The importance of identifying cross-connections between TWGs was highlighted. For example, the cost of energy is a significant portion of budgets in small communities. This has led to migration to find additional sources of income. Social relationships and communities suffer when migrants include important hunters. Another example is the importance of transport during emergencies to protect human health.
 - It was recommended that a column be added after "Notes" to identify key linkages across TWGs.
- Foodborne diseases should be discussed separately from waterborne diseases. Less reliable fishing yields could affect malnutrition, amongst other impacts.
- The categories of heat and cold stress will be combined into one category of thermal extremes.
- Mental stress should be used instead of mental health.
- One TWG member volunteered to reframe Option 1.1 (Health Impact

Assessment) to make it more relevant for adaptation in Alaska.

Next steps and agreements:

1. The next TWG meeting will be held on July 9, from 8:30 - 10:00 am.
2. TWG members will review the Catalog of State Actions before the next call and be prepared to discuss additions and revisions to the catalog. Comments and suggestions prior to the call are welcome; please send to Kristie Ebi (krisebi@essllc.org) and Jason Vogel (jvogel@stratusconsulting.com).