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BLM-Alaska Announces New Science Technical Advisory Panel Appointments

ANCHORAGE – Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell recently made appointments to fill eight vacancies on the North Slope Science Initiative Science Technical Advisory Panel (NSSI STAP). The STAP advises the NSSI Oversight Group on identifying and prioritizing inventory, monitoring and research needs on the North Slope. Robert A. Shuchman, Ph.D., of Ann Arbor, Michigan was reappointed for three years for his expertise in remote sensing. New appointees include:

- Robert V. Shears, of Barrow, Alaska, for expertise in North Slope traditional and local knowledge
- Robert M. Meyer, of Ketchikan, Alaska, for expertise in fisheries biology
- Jeffrey C. Organek, of Fairbanks, Alaska, for expertise in civil engineering
- Robyn P. Angliss, Ph.D., of Seattle, Washington, for expertise with marine mammals
- Ronni L. Wilcock, Ph.D., of Anchorage, Alaska, for expertise in landscape ecology
- Gerald McBeath, Ph.D., of Fairbanks, Alaska, representing academia
- Elizabeth H. Snyder, Ph.D., of Anchorage, Alaska, representing academia

Most of the new appointments are for a period of three years. There will be an additional call for nominations in the fall of 2014 to complete the fifteen-member panel.

"Although the Panel is solely advisory in nature, the contributions of Panel members are of great value to the Department of the Interior and have aided in the development of balanced decisions that serve the interest of all public land users," noted Secretary Jewell in her appointment letters.

"I look forward to working with the STAP and stakeholders in exploring scenarios that identify different ways the future may unfold, including potential energy development, resource extraction, and associated support activities on the North Slope and adjacent seas," said John Payne, Executive Director of the NSSI. "Regardless of which scenario comes to pass, NSSI member agencies need to be prepared with strategies to obtain information to make effective decisions."

The NSSI is an intergovernmental effort to increase collaboration at the local, state, and federal levels to address research, inventory, and monitoring needs as they relate to development activities on the North Slope of Alaska. Member organizations include the federal Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Bureau of Energy Management, Regulation, and Enforcement, and the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement; the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources and Alaska Department of Fish and Game; the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, and the North Slope Borough. NSSI advisory organizations include the United States Geological Survey, the Arctic Research Commission, the Department of Energy, the National Weather Service, and the United States Coast Guard.

For more information about the NSSI and the STAP, go to <http://www.northslope.org/>

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