Final Report

of the Alaska Arctic Policy Commission

January 30, 2015

Alaska Arctic Policy Commission

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Dear Alaskans,

Alaska is America's Arctic, and the Arctic is a dynamic region that is changing rapidly. We cannot let the perceptions of others – who might not understand its value or its people – determine Alaska's future. Alaska's future in the Arctic demands leadership by Alaskans.

Since the 1867 purchase of Alaska from Russia, the United States has been an Arctic nation. Unique challenges of sea ice and permafrost, the remoteness of communities, and distance from markets, but also exceptional opportunities, have always made it obvious to those living here that Alaska is "Arctic."

Alaskans are building on a history of vision, hard work and experience living in, developing and protecting our home, and now find ourselves at the forefront of emerging Arctic economies and resource development opportunities that have the potential to promote and create healthy resilient communities. Urgent action is required.

The Arctic presents us with unparalleled opportunities to meet the needs of Alaskans and the nation. As Alaskans we have a shared responsibility to understand the issues at stake, including the perspectives and priorities of Arctic residents, and to set a clear course for leadership now and into the future. The United States is just now beginning to realize it is an Arctic nation – and that it should assume the responsibilities that come with that reality, while assessing the potential. While the state may not always agree with the federal government, the actions of federal agencies clearly affect the interests of Alaskans. We want to chart our own destiny with a large say in how that destiny will unfold.

In 1955 Bob Bartlett addressed the delegates at the Alaska Constitutional Convention, stressing the importance of resource development to the "financial welfare of the future state and the well being of its present and unborn citizens..." He continued on to describe two very real dangers – exploitation without benefit and efforts to constrain development. These concerns are still very relevant today: "Two very real dangers are present. The first, and most obvious, danger is that of exploitation under the thin disguise of development. The taking of Alaska's mineral resources without leaving some reasonable return for the support of Alaska governmental services and the use of all the people of Alaska will mean a betrayal in the administration of the people's wealth. The second danger is that outside interests, determined to stifle any development in Alaska which might compete with their activities elsewhere, will attempt to acquire great areas of Alaska's public lands in order NOT to develop them until such time as, in their omnipotence and the pursuance of their own interests, they see fit."

Bob Bartlett's wisdom holds true today, as we see from actions of the federal government the potential for both dangers to occur. With this in mind, we expect from our federal government outer-continental

shelf revenue sharing; we want access to federal lands and more powers devolved from the federal government; we value our federally-protected wilderness and marine areas, but Alaskans should decide for ourselves whether we want any more; and we are concerned with climate change and want to partner with the federal government to adapt, rather than endure any federal attempts to solve world climate change on the backs of Alaskans.

Alaskans understand that our climate is changing; we are watching it happen, here, in our home. We are watching our permafrost melt, our shores erode and are on the verge of having some of the world's first climate change refugees. However, Alaskans will adapt to change when having the freedom to make our own economic decisions.

We are concerned that Alaskans will not be able to develop our economy in a way that will allow us to respond to, and prosper, in the face of change. All levels of government can work together to empower Alaskans to adapt and promote resilient communities. We believe that people should come first.

Economic development for the benefit of Arctic residents will continue to be a focus for the state of Alaska and we will continue to advocate for this be one of the priorities during the United States chairmanship of the Arctic Council. Economic development in the Arctic is economic development across the state: we all stand to gain by action.

A people-first approach recognizes that Alaska lacks some of the basic infrastructure needed for emergency and environmental response capacity, search and rescue, telecommunications, ports, roads and railways. We must address these as priorities, or they will remain barriers that hinder the next steps toward creating vibrant economies that support our Arctic and Alaskan communities. Resource development, shipping and tourism will happen across the North, with or without Alaska. The lack of infrastructure and the speed at which global development in the Arctic is occurring should be a call to action – to build and to create. To sit idly by only increases our risk while preventing us from capitalizing on the new opportunities. We need a new way forward – this is the Arctic imperative that the nation can respond to.

The timeliness of this report is consistent with the interest and commitment that our neighbors in the circumpolar north have shown in developing Arctic policies. In addition, it coincides with the warranted but past due attention that the United States has given the topic in the last twelve months. While U.S. action and interest in the region is important, Alaska needs to develop and pursue its own Arctic vision, consistent with our understanding of, and claim to, the Arctic.

This report does just that, setting forth a vision for Alaska's Arctic future. This vision consists of healthy resilient communities across the state built from economic and resource development, leadership, courage and hard work. The Alaska Arctic Policy and Implementation Plan presented here creates a framework of policy and recommended actions that can be built upon and adapted to the emerging reality of the Arctic as a place of opportunity, stewardship and progress. We propose that Alaska act strategically, directing its focus on the Arctic for the benefit of Arctic residents, all Alaskans, and the nation.

Sincerely,

Senator Lesil McGuire

Representative Bob Herron

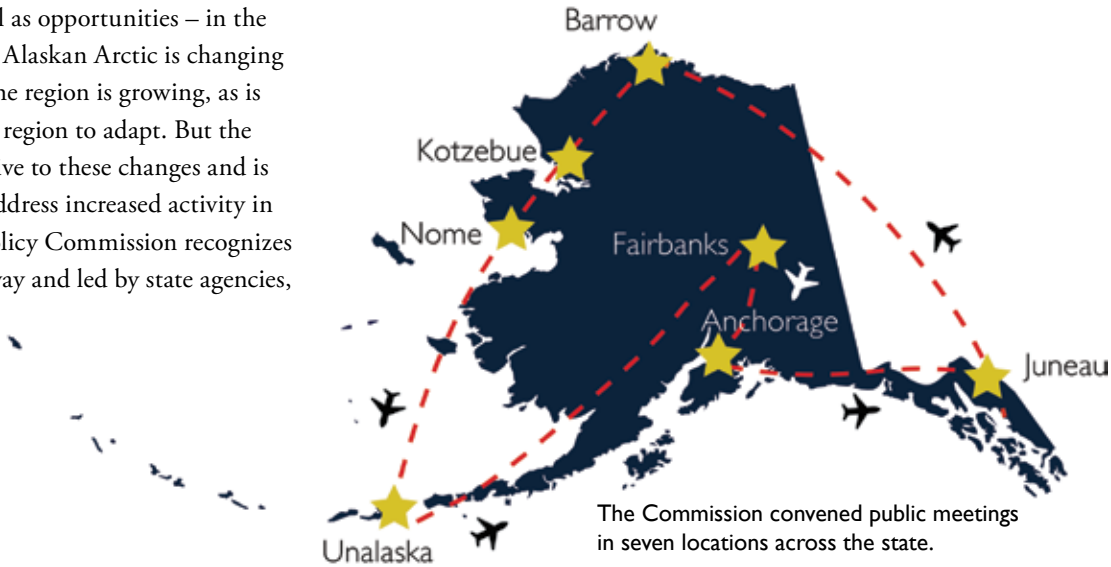
Introduction

The Alaska Arctic Policy Commission presents a vision of economic advancement, resilient communities, a healthy environment and thriving cultures. The Commission believes this vision can be achieved through strong Alaska leadership, utilization of expert knowledge within the state and through an increase of collaborative partnerships between a variety of entities, including the federal government.

The changing climate and globalization are heavy drivers of this new paradigm, even as the world's attention shifts to this emerging frontier. The geographic and regional response differences are less clear. In conjunction with heightened accessibility, climate change presents obstacles of unpredictability, variability and the associated heightened risks. Similarly, the effects of globalization are not uniform across the Arctic region. The North American Arctic is vastly different from the Scandinavian Arctic, for instance, in terms of economies of scale, response assets and infrastructure and governance systems. It is imperative that Alaskans adequately convey these challenges – as well as opportunities – in the spirit of Arctic cooperation. The Alaskan Arctic is changing and international attention on the region is growing, as is the list of needs required for the region to adapt. But the state of Alaska has been responsive to these changes and is well-positioned to continue to address increased activity in the region. The Alaska Arctic Policy Commission recognizes the many efforts already underway and led by state agencies, including:

- Resource and geospatial mapping
- Sub-area planning and emergency response
- Competitive fiscal regime
- Stable governance
- Workforce development and training
- Innovative technology development and application
- Sewer, water and sanitation upgrades
- Effective and inclusive permitting and regulatory system
- Science-based decision making
- Energy and power testing and research
- Northern port assessment
- Strong efforts for access to federal lands
- On and offshore development
- Transportation planning

The state is able to leverage these assets for great impact in the Arctic, where challenge and opportunity intersect, and offer its expertise to national and international efforts.



The Commission convened public meetings in seven locations across the state.

About the Alaska Arctic Policy Commission

In April 2012, the Alaska State Legislature established the Alaska Arctic Policy Commission to "develop an Arctic policy for the state and produce a strategy for the implementation of an Arctic policy." The Commission has conducted a baseline review of the Alaskan Arctic by evaluating strengths, deficiencies and opportunities in their Preliminary Report, submitted to the Alaska State Legislature in January 2014. Building on that foundation, the Commission has produced this Final Report that sets forth a proposed Arctic policy and implementation plan.

The state is an active and willing leader and partner in Arctic decision making, bringing expertise and resources to the table. Furthermore, the Commission has remained committed to producing a vision for Alaska's Arctic that reflects the values of Alaskans, provides a suite of options to capitalize on the opportunities and mitigate risk and that will remain relevant and effective in the future.

Alaska's Arctic policy will guide state initiatives and inform U.S. domestic and international Arctic policy in beneficial ways that ensure Alaska's people and environment are healthy and secure. The Commission has considered a broad diversity of Alaskan perspectives, drawing from an internal wealth of knowledge, while considering the national and international context of ongoing Arctic initiatives. This Final Report summarizes the Commission's findings and serves as the basis for both the Alaska Arctic Policy and the Implementation Plan.

The Alaska Arctic Policy Commission has, in this report to Alaskans, provided:

1. A review of economic, social, cultural and environmental factors of relevance to the Arctic and more broadly to all Alaskans.

2. A draft Alaska Arctic Policy, which drew on vision and policy statements developed through Commission consensus, that aims to reflect the values of Alaskans and provide guidance for future decision making.

3. An Implementation Plan that presents four lines of effort and strategic recommendations that form a suite of potential independent actions for legislative consideration.

In its review of economic, social, cultural and environmental considerations it was important to the Commission to portray the breadth of the issues that were considered in relation to the Arctic. The following discussion and statements review this more fully and provide some context for the Commission's work on the resulting Arctic Policy and Implementation Plan.

For the purposes of its research the Commission applied the geographic definition of the U.S. Arctic set out in the Arctic Research and Policy Act (ARPA) – [A]ll United States… territory north of the Arctic Circle and all United States territory north and west of the boundary formed by the Porcupine, Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers; all contiguous seas, including the Arctic Ocean and the Beaufort, Bering and Chukchi Seas; and the Aleutian chain."[1] The Commission recommends that federal agencies use the complete ARPA 1984 definition and understand that in terms of international policy all of Alaska should be considered the U.S. Arctic.

1 Arctic Research and Policy Act of 1984. Pub. L. 98–373, title I, § 112, July 31, 1984, 98 Stat. 1248

Arctic Boundary as defined by the Arctic Research and Policy Act (ARPA)

Review of Alaska's Arctic – A Foundation that Rests upon Economic and Resource Development

The state of Alaska has been engaged in Arctic development and protection since statehood, in 1959. Prior to statehood peoples of the region pioneered resource management, development and conservation for the benefit of the region. With statehood came the promise that Alaska's significant land and resource base would build its economy and support its citizenry.[2] Today, oil and gas development is a third of its economic activity and provides roughly 90% of Alaska's general fund revenue; minerals, timber, seafood and tourism contribute to the balance. Alaska has over 45 years of oil and gas development experience in the Arctic and over 100 years of mining experience.[3] The Trans Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) is an example of a transformative infrastructure and resource development that required a solid vision and collaboration to complete in 1977. Still in operation today, TAPS has transported over 17 billion barrels of oil from the North Slope to the Valdez Marine Terminal where it is loaded on tankers headed south.

The Arctic will inevitably see expanding development as it is increasingly the focus of new commercial opportunities for resource exploration, development and production. While Alaska has long been the air crossroads of the world, changing Arctic maritime access could mean more efficient and expeditious delivery of extracted resources to markets across the globe. Arctic marine traffic is primarily driven by globalization of the region and consequently the ability to move cargo faster connecting Arctic natural resources with global markets. Alaska's maritime industry has prudently operated in these waters for nearly a century. A decrease in sea ice and increase in activity mandate continued and long-term investment in our maritime assets. Many organizations are actively engaged in this arena. These and other partners have an important role to play in maritime safety and security and in collaborating with the state and industries to establish best practices for safe development of the Arctic.

The vast mineral and hydrocarbon reserves make the Alaskan Arctic attractive for investment. However, development is challenged by distance to markets, limited infrastructure, costs and risks attendant to its remoteness, challenging weather and environmental conditions and a dwindling subfreezing season necessary for maintaining ice roads and conditions suitable for safe travel and operation within the Arctic.[4] Despite this challenging environment, exploration and development investment in the Arctic has steadily increased and will continue to do so if commodity prices remain high and Alaska remains competitive for investment dollars.[5] Alaska is in a global race to attract investment that will open new opportunities in the Arctic.

To encourage new capital investment and secure the benefits of new resource development upon which state and local communities depend, Alaska and its federal counterparts must continue to spearhead new strategies to keep Alaska competitive. The state has some of the most sophisticated interagency coordination and permitting processes in the country, with the expertise, experience and commitment to safely develop the Alaskan Arctic's vast resources. With this history and experience, Alaska is well-positioned to respond to increased resource development activity in the Arctic.

Some Alaskan Arctic communities are currently supporting new resource extraction projects. These communities recognize that oil, gas and mining industries offer meaningful employment, stable cash economies and reliable municipal revenues that support clean water, sanitation, health clinics, airports and other infrastructure necessary for strong, safe and healthy communities. While circumstances differ among local governments, resource development projects often generate an influx of new revenue sources. This new revenue has, in many cases, afforded local governments the resources to expand emergency response and search and rescue capabilities, take an active role in oil spill preparedness and implement meaningful measures to protect regional ecosystems and local food sources that are critical to a subsistence culture. Resource development also holds the potential to increase access to affordable energy in remote communities with staggering energy costs.

It is imperative to balance new resource development opportunities – both on- and offshore – with safeguards that consider possible environmental impacts. Although debate of potential risks to the environment and impact on subsistence

2 Alaska State Constitution sections: 8.1 and 8.2

3 Banet, Jr., Arthur C., Oil and Gas Development on Alaska's North Slope: Past results and future prospect, USDOI – BLM – Alaska, Open File Report 34, March 1991; See Table 1, www.blm.gov/pgdata/etc/medialib/blm/ak/aktest/ofr.Par.49987.File.dat/OFR_34.pdf (Accessed May 2013)

4 USGCRP. 2009. Regional climate impacts: Alaska. in T.R. Karl, J.M. Melillo, and T.C. Peterson (Editors), Global climate change impacts in the United States: A state of knowledge report from the U.S. Global Change Research Program. Cambridge University Press, New York, N.Y., p. 139-144, http://downloads.globalchange.gov/usimpacts/pdfs/climate-impacts-reports.pdf (Accessed May 2013).

5 Haley, S., M. Klick, N. Szymoniak, and A. Crow. 2011. Observing trends and assessing data for Arctic mining. Polar Geography 34:1-2, 37-61.

resources is contentious, dialogue that addresses these issues is constructive and solution-oriented. This discourse includes ensuring that rural development includes protections for subsistence resources, cultural identity and lands, while providing needed infrastructure, services and employment training opportunities.

Emerging resource development opportunities, newly accessible maritime routes and public investment in construction and infrastructure will create an increased demand for educational resources and skilled workforces. The state university system, with industry and nonprofit partners, is actively engaged in delivering quality training and meeting the needs of a future workforce.

The balance between economic prosperity – which in Alaska rests on resource development – and socio-environmental health should result in more resilient communities. For rural Alaskans this means both active participation in cash and subsistence economies, in additional to traditional lifeways. 'Resilient communities' is an expression that captures both the intent and challenge of adaptability in planning for Alaska's Arctic future. The justification for addressing Arctic issues is not only to better understand increasing changes or human activity in the region, but to recognize the presence of Alaskans and their corresponding needs to enjoy a quality of life consistent with and responding to national standards, traditional ways of living and a remote Arctic environment.

Community engagement helps to find balance and build strong partnerships between local government, tribal and state entities and the private sector. Collaboration among these various levels occurs frequently and successfully in Alaska. Arctic communities affected by new development prospects are engaged during all phases of a project's development. Partnership also extends beyond the state, and Alaska is well-suited to lead national and international dialogue on resource development in the Arctic. Subject matter experts and state leaders lend a strong voice of knowledge and expertise to resource management and development opportunities as they emerge in the Arctic.

Safe and effective infrastructure relies on economic and resource development while contributing to community resilience. The state has invested heavily in infrastructure development. This development is critical not only to maritime transportation, but to moving goods and services between and to communities throughout Alaska. Investment in Alaska's transportation system is a perennial issue for state and federal agencies that weigh an ever-expanding list of needs against dwindling resources. Increased change and activity in the Arctic will place further demands on the state's transportation abilities. In the Arctic, a region where infrastructure often follows resource development, the majority of communities are not connected to the state or national road systems. Thus, maritime and aviation routes become more critical. Ports, airports, road and rail all play a significant role in the development of the region's resources, in

community resupply, safety and security, healthcare delivery and in future economic activity. The state of Alaska continues to have a fundamental position of addressing these necessary demands, the solution to which is a robust economy supported by active and prudent resource development.

Beyond transportation hurdles, Arctic peoples experience a demanding physical environment that can be harsh on structures like homes, schools, local government offices and health clinics. There is a wide array of efforts in place to address these issues, including a weatherization program, energy planning, applied research on power and energy and cold weather housing innovation. A long history of design and construction materials that are not responsive to northern and remote conditions has resulted in inefficient heating and electrical systems, poorly insulated or ventilated homes and structural deficiencies that are not able to withstand permafrost changes or freeze/thaw cycles. Alaska's Arctic geography and remoteness also make it difficult to build, maintain and provide reliable communication services at an affordable price. Even with the fast-paced change of communications technology, which brings more efficient and cost-effective solutions over time, the economics of statewide broadband infrastructure deployment remain challenging. The state is leading activities that address this challenge, working with the private sector to identify gaps and improve telecommunications.

One of the state's priorities – expressed in projects, planning and funding – is to see more affordable energy in every Alaskan community. Communities and regions are actively pursuing solutions to the high cost of energy through energy resource mapping, community consultation, partnerships, funding and proper permitting. While progress has been made, Alaska's rural communities pay the highest prices for energy in the United States, a difficult discrepancy to address. One major factor contributing to high costs is a lack of regional energy supply systems such as electrical grids or gas pipeline networks. For interconnecting villages, distance, lack of infrastructure and impacts of melting permafrost on existing infrastructure are huge and costly impediments. However, increased connectivity or the development of more efficient microgrids, (isolated systems individual to a community), have the potential to significantly reduce energy costs.

Substantial progress has been made on the development of local, often renewable, energy sources to offset some of the diesel fuel use.[6] In villages where residents must spend more than half of their annual income on fuel and electricity, even modest economic activity such as maintaining a local consumer economy, is severely limited. Reduced economic activity compromises the effectiveness of local governments, schools and utilities. Addressing high energy costs will incentivize Arctic industrial operations. In the recent past, the state legislature and the executive branch have created and funded many substantial programs and tools focused on energy and power issues.

Over the past 50 years the state of Alaska and its federal partners have supported community sanitation systems in rural Alaska. The state continues to put resources toward addressing rural water and sanitation needs, examining best practices and facilitating innovative solutions that result in healthier communities. Rural communities are devising innovative solutions to afford operations and maintenance bills for water and wastewater systems even as they respond to aging systems that are failing. In places with job scarcity and low household income, the cost of water is a significant economic issue that leads to household water rationing that escalates serious public health problems.

Combinations of socio-economic and environmental factors, preventive measures and clinical treatment, have the potential to significantly impact and improve Alaskan community wellbeing. A rapidly changing environment, evolving social and governance systems and increasing human activity in Alaska's Arctic exacerbate the challenges of providing adequate healthcare, medical emergency response and preventative services. Service capacity in the region – whether in the form of local or state government, federal agencies or Alaska Native health organizations – is increasing, and a high percentage of resources are allocated to respond to the area's needs. At the same time, many rural villages are actively working to address pervasive alcoholism and substance abuse problems, suicide and domestic and sexual violence. Many communities have some degree of law enforcement, which the state continues to address through investments in the State Troopers, Village Public Safety Officers, and Village Police Officers. Beyond additional resources, solutions do come with robust economic development and support for traditional ways of living.

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6 Irwin, Conway. Displacing Diesel May Prove Cost-Prohibitive in Rural Alaska. August 1, 2013.

One of the most crucial components of Alaska Natives' traditional ways of living is food security. Based on initial work in Alaska, the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) found that food security is synonymous with environmental health, and includes the concepts of availability, accessibility, the Inuit ecosystem and identity, livelihood, preference of food, traditional knowledge, management, community and social networks, responsibility and accountability to educate youth, stewardship and the protection of the environment and culture.[7] Changing environmental conditions threaten food security by reducing the efficacy of subsistence hunting due to changes in the weather and ice, impacting subsistence species distribution and health and added strain on food preservation and storage. The economic, health, social, cultural and spiritual values of all Alaskan Arctic communities are closely tied to a subsistence-reliant lifestyle. Alaska is world-renowned for its diverse and abundant wildlife, ranging from some of the largest free-ranging caribou herds in the world to a wide variety of marine mammals including several iconic to the Arctic such as the bowhead whale and walrus. The region supports important nesting habitat for a wide range of waterfowl species. Alaskans also depend on sustainable fisheries for their sustenance, livelihood, and recreation. Fishing is a major source of food for Alaskans and a provider of employment and economic. This is an area where the state has excelled, in cooperation with many stakeholders.

7 North Slope Regional Food Security Workshop: How to Assess Food Security from an Inuit Perspective: Building a Conceptual Framework on How to Assess Food Security in the Alaskan Arctic. Inuit Circumpolar Conference, November, 2013.

MANAGING DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD SECURITY

A good example of how Alaska's Arctic communities have managed development and food security is the Red Dog Mine, which produces zinc, lead and silver ore from one of the largest base metal deposits in the world, and is owned by NANA Regional Corporation (NANA), an Alaska Native Corporation, and operated by Teck Alaska. Before initial development began, NANA directly engaged in a decades-long dialogue with their Inupiat shareholders to determine how resource development would affect their region. As a result of this extensive dialogue, NANA and Cominco (now Teck Alaska, LLC) signed an innovative operating agreement in 1982 that protects the subsistence resources of the Inupiat of Northwest Alaska and contributes to the regional economy with the production of valuable zinc and lead concentrate at the Red Dog Mine. The agreement also created a management and oversight committee consisting of members of NANA and Cominco and a Subsistence Committee consisting of Elders from neighboring communities who regularly work with mine officials to address local concerns regarding subsistence impacts. The mine has proven to be an economic catalyst in the region while protecting the traditional Inupiat lifeways.

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There are many institutions, organizations, private sector and government agencies conducting research in the Arctic that collaborate with one another and with international partners to accomplish assessment, monitoring and modeling. A short list of priorities were identified as highly urgent problems including: economic and socio-economic factors affecting community wellbeing and ability to adapt; human physiological, behavioral and mental health; civil and industrial infrastructure planning; ocean acidification and its possible impacts on subsistence and commercial fisheries; tracking of trans-boundary contaminants and persistent pollutants and their cumulative impacts on Arctic inhabitants and ecosystems. There is a trend toward more community-driven research and the state of Alaska is – and should be – increasingly involved in setting the research agenda. Alaska state agencies are active and engaged participants in these discussions at local, national and international levels and by actively monitoring trans-boundary contaminants (Department of Environmental Conservation), collaborating with the University of Alaska system to study shipping and related considerations for commerce and international trade (Department of Commerce Community and Economic Development), and monitoring, research, and managing fish and wildlife populations across the Arctic region (Department of Fish & Game).

Ensuring a sound economy and quality of life for its residents is a key concern facing the Arctic. Equally important is the protection of the environment. Rapid warming, reduced summer sea ice extent, thawing permafrost and a variety of other climate-related changes are affecting people and the physical environment in the Arctic.[8] Diminishing sea ice and ocean acidification has multiple impacts that change marine productivity and shift habitats and trophic structures in the ocean.[9] Persistent organic pollutants and heavy metals such as mercury, lead and cadmium originate from sources outside Alaska and reach the Arctic by air and water. Once present, they accumulate through the food web and affect the health of individual animals and humans. Alaska is concerned about the potential impacts of vessel traffic and development activity outside U.S. jurisdiction, transiting close to U.S. waters, from lower latitudes and over the poles as sources of pollution, litter and sewage that could have significant impacts on marine and terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity. The Arctic region is particularly vulnerable to drastic climate-related changes such as: decreased summer sea-ice extent, increases in permafrost melt, glacial retreat, coastal erosion, ocean acidification and changing vegetation and wildlife patterns that will impact food security, national security and economic security.[10] Strong storms have increased in occurrence along the coasts and in the absence of summer and fall sea ice cover threaten coastal communities.[11]

Climate change is a global challenge and Alaska's citizens and its economy should not bear the consequences of mitigation. Economic development provides funding for needed infrastructure that will empower Alaskans to adapt, respond and plan for changes that may result from sources beyond its jurisdiction. The state is actively monitoring and assessing major and irreversible impacts on biodiversity, ecosystems and the well-being of indigenous peoples and Arctic communities.

8 Arctic Report Card: Update for 2013. NOAA Arctic Research Program. December 12, 2013.

9 Hinzman L.D, Deal C.J., McGuire A.D., Mernild S.H., Polyakov I.V., and Walsh J.E. Trajectory of the Arctic as an integrated system. Ecological Applications, 23(8), 1837-1868, 2013.

10 Chapin, F. S., III, S. F. Trainor, P. Cochran, H. Huntington, C. Markon, M. McCammon, A. D. McGuire, and M. Serreze, 2014: Ch. 22: Alaska. Climate Change Impacts in the United States: The Third National Climate Assessment, J. M. Melillo, Terese (T.C.) Richmond, and G. W. Yohe, Eds., U.S. Global Change Research Program, 514-536. doi:10.7930/J00Z7150.

11 Stewart, B.C., K.E. Kunkel, L.E. Stevens, L. Sun, and J.E. Walsh. Regional Climate Trends and Scenarios for the U.S. National Climate Assessment. Part 7. Climate of Alaska, NOAA Technical Report NESDIS 142-7, 60 pp., 2013.

Oscar Avellaneda | ION

Conclusion

This review demonstrates that economic, social, cultural and environmental health and well-being provide a fundamental and intentional starting point for the work and direction of the Alaska Arctic Policy Commission. Some key lessons emerge, however, from the previous overview:

- The state's economic and community growth depends on the prudent development of its rich resource endowment, most importantly on oil resources
- The state has a long history of successfully and responsibly developing said resources for the benefit of Alaskans and the United States
- The Alaskan Arctic requires special attention to protection of subsistence resources and the health of the environment on which they rely
- The food security of local residents and indigenous peoples is an intelligent measure by which to stake success and should encompass ecosystem and cultural health
- Alaskan communities remain challenged by insufficient water and sanitation systems, high costs of energy, distance to healthcare delivery and lack of transportation infrastructure.

The Commission has addressed these lessons directly and indirectly through its four strategic lines of effort and recommendations and can point to each as motivation – Economic and Resource Development, Response Capacity, Community Health and Science and Research.

The Alaska Arctic Policy Commission is building on a legacy of state efforts and believes that it is important to provide Alaskans with a well-vetted, comprehensive overview of the issues that impact the economic, social, cultural and environmental health and well-being of the region. These issues are balanced against the technical, physical and fiscal constraints facing the state and region; scope of the Commission's work and authority; and jurisdictional authority of the State of Alaska. Over the course of two years, the Commission has heard from a wide array of interest groups and partners about just how large and complex an issue Arctic Policy is now and will continue to be in the future. The following Alaska Arctic Policy and Implementation Plan demonstrate where focused attention is needed to have the greatest impact.

Alaska's Arctic Policy

The Alaska Arctic Policy Commission submits to the Legislature for consideration this language for an Alaska Arctic Policy bill. It is possible that through the legislative process changes will be made.

An Act Declaring the Arctic Policy of the State

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT

***Section. 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to read:

(a) The legislature finds that

(1) the state is what makes the United States an Arctic nation;

(2) the entirety of the state is affected by the activities and prosperity in the Arctic region, and conversely, the Arctic region is affected by the activities and prosperity in the other regions of the state;

(3) residents of the state, having lived and worked in the Arctic region for decades, have developed expert knowledge regarding a full range of activities and issues involving the region;

(4) residents of the state recognize the risks that come with climate variability and emerging threats to ecosystems, as well as increased maritime activity, but are optimistic that the skillful application of expertise, coupled with circumpolar cooperation, will usher in a new era of economic and resource development that will improve the quality of life for residents of the state;

(5) the development of the state's natural resources in an environmentally and socially responsible manner is essential to the development of the state's economy and to the well-being of the residents of the state;

(6) respect for the indigenous peoples who have been the majority of the inhabitants of the Arctic region for thousands of years and who depend on a healthy environment to ensure their physical and spiritual well-being is critical to understanding and strengthening the Arctic region;

(7) the United States, other nations, and international bodies, including the Arctic Council, are rapidly developing Arctic strategies and policies, and therefore it is essential that both the state and the nation communicate the reality, richness and responsibility that comes with being in the Arctic, including communicating the need to provide safety, security and prosperity to the region;

(8) it is essential for the state and federal government to strengthen their collaboration on Arctic issues, including coordination when creating strategies, policies and implementation plans related to the Arctic, as both continue to engage in international circumpolar activity;

(9) the state should develop and maintain capacity, in the form of an official body or bodies within the executive or legislative branch, or both, to develop further strategies and policies for the Arctic region that respond to the priorities and critical needs of residents of the state.

(b) It is the intent of the legislature that this declaration of Arctic policy

(1) be implemented through statutes and regulations;

(2) not conflict with, subjugate, or duplicate other existing state policy;

(3) guide future legislation derived from the implementation strategy developed by the Alaska Arctic Policy Commission;

(4) clearly communicate the interests of residents of the state to the federal government, the governments of other nations and other international bodies developing policies related to the Arctic.

Sec. 2. AS 44.99 is amended by adding a new section to read:

Sec. 44.99.105. Declaration of state Arctic policy.

(a) It is the policy of the state, as it relates to the Arctic to,

(1) uphold the state's commitment to economically vibrant communities sustained by development activities consistent with the state's responsibility for a healthy environment, including efforts to

(A) ensure that Arctic residents and communities benefit from economic and resource development activities in the region;

(B) improve the efficiency, predictability, and stability of permitting and regulatory processes;

(C) attract investment through the establishment of a positive investment climate and the development of strategic infrastructure;

(D) sustain current, and develop new, approaches for responding to a changing climate;

(E) encourage industrial and technological innovation in the private and academic sectors that focuses on emerging opportunities and challenges;

(2) collaborate with all levels of government, tribes, industry and nongovernmental organizations to achieve transparent and inclusive Arctic decision-making resulting in more informed, sustainable and beneficial outcomes, including efforts to

(A) strengthen and expand cross-border relationships and international cooperation, especially bilateral engagements with Canada and Russia;

(B) sustain and enhance state participation in the Arctic Council;

(C) pursue opportunities to participate meaningfully as a partner in the development of federal and international Arctic policies, thereby incorporating state and local knowledge and expertise;

(D) strengthen communication with Arctic Council Permanent Participants, who include and represent the state's indigenous peoples;

(E) reiterate the state's long-time support for ratification of the Law of the Sea Treaty;

(3) enhance the security of the state through a safe and secure Arctic for individuals and communities, including efforts to

(A) enhance disaster and emergency prevention and response, oil spill prevention and response and search and rescue capabilities in the region;

(B) provide safe, secure and reliable maritime transportation in the areas of the state adjacent to the Arctic;

(C) sustain current, and develop new, community, response, and resource-related infrastructure;

(D) coordinate with the federal government for an increase in United States Coast Guard presence, national defense obligations and levels of public and private sector support; and

(4) value and strengthen the resilience of communities and respect and integrate the culture and knowledge of Arctic peoples, including efforts to

(A) recognize Arctic indigenous peoples' cultures and unique relationship to the environment, including traditional reliance on a subsistence way of life for food security, which provides a spiritual connection to the land and the sea;

(B) build capacity to conduct science and research and advance innovation and technology in part by providing support to the University of Alaska for Arctic research consistent with state priorities;

(C) employ integrated, strategic planning that considers scientific, local and traditional knowledge;

(D) safeguard the fish, wildlife and environment of the Arctic for the benefit of residents of the state;

(E) encourage more effective integration of local and traditional knowledge into conventional science, research and resource management decision making.

(b) It is important to the state, as it relates to the Arctic, to support the strategic recommendations of an implementation plan developed by the Alaska Arctic Policy Commission to encourage consideration of recommendations developed by the Alaska Arctic Policy Commission. Priority lines of effort for the Arctic policy of the state include

(1) promoting economic and resource development;

(2) addressing the response capacity gap in the Arctic region;

(3) supporting healthy communities; and

(4) strengthening a state-based agenda for science and research in the Arctic.

(c) In this section, "Arctic" means the area of the state north of the Arctic Circle, north and west of the boundary formed by the Porcupine, Yukon, and Kuskokwim Rivers, all contiguous seas, including the Arctic Ocean, and the Beaufort, Bering, and Chukchi Seas, and the Aleutian Chain, except that, for the purpose of international Arctic policy, "Arctic" means the entirety of the state.

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Implementation Plan

Introduction

The Commission has framed its strategic recommendations around to four lines of effort – economic and resource development, response capacity, healthy communities, and science and research. As part of the Implementation Plan for the Arctic Policy these recommendations present a collective menu of options for consideration and evaluation by the Alaska State Legislature. The lines of effort in the Implementation Plan are those the Commission thought would benefit from immediate attention and state of Alaska leadership to build productive and collaborative partnerships.

These four lines of effort, ultimately address the socio-economic factors related to Arctic activity, while responding to change, opportunity and risk. The Commission considers these the building blocks from which areas that were not addressed directly – education, healthcare, language, domestic violence, etc. – can find innovative solutions that correspond to unique circumstance and statewide resonance. Alaska's Arctic must be both economically and environmentally robust, achieved through economic and resource development and respect for the environment upon which Alaskans depend.

Within each line of effort, Commissioners have identified strategic recommendations for priority consideration given their potential scale of impact. These have been further developed under the Implementation Plan as a suite of options for future action. The Implementation Plan provides 'shovel-ready' actions for consideration by state policymakers as interest develops and resources become available.

In an increasingly busy Arctic it is critical that Alaska proceed prudently. The work of the Commission is a culmination of the many years of effort, resources and attention the Legislature has devoted to further understanding the current and emerging challenges in the Arctic. Through this process the Commission has become aware and dependent upon coordination among jurisdictions, cooperation at all levels of government – including international, national, state, local and tribal – and sought to balance multiple values to protect, promote and enhance the well-being of the Alaskan Arctic including the people, flora, fauna, land, water and other resources. Alaska should fully engage and assume leadership now in order to ensure the development of policies that align with the priorities and needs of Alaskans.

Line of Effort #1 - Promote Economic and Resource Development

The Commission recognizes that natural resource development is the most important economic driver in Alaska, today and for the future. Alaska has successfully integrated new technology, best practices and innovative design into resource development projects in Alaska's Arctic and must continue to be a leader. The strong economy established by prudent natural resource development provides a base for Alaska's Arctic communities to thrive by creating new economic opportunities such as infrastructure, jobs, contracting services and community revenue sharing. The State must continue to foster an economic investment climate that encourages and promotes development of the Arctic.

A sound foundation encourages the creation and leverage of economic opportunity leveraged through stable and strong state and federal government investment; mobilization of capital by Alaska Native regional and village corporations; and local economies that are supported by tourism, fishing, arts and other small businesses. Investment is necessary to take advantage of Alaska's strategic location in the opening Arctic, which is critical to the nation's security and important to global shipping routes.

While the state is rich in resources, there are five major barriers and respective approaches to economic and resource development to consider:

- Capital Intensity – recognize that high capital costs are required to develop new infrastructure and natural resources in the Arctic and to address high energy and transportation costs in communities.
- Regulatory Uncertainty – advocate for sound regulatory policies that are legally defensible and minimize third-party lawsuits, which increase the risk and cost to project planning and discourage investment in the Arctic.
- Revenue Sharing - find new ways to cost-share between communities or with neighboring jurisdictions to ensure concrete community benefits distributed and embraced by Arctic residents.
- Distance to/from markets and communication centers – identify and invest in small-scale value-added businesses that displace outside dependence; evaluate and cultivate new markets; and invest in improved communication systems in Alaska's Arctic.
- Access – demand access to/through federal land holdings and consider state co-investment in resource-based infrastructure.

These concerns and considerations are critical when evaluating the Arctic. However, with increased national and international attention, the climate is ripe to implement an action plan to overcome basic challenges. The state should be strategic in its approach by leveraging assets currently in place and facilitating strategic investments. The state can do this by promoting competition and removing project barriers that promote sound sustainable investments and foster a climate for private investment.

Alaska's Arctic has an enviable resource base that, with careful consideration and state investment, will continue to produce returns to the state and its residents that ensure community health and vitality. Alaskans have long argued that economic development should not come at the cost of stewardship; federal agencies should respect Alaska's long-standing ability to deliver both.

Promote Economic and Resource Development, efforts to include:

- 1(a) Facilitate the development of Arctic port systems in the Bering Strait region to support export, response and regional development.
- 1(b) Strengthen or develop a mechanism for resource production-related revenue sharing to impacted communities.
- 1(c) Lead collaborative efforts between multiple levels of government that achieve predictable, timely and efficient state and federal permitting based on good information, sound science, clear legal foundation and reasonable economic feasibility.
- 1(d) Promote entrepreneurship and enterprise development.
- 1(e) Support and advocate for multiple-use of Arctic public and Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) lands and promote prudent oil and gas exploration and development in the Arctic.
- 1(f) Increase economic returns to Alaska and Alaskan communities and individuals from maritime and fisheries activities.
- 1(g) Support the continued exploration and development of the Ambler Mining District, Mid Yukon-Kuskokwim River and the Northern Alaskan Coal Province.
- 1(h) Build on and promote Alaska's position as a global leader in microgrid deployment and operation to advance a knowledge-based export economy, creating new jobs and revenue for the state.
- 1(i) Encourage foreign and domestic private sector capital investment in Alaska's resource industries through stable, predictable and competitive tax policies.

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Line of Effort #2 - Addressing the Response Capacity Gap

One of the primary motivating factors for addressing an "emerging Arctic" is the concern for human and environmental security in the face of increasing change and activity, even as that increased activity brings the benefit of additional response resources to the region. Alaska's response capacity – assets, planning, infrastructures to respond to oil pollution, search and rescue, or natural disasters – is measured by private sector, government, community and non-governmental resources. When considering strategic investment in infrastructure in the Alaskan Arctic, it is critical to understand the scope of the region in terms of its diversity and current resources. Differences in proximity, risk, geography and scale of challenge make evaluation of response capacity and the design of solutions difficult—a universal and encompassing approach is not plausible.

Time and distance are big logistic challenges for security and defense operations; Alaska's Arctic compounds these hurdles with a lack of communications and response infrastructure. Essentially, capabilities to address threat or aggression are sufficient; less sufficient are the capabilities to support the civil sector and execute oil spill and search and rescue response operations. The strains on these provisions are further stressed by the lack of 1) economic activity, 2) infrastructure, and 3) public awareness. Development of resources coincides with the ability to provide more adequate responses. This is extremely important as agencies and organizations responsible for responding are poorly resourced.

Industry carries the primary responsibility for prevention, preparedness and response; where economic activity or resource development occur the most response capacity can be found. Development of natural resources, shipping routes and tourism are activities happening on a global scale regardless of Alaska's participation. The lack of infrastructure and the speed at which global development in the Arctic is occurring should be a call to action. Response capacity will increase as economic opportunities are explored. Alaska's industry needs the tools and space to mature and prosper to establish appropriate safe guards to respond to the inherent

risks of our neighbors' development activities. Response resources will either be developed and provided by the companies, or through Oil Spill Response Organizations, the 'boots on the ground' for oil spill response. There is also a high level of very effective coordination and communication between the private sector, state and federal agencies and a collective recognition that no single entity can address Arctic issues, which reinforces the need for collaboration. The Alaska Regional Response Team is the state, federal and tribal coordinating body for response operations and is an effective mechanism for developing and implementing the Unified Plan and sub-area planning process, which provide a comprehensive guide to responding in the case of an oil spill with invaluable local input. Additional resources can be found in local government, e.g. the North Slope Borough currently conducts all Search and Rescue operations north of the Brooks Range.

Action is needed to enable the responsible development of resources; facilitate, secure, and benefit from new global transportation routes; and safeguard Arctic residents and ecosystems. Response infrastructure will by necessity require strong partnership and communication to prepare for incidents, respond, and develop best practices.

Address the Response Capacity Gap, including efforts to:

- 2(a) Ensure strengthened capacity within the Administration to address Arctic maritime, science, climate and security issues.
- 2(b) Support efforts to improve and complete communications and mapping, nautical charting, navigational infrastructure, hydrography and bathymetry in the Arctic region.
- 2(c) Expand development of appropriately integrated systems to monitor and communicate Arctic maritime information.
- 2(d) Facilitate and secure public and private investment in support of critical search and rescue, oil spill response and broader emergency response infrastructure.
- 2(e) Assure the state of Alaska Spill Prevention and Response programs have sufficient resources to meet ongoing spill prevention and response needs in the Arctic.
- 2(f) Strengthen private, public and nonprofit oil spill response organizations to ensure expertise in open water, broken ice, near shore and sensitive area protection; and be able to meet contingency plan requirements and operate effectively in the Arctic.
- 2(g) Ensure that a variety of response tools are readily available and can be deployed during an oil or hazardous substance discharge or release.
- 2(h) Foster and strengthen international partnerships with other Arctic nations, establishing bilateral partnerships with, in particular, Canada and Russia, to address emerging opportunities and challenges in the Arctic.

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Line of Effort #3 - Support Healthy Communities

Increasing changes and activity in the Alaskan Arctic are likely to hold enormous implications for the health and well-being of its inhabitants. In turn, socio-economic systems must react as additional stress is placed on existing and future infrastructure and global processes impact local planning. There is a strong correlation between vibrant economies and healthy communities. Socio-economic and environmental factors that lead to such healthy communities can mitigate adverse health impacts that may emerge in the future.

In an increasingly busy Arctic it is critical that Alaska continue to engage in transparent public processes that involve stakeholders, lead to informed decision making and hold decision makers accountable. Transparency requires coordination among jurisdictions, cooperation at all levels of government – international, national, state, local and tribal – with clearly-defined functions and roles for each participant. Additionally important is the balancing of multiple values to protect, promote and enhance the well-being of the Alaskan Arctic including the people, flora, fauna, land, water and other resources. Much of these requirements currently exist.

Local governments with active resource development work collaboratively with the state and industry to support and sustain the communities in their region. This effort ensures that rural development includes protections for subsistence resources, cultural identity and lands, while providing needed infrastructure, services, and employment training opportunities.

The justification for addressing Arctic issues is not only to better understand increasing changes taking place or human activity in the region, but to recognize the region's residents and their historical roots. Residents of the Alaskan Arctic have engrained and established practices and needs to maintain in order to enjoy a quality of life consistent with and responding to national standards, traditional ways of living and a remote Arctic environment. With increased attention to the Arctic, local communities should see corresponding workforce development, revenue sharing and access to affordable energy and transportation.

With sound economic opportunity for Alaskans the state can maintain a vibrant economy, driven by private sector growth and a competitive business environment that has the potential to deliver social benefits while responding to the needs for a healthy environment. The state of Alaska can seek a better quality of life for the whole Arctic region without compromising the economic security and well-being of other communities or the state as a whole; healthy marine and terrestrial ecosystems; and effective governance supported by meaningful and broad-based citizen participation.

Patrick Race | ION

Support Healthy Communities, including efforts to:

- 3(a) Foster the delivery of reliable and affordable in-home water, sewer, and sanitation services in all rural Arctic communities.
- 3(b) Reduce power and heating costs in rural Alaskan Arctic communities.
- 3(c) Support long-term strategic planning efforts that utilize past achievements, leverage existing methods and strengthen local planning that assesses and directs economic, community and infrastructure development, as well as environmental protection and human safety.
- 3(d) Anticipate, evaluate and respond to risks from climate change related to erosion and community infrastructure and services; and support community efforts to adapt and relocate when necessary.
- 3(e) Develop and support public education and outreach efforts that (a) enhance the understanding of the conservation of Arctic biodiversity and sustainable use of biological resources and management of natural resources and (b) promote public participation in development of fish and wildlife management plans within existing management systems and policies.
- 3(f) Enforce measures that protect and help further understanding of the food security of Arctic peoples and communities.
- 3(g) Identify and promote industry, community and state practices that promote sustainability of subsistence resources while protecting against undue Endangered Species Act (ESA) listings and broad-brush critical habitat designations.
- 3(h) Create workforce development programs to prepare Arctic residents to participate in all aspects and phases of Arctic development.

Todd Paris | UAF

Line of Effort #4 - Strengthen Science and Research

Alaska's future prosperity largely depends on the scientific, technological, cultural and socio-economic research it promotes in the Arctic in the coming years and its ability to integrate science into decision making. Ongoing and new research in the Arctic must be designed to help monitor, assess and improve the health and well-being of communities and ecosystems; anticipate impacts associated with a changing climate and potential development activities; identify opportunities and appropriate mitigation measures; and aid in planning successful adaptation to environmental, societal and economic changes in the region.

The vast amount of science and research conducted in the Alaskan Arctic is performed by a broad spectrum of interests, from the public to the private sector and includes non-governmental organizations, the state University system and many others. It is crucial that the state of Alaska is involved in the various forums that build the information base available to policy makers. Though local and traditional knowledge and subsistence activities inform many of the above entities' research priorities, activities and findings, there is a need for more effective use of traditional knowledge. Inquiry into how researchers can better collaborate with local peoples and include traditional knowledge into their projects is receiving more attention.

Observational systems are among the most effective means for monitoring and documenting change, improving inputs to models and informing permitting decisions. They are also a valuable way to meaningfully involve Arctic communities in research activities. Process studies can add to this knowledge and help to reveal the forces shaping ecosystem structure and function. In addition, the transfer of findings from process studies to models can reduce uncertainties and improve the accuracy of projections.

While models have practical use in developing strategies for managing wildlife and for sustainable and adaptable communities, civil infrastructure and economic development infrastructure, there are also concerns regarding the identification of the limitations of models developed to aid

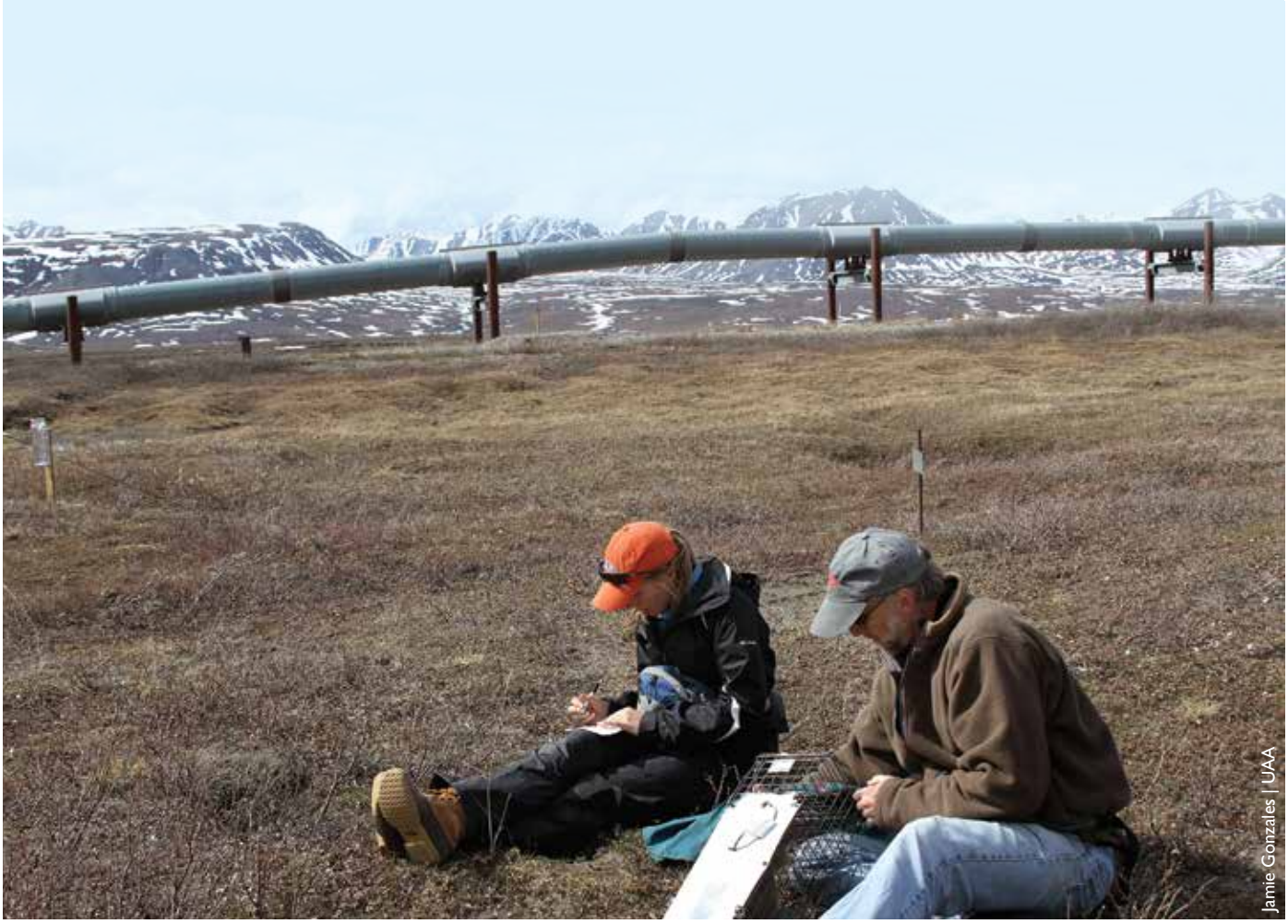
in decision making. Even as baseline data and component parameterizations improve, decision makers must have a clear understanding of uncertainties present in model projections in order to evaluate contingencies and determine proper levels of precaution in management and strategic approaches.

To ensure organized state input to federal, local and institutional decisions on Arctic research and monitoring needs, a process is needed to establish state government priorities guided by state objectives in the region. As the state's engagement with Arctic issues increases, the executive branch will play an important role in improving coordination of state agencies' positions in matters related to Arctic research. Alaska should pursue strategies to broaden and strengthen the influence of its agencies, its academic experts and its local governments and associations.

Benefits include increasing the knowledge available to decision makers in both the public and private sectors; strengthening and refining the results of data synthesis; reducing duplicative research; and enhancing the effectiveness of interdisciplinary research efforts. More coordinated research efforts driven by state of Alaska priorities would have significant impact for policy makers and decision makers being able to respond to opportunities and challenges in the emerging Arctic.

Strengthen Science and Research, including efforts to:

- 4(a) Ensure state funding to, and partnership with, the University of Alaska for Arctic research that aligns with state priorities and leverages the University's exceptional facilities and academic capacity.
- 4(b) Increase collaboration and strengthen capacity for coordination within the Arctic science and research community.
- 4(c) Strengthen efforts to incorporate local and traditional knowledge into science and research and use this collective knowledge to inform management, health, safety, response and environmental decisions.
- 4(d) Improve, support and invest in data collaboration, integration, management and long-term storage and archiving.
- 4(e) Support monitoring, baseline and observational data collection to enhance understanding of arctic ecosystems and regional climate changes.
- 4(f) Invest in U.S. Arctic weather, water and ice forecasting systems.
- 4(g) Update hydrocarbon and mineral resource mapping and estimates in the Alaskan Arctic.


Jamie Gonzales | UAA

Ken Tape

National and International Interests

The Alaska Arctic Policy Commission, as part of its two-year effort to identify the current state of the Arctic and make recommendations for responding to change and activity, recognizes that Alaska shares the region with others who have jurisdictional authority. The Bering Strait, for instance, is an international waterway; the federal government controls waters three miles beyond the state coastline and within the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone; and federal agencies own and manage federal lands within much of the Arctic. Alaskans have undertaken significant efforts to provide for the needs of Arctic residents through natural resource development and environmental protection. The Commission encourages the continued cooperation and partnership with the federal government and with other national and international interests in the development of strategies and policies that assure a beneficial future for the region.

The Commission has produced a number of recommendations that speak to those issues outside its authority, as they relate directly to the health and well-being of Alaskans. The Alaska Arctic Policy Commission recommends that the U.S. government and federal agencies consider:

- Adopting federal revenue sharing with the state and impacted communities from resource development opportunities on the Arctic Outer Continental Shelf (OCS).

- Sufficiently funding the U.S. Coast Guard to execute its assigned and emerging duties in the U.S. maritime Arctic without compromising its capacity to conduct all Alaskan and nearby international missions.

- Replacing the U.S. Coast Guard's Polar Class icebreakers and increasing the number of ice-capable cutters.

- Applying current fisheries management regimes to emerging fisheries of the Arctic region.

- Supporting the economic well-being of residents of the Arctic by maintaining the ability to access and, where appropriate, prudently develop natural resources in State and Federal upland and offshore areas, including the: Alaska National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) and oil and gas exploration and production in the 1002 area, National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A), and Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) lands.

- Improving the safety of shipping by implementing – in cooperation with Alaskan experts – the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Polar Code.

- Adopting a vessel-route system through the Bering Strait; and engaging the itinerant shipping community to join and help fund a policy framework to prevent and respond to oil spills in the Aleutians, the Bering Sea and the Arctic Ocean.

- Sufficiently funding the federal agencies whose mission it is to provide baseline data, monitoring, mapping, charting and forecasting.

- Designating a single coordinating agency and identifying a designated funding stream that will be responsive to climate change impacts requiring community relocation.

- Ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, ensuring freedom of the seas and clear navigation rights and national security interests while answering outstanding questions of the role of the International Seabed Authority and Article 234.

- Preparing the submission of an extended Continental Shelf claim beyond Alaska waters.

- Listening to and including Alaskans in federal decision-making now and in the future with emphasis on the Arctic Council process during the U.S. Chairmanship.

- Recognizing the unique and specific needs of Alaska in the development of policy, promoting approaches that accommodate Alaska conditions within federal efforts, such as the National Ocean Policy, Regional Planning Bodies and Marine Planning.

Specifically with regard to offshore development, the AAPC recommends to the federal government that it:

- Support Arctic-specific rules for Arctic OCS activity, including Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) and Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE)'s Arctic-specific regulations under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA), and call for demonstrated continual improvement by both the regulators and the regulated operators to ensure the safest possible oil and gas operations on the U.S. Arctic OCS.

- Encourage federal regulators to standardize conditions for OCS exploration by moving conditions out of individual leases and permits and into the regulations themselves, recognizing that some degree of individualized conditionality is needed for flexibility.

- Support the State of Alaska in working with federal regulators toward a "near miss" incidents database and the design and installation requirements of Arctic-specific safety.

- Establish an ongoing state-federal public forum on Arctic OCS Risk Management and Process Safety.

- Encourage continued circumpolar cooperation between regulators and other stakeholders.

- Support coordination within and between federal agencies towards Integrated Arctic Management (IAM) to develop a practical tool that supports improved safety, risk management and project success.

Alaska Arctic Policy Commission

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