

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF GEOLOGICAL & GEOPHYSICAL SURVEYS

Geological Mapping Advisory Board Minutes
June 14, 2011 Meeting

The Alaska Geological Mapping Advisory Board held its spring meeting on Tuesday, June 14th, 2011 from 9:00 a.m. until 11:05 a.m. This teleconference was held in Fairbanks in the DGGS Conference Room, lower floor at 3354 College Road and at the Alaska Division of Oil and Gas offices in the Atwood Building in Anchorage.

ROLL CALL

Present:

Board Members:

Present were Board Chairman David Stanley and board members Peter Haeussler and Tom Homza (in Anchorage); Curtis Freeman and Paul Layer (in Fairbanks).

DGGS Staff: Rod Combellick, Melanie Werdon, De Anne Stevens, Dave LePain, Larry Freeman, Trystan Herriott, Trevelyn Lough, Jim Weakland, and April Woolery (in Fairbanks)

Guests: Steve Wright of Chevron and Ken Helmold of the Alaska Division of Oil & Gas (in Anchorage)

Agenda: Approved as written.

Minutes (February 2, 2011 Meeting): Approved as written.

OLD BUSINESS

Status of FY-2011 StateMap Program Funding – Rod Combellick: Funding was awarded May 31, 2011. Alaska received \$221,599, slightly lower than last year's amount of \$226,152.

Update on 2010 StateMap products being submitted to the USGS:

Tyonek-Capps Glacier, year 2 of 2 – Trystan Herriott: Surface outcrops are limited in this area, so the project crew pulled together subsurface information from well logs and seismic information from the Division of Oil & Gas along with aeromagnetic data from the USGS.

Although some of the data were confidential, DGGS staff were able to build a cohesive picture of the subsurface geology of this area. Their goal is to publish the map in 2012. De Anne Stevens and Richard Reger produced a surficial geologic map of this area as well, which may be published by the end of 2011.

Kivalina – De Anne Stevens: The deliverable for this project is a surficial geologic map, which is currently in draft stage. The projected publish date is 2012. The project crew will pursue hazards mapping of the area with other funds, as StateMap funding was cut. Paul Layer and Curt Freeman approved of the shaded relief on the draft map. Mr. Freeman pointed out that a shaded relief map is easier to interpret for a person who is not used to reading topo maps.

Update on 2011 StateMap project preparations:

Moran-Year 1 – Larry Freeman: Due to funding being less than planned, surficial and neotectonic work was cut. The crew hope to do this work next year if they have funding. Chairman Stanley said that he will try to get DOT funding to help with that work, as there is a proposed road to Nome routed through this area. Delivery of the bedrock geologic map is planned for May 31, 2012.

Break (10:00-10:15 a.m.)

NEW BUSINESS

Future StateMap project candidates:

Minerals Section – Melanie Werdon: The second half of the Moran project will be expensive, so it is proposed as a primary StateMap project. Unless the Minerals Section receives a directive to do a large-scale rare earth elements project, Moran 2 is their preferred project.

Energy Section – Dave LePain: The main priority is the Umiat-Gubik area in the central North Slope region. The Energy section considered the DeLong Mountains because of their proximity to the Chukchi Sea, and they may re-visit this area in the future. Completing the Tingmerkpuik compilation would be a precursor to work in this area. Other possibilities include the Susitna Basin and interior basins (for gas potential). Tom Homza commented that the stratigraphic column that was produced by DGGs for the Umiat project has given the best understanding yet of that area. He pointed out that industry, and everyone else, uses this column, as it is a huge advance over what was known before. Mr. Homza also said that there is industry interest in the DeLong Mountains and hopes that there will be industry sponsorship of exploration there.

Engineering Geology – De Ann Stevens: Although this section is not pursuing a 2012 StateMap project, future project possibilities include a new Yukon River crossing, the Cantwell area, the Susitna Hydro project, and the Alaska Range northern foothills fold and thrust belt. The Yukon River crossing project would look for earthquake hazards from the Kaltag Fault that could impact the crossing and the TAPS and nearby highway. In the Cantwell area (which is just south of the northern foothills fold and thrust belt), the crew would look at how infrastructure, tourism, and the Denali National Park area could be impacted by seismic activity. The Susitna project would look at possible glacial outburst floods, water influx, siltation, seismic hazards, an inventory of lakes, and glacier melting impacts. Greater understanding of the faults in the northern foothills fold and thrust belt is needed to assess impact potential on nearby communities, the Parks Highway, tourism, and a possible future gas line.

GMAB feedback and discussion:

Board Comments

Peter Haeussler asked about the status of the LiDAR for the potential gas pipeline corridor. Rod Combellick reported that the flying portion is 70% complete. DGGs will release the first portion of the data in a month or two. Curt Freeman commended the work on the Tyonek compilation map. Paul Layer pointed out that the biggest issue now is the threat to funding of the StateMap program. Mr. Haeussler affirmed that the StateMap program is not likely to avoid cuts in the future. Mr. Freeman asked if the Board can send a letter of support for the StateMap program, and Rod Combellick replied that the Board can do this.

Public Comments: None

General Comments:

Steve Wright is pleased with the work being done and is glad to see a more integrated approach to exploratory work to encourage energy development. Rod Combellick announced that Steve Wright and Lance Miller of NANA Regional Corporation have both accepted positions on the GMAB. DGGs Director Robert Swenson will work to secure appointments through the Commissioner's Office.

Next Meeting Schedule: The next GMAB meeting will be in October, 2011.

Adjournment: David Stanley adjourned the meeting at 11:05 a.m.