

Alaska Climate Change Adaptation Advisory Group

Meeting #4a (continuation of Meeting #4)

Wednesday, December 17, 2008 8:00 AM–10: 00 AM

Call-in number: 800-315-6338

Code: 2294#

DRAFT MEETING NOTES

Attendees:

AAG and TWG members: Fran Ulmer, Amy Holman, Marilyn Leland, Patricia Cochran, John Madden, Tony Nakazawa, Molly McCammon, Bob Pawlowski, Taunnie Boothby, Steve Weaver, Stan Foo, Bruce Botelho, Jeff Short, Larry Dietrick, Mike Cerne, Thomas Weise, Larry Hinzman, Vladimir Romanovsky, Billy Connor, Peter Larsen, Patricia Cochran.

Facilitators: Brian Rogers, Barbara Sheinberg, Jan Caulfield, Fran Sussman

DEC: Larry Hartig, Jackie Poston

Review of Status of TWGs: EA, HC. Fran Sussman briefly reviewed the status of the Economic Activities and Health & Culture TWGs.

For the HC TWG:

1) Based on feedback from the AAG, the Health and Culture TWG consolidated its policy options into the following five:

- Ombudsman for supporting rural communities
- Augment surveillance and control of diseases
- Institute health assessments
- Assess sanitation and solid waste disposal infrastructure and practices
- Assess and protect archaeological resources and gravesites

2) Subcommittees of the TWG have begun drafting options A, B, and D.

3) The draft of option B was circulated and commented on by the Subcommittee Chair and others. Those comments are being incorporated into the drafts of all policy options.

3) A subcommittee has formed to begin addressing option C

4) An effort is underway to find experts in archaeology to tackle option E. This expertise will need to come from outside the current TWG membership.

5) A call schedule has been established for 2009.

For the EA TWG:

1) Five options are moving forward – individuals or subgroups have drafted language on all of them (see table below)

2) The TWG met on Dec 11 to discuss the options, and the TWG will revise and enhance the options for another meeting in mid-January

3) TWG will finalize preliminary drafts of options/recommendations for Feb AAG meeting

Option #	Option Title
EA-1	Increase/Improve Arctic Ocean Activities
EA-2	Explore Economic Activity Opportunities Offered by Climate Change
EA-3	Develop Scenarios for the Alaskan Economy
EA-4	Participate in National or International Forums on Arctic Issues
EA-5	Improve Availability of Mapping, Surveying, Charting and Imagery Data

**Review and Approve Recommended Priority Options by Technical Working Group (TWG):
Public Infrastructure**

Presented by Barbara Sheinberg (Sheinberg Associates), Facilitator

Members of the PI TWG identified themselves as present. Presentation began with definition and statement about the effects of climate change:

- **Public Infrastructure** are the essential facilities and utilities under public, cooperative or private ownership that deliver goods and services to communities.
- The **Effects** of Climate Change in Alaska that impact public infrastructure are:
 - Increased flooding (this includes increased coastal inundation,
 - Storm surges, coastal and river erosion, siltation, and sea level rise);
 - Decreased duration and extent of sea ice;
 - Increased wind;
 - Thawing permafrost; and
 - Increased fire risk.

Presentation then provided an overview of the policies/options. The catalog of options is organized hierarchically on policy /programs/-tasks/-details:

1. Identify the key policy issues and decisions that are and will be needed with regard to climate change and the effect on Alaska's public infrastructure and spending.
2. Translate policies to program areas for which direction is needed.
3. Identify priority tasks, with details, in program areas.

In the approach taken by the TWG, there are only a few policy issues, other decisions and programs "fall-out" once policy options are established. The TWG used the same 6 criteria as other TWGs used in discussions of options: benefits/effectiveness, costs, feasibility, timing of impact, adaptive capacity). No balloting was needed, since there are only a few policy options. The criteria will be revisited as policy option papers are prepared.

TWG voted December 7-10 on level of endorsement for the catalog and its three policy options. The catalog as it currently stands received one full endorsement. All others voted to keep moving forward, knowing that language will be refined as policy papers are developed. (No one voted to reject.) As TWG prepares policy papers, catalog language will be revised a bit to reflect deeper work.

Today, the TWG seeks AAG comment and 'nod' that:

- This is a cohesive framework,
- The broad structure and policy-program-task approach is appropriate
- Any other guidance on the developing options

Presented a set of guiding principles, or vision statement. Discussion moved onto the individual policy options. Presentation is on website for meeting, as is draft options catalog.

[POLICY OPTION 1. Collect, assess and monitor data needed to develop sustainable solutions to adapt public infrastructure to the effects of a changing climate.](#)

Discussion

One member was intrigued by the “vision statement.” One member observed that, in terms of the practical aspects of the program, it could be a massive undertaking requiring considerable resources. The member said that who would do this, or how would it be integrated in capital planning and decision making, was unclear. Response: more specifics will be developed as the option is further explored and the templates are prepared. The focus will be on better defining the boundaries, and which areas need to be focused on.

In terms of Program E within the option (Enact a law to create and authorize a Public Infrastructure Commission on Climate Change (PICCC)), it was pointed out that, without an entity with this responsibility and empowerment, it might be difficult to get this to happen. If the function is nested within other agencies, would compete for resources and attention within those agencies. One member agreed that there is a need for intergovernmental coordination and possibly a new structure, but it requires much thought. The point was made that the TWG members could consider an interagency/multi-agency task force.

The question was raised about the types of overarching commissions/task forces, etc. coming out of the TWGs, and whether they should be combined. (For example, it was pointed out that the H&C TWG is looking at an Ombudsman.) It appears that this will be important to do at a future in-person meeting of the AAG, which looks at all policy options side by side.

Members raised several questions regarding the tribal communities, including:

- who are the local governments referred to and do they include federally recognized tribal communities
- whether the tribal communities are being involved in discussions and could they be better integrated into the activities of the IAWG and PITWG
- how are dealing with overlapping responsibilities of agencies

Members got into some discussion of data and databases, making several points:

- IAWG is looking at the DCRA (Community Database) for 30 years of investment in public infrastructure, and also looking at state-declared disaster database
- ISER has a set of SAS programs and an automated model just waiting to be updated and used (this led to a discussion of data needs and what would be needed to run the model)

POLICY OPTION 2. Adopt a statewide planning initiative requiring that state agencies and local governments collaborate to address the effects of climate change on public infrastructure.

Discussion

The question was asked about whether this will be further expanded and what the time frame was for that (would it be expanded for the February AAG).

One member pointed out that there is precedence for moving towns such as Valdez.

There was discussion of how you can “require” agencies and government to collaborate, and how that can be made to occur. It was pointed out that the EA TWG has a collaborative option also.

A discussion followed of rebuilding. One member pointed out that FEMA will not rebuild in place. Another member pointed out that HUD did not rebuild homes close to sea but put them about 3 miles inland or moved to Anchorage, and that it is important not to destroy culture in process of moving.

POLICY OPTION 3. Enact sustainable solutions to adapt public infrastructure currently at significant risk, and future public infrastructure, to the effects of climate change. Accomplish by establishing a statewide capital program.

Discussion

One member pointed out that it was important to think about the composition of these groups, and that there is a parity issue. Another member stressed the coordination of all entities, as more important than anything else.

AAG Recommendation on all three options:

There was no objection to going forward with these three options, subject to the question about their implementation raised above.

Review and Approve Recommended Priority Options by Technical Working Group (TWG): Natural Systems

Presented by Jan Caulfield (Jan Caulfield Consulting), Facilitator

Members of the NS TWG identified themselves as present. Presentation began with description of the scope, focus, and membership of the TWG, followed by a description of the catalog. Specifically, the NS catalog is divided into three sections:

- Section I – Summary: Expected effects of climate change on Alaska’s habitats and dependent fish and wildlife species. Marine, Terrestrial, Freshwater.
- Section II - Catalog of relevant adaptation options State could take to adapt to changes in Alaska’s natural systems at Policy or Program level, with examples of “extended actions” that could be taken to implement
- Section III – “Cross-Cutting” Recommendations

The NS TWG used six basic criteria to evaluate options, scoring 1, 3, or 5, for a possible total score of 30: significance, benefits/effectiveness, costs, feasibility, timing, adaptive capacity.

The presentation then provided an overview of the options. The point was made that Options 1 & 7 could be combined, as could 5 & 6. Discussion then moved onto the individual options.

Option 1. Incorporate CC in commercial fisheries management. Consider cc impacts on species abundance and distribution when assessing fish stocks.

Discussion

One member raised two questions: (1) why focus on Arctic salmon fisheries (should also consider Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea fisheries; and (2) what about ocean acidification. Clarification was provided that State Arctic Salmon management plan would need to be developed to pair with Federal precautionary plan likely to be adopted by the NPFMC for all fish in federal Arctic waters.

Ocean acidification is addressed in the NS Catalog, Section I, Marine Environment and in recommended research/monitoring. It is very difficult to anticipate what the specific effects of ocean acidification might be and what role the State could take in adaptation or control of those effects.

Another member asked whether the TWG had considered co-management of fish and wildlife between tribal governments and the State of Alaska. This suggestion will be forwarded to the TWG for consideration.

Option 2. Modify wildland fire policies. Modify wildland fire policies in context of climate change.

No discussion

Option 3. Protect community water sources and instream flows. Identify and protect watersheds to meet estimated future water needs of communities and to reserve instream flows for productive fish habitat.

No discussion

Option 4. Expand control of invasive species. Support all-taxa Alaska Invasive Species Council; implement statewide strategic program for invasives.

Discussion

Another member mentioned that the option should be explicit about coordination with the Alaska Invasive Species Council and with Federal advisory group.

A member asked for clarification about whether invasive species were being discussed in this option in the context of climate change. Is the issue the changing range of invasive species? Or new species arriving by human activities (e.g., in ballast water, as shipping increases due to diminished ice). What’s considered to be invasive? What’s a result of climate change? Both were explained to be important, and the point is that will be faced with invasives in a number of ways.

AAG Recommendation on Option 4

- Clarify that the Alaska Invasive Species Council already exists, with recommendation for additional support and emphasis for the Councils’ work

- Include recommendation to improve coordination with the Federal Invasive Species Committee
- More clearly explain the connection of these recommendations to climate change. Distinguish these recommendations from actions that would be required to address invasives regardless of climate change effects.

Option 5. Revise fish and wildlife harvest regulations, as required for CC adaptation.

As with commercial fisheries management, one member asked whether the TWG had considered co-management of fish and wildlife between tribal governments and the State of Alaska. This suggestion will be forwarded to the TWG for consideration.

Option 6. Adopt adaptive F&W management to minimize or slow species loss. Coordinate state and federal management to minimize or slow loss of species where such mitigation is feasible.

Discussion

The group briefly discussed the wording “minimize or slow species loss.” At some point, it may not be possible to control loss. Perhaps rephrase in terms of understanding changes to fish and wildlife species more completely, so managers can respond in the most appropriate manner.

One member pointed out that the NEPA process is not easily adapted to I.A.

Option 7. Assist commercial fishing communities & users in adaptation. Assist communities and user groups in adapting to changes in commercial fishing industry necessitated by climate change.

Discussion

One member suggested adding “... and optimize fish processing practices” in the recommendation to “invest in and support potential new fishing opportunities.” He suggested that fish process waste composting could lead to improved agriculture opportunities.

Another member pointed out that options 1 and 7 should be linked more than they are now. Should consider putting them together.

Option 8. Develop capacity in new forestry and wood biomass opportunities. Invest in economic development and infrastructure to develop capacity to use insect or fire damaged timber and underutilized and new sources of wood biomass.

No discussion.

Option 9. Support local sustainable agriculture. Support and expand sustainable agriculture in Alaska at local level.

Discussion

One member pointed out a focus on rural sustainable opportunity for communities off road system.

Overall recommendation of the AAG:

Combine 1 & 7, 5 & 6.

Public Input and Announcements

Brian Rogers, Co-facilitator.

Jackie Poston provided information on the next AAG meeting, which will be at the Atwood Building, on February 6.

Wrap-up and Adjourn

Larry Hartig, Chair, Climate Change Sub-Cabinet