

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service / U.S. Geological Survey

Climate Change Forum for Alaska

(Draft 2-9-07)

Background: Climatic changes and the effects on Alaskan flora and fauna challenge our quest to conserve the fish, wildlife, and plant resources entrusted. Climate Change was identified as a priority through the Future Challenges Workshop of June 2005, and this Climate Change Forum for Alaska is taking the issue to an applied level. Current scientific findings will be presented in a public forum on Day 1. This will set the stage for intra-agency planning workshops on Days 2 and 3. In Alaska, climatic effects are predicted to be more timely and significant, emphasizing the need for FWS and USGS to incorporate climate change into recommendations on research and monitoring priorities, management directions, outreach messages, and how to improve partner involvement. This Forum is the time to start planning our role in the bigger picture of global climate change. This is the opportunity to identify proactive strategies versus reactive responses.

Goals of the Forum:

- 1) Inform resource professionals about natural resources in Alaska that may be affected by climate change;
- 2) Strengthen communication and collaboration among FWS and USGS scientists and project leaders in Alaska.
- 3) Initiate a process to address the effects of climate change in Alaska considering our mission and statutory mandates;
- 4) Provide the opportunity for FWS cross-programmatic collaboration to address climate change concerns;

Desired Outcomes of the Forum:

- 1) Increase the awareness of climate change effects at regional (Alaska and Circumpolar) and local scales.
- 2) Utilize a workshop process to:
 - Identify priority issues within each of Alaska's Ecological Planning Units; Under these priority issues, identify priority research and monitoring needs, management directions, outreach and education, and partnerships; and
 - Explore broad management topics (Thematics) as they relate to climate change and statutory mandates, outline key issues and make recommendations for action.
- 3) Compile and report workshop recommendations and identify next steps.

Cover Photo Credits: Iceberg Scene, Erosion & Walrus Photos-Liz Labunski, FWS; Swimming Polar Bear-Geoff York, USGS; Kittlitz's Murrelet-Tamara Mills, FWS.

Day 1 – Technical Session/Scientific Presentations, Egan Convention Center, Anchorage

8:00- 8:10am	Welcome	Tom Melius (FWS-Alaska Regional Director), Leslie Holland-Bartels (USGS-Alaska Science Center Director)
8:10- 8:20am	Introductions	Dale Hall (FWS Director), Mark Myers (USGS Director)
8:20- 8:30am	Structure of the Forum	Ellen Lance (FWS), Tony DeGange (USGS-Alaska Science Center)
	<i>Morning Session</i>	Virginia Burkett – Chair (Coordinator, USGS Global Change Science)
8:30- 9:00am	Keynote – Overview of Climate Change in the Arctic	Bob Corell (Integration Team Chair, Arctic Climate Change Assessment)
9:30-10:00am	Vegetation Change in Alaska: Examples from the Fossil Record	Tom Ager (USGS, Research Geologist, Denver, CO)
10:00-10:30am	<i>Break</i>	
10:30-11:00am	Water Resources of Alaska: Historical and Future Climate-related Changes	Tim Brabets, Glenn Hodgkins, and Michelle Ann Walvoord (USGS, Water Resources Discipline)
11:00-11:30am	Current and Projected Climate-Induced Changes to Alaskan Permafrost	Gary Clow (USGS, Research Geologist, Denver, CO)
11:30- 1:00pm	<i>Lunch</i>	
	<i>Afternoon Session</i>	Tony DeGange – Chair (USGS, Alaska Science Center)
1:00- 1:30pm	Climate Change, Sea-Level Rise, and Coastal Erosion - Alaskan Arctic Coast	Don Forbes (Geological Survey of Canada) and Virginia Burkett (USGS)
1:30- 2:00pm	Response of Arctic Terrestrial Ecosystems	Terry Chapin (Institute of Arctic Biology, Univ. of Alaska-Fairbanks)
2:00- 2:30pm	Forest Dynamics and Fire	Glenn Juday (Univ. of Alaska Fairbanks)
2:30- 3:00pm	<i>Break</i>	
3:00- 3:30pm	Effects of Climate Change on Terrestrial Wildlife	Brad Griffith (USGS, Alaska Fish and Wildlife Coop. Research Unit)
3:30- 4:00pm	Sea Ice and Sea Ice-Dependent Marine Mammals	David Douglas and Steve Amstrup (USGS, Alaska Science Center)
4:00- 4:30pm	Perspectives of Indigenous Alaskans on Climate Change	Taqulik Hepa (North Slope Borough Dept. of Wildlife Mgt.)
4:30- 5:00pm	Implication for Adaptation: Putting Climate Change in a Mgt. Context	John Morton (Kenai Natl. Wildlife Refuge), Stephanie Simms (Kenai Watershed Forum) and Brad Stelfox (FOREM Consulting, Ltd)
5:00- 7:00pm	Poster Session & Social (Hors Devours & No Host Bar)	Hosted by <i>The Nature Conservancy and ABR, Inc. Environmental Research & Services</i>

