

# Federal Research Priorities and Processes

*A Week of the Arctic Presentation*

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How do federal research agendas get decided? Whose input is asked for, and how do local and state issues get elevated in the process? Across the circumpolar north, national governments are working on developing science-informed decision-making. This means partnerships are being managed or established to 1) highlight local priorities and traditional knowledge; 2) incorporate regional and sub-national interests; 3) support science and a research agenda that meets needs at multiple levels; 4) translates the science into decision-making; and 5) communicates that process through public outreach efforts.

Summaries of key points on the topic are summarized below, with video and PowerPoint found at [www.institutenorth.org/woa](http://www.institutenorth.org/woa). Special thanks to speakers, as well as the panel moderator, Dr. John Payne, Director, North Slope Science Initiative (NSSI).

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## Integrated Arctic Management

Joel Clement, Director of the Office of Policy Analysis,  
US Department of the Interior

U.S. agencies are faced with a number of challenges, including different mandates for multiple agencies working on Arctic issues. There is no shared vision in the face of rapid change. With this in mind, something needs to be done to de-conflict the allocation of time and assets to avoid mutual interference.

The Inter-agency Working Group on Coordination of Domestic Energy Development and Permitting in Alaska is an attempt to address this challenge. By the end of 2012 the Group hopes to have a list of current processes compiled in order to assess anticipated infrastructure.

The fundamental principle of this Integrated Arctic Management is “policy-relevant science.” This effort can coordinate goals and efforts across jurisdictions to inform strategy and improve system sustainability to minimize surprises.

## Alaska-centric efforts and IARPC and USARC

Dr. Cheryl Rosa, Deputy Director, U.S. Arctic  
Research Commission

The USARC has a five-year research plan that includes civil infrastructure, human health, environmental change, an indigenous languages. From this, USARC is able to make recommendations, which IARPC then implements. IARPC involves 15 federal agencies, which together manage \$400 million annually for Arctic projects.

### A sampling of partners:

- Academic research: APU, UAA, UAF, Ilisagvik College, ARCUS
- Federal: DOC, DOI, MMS, NSF, DOE, DOD
- State: DEC, DNR, ADF&G, Governor’s Climate Change Sub-Cabinet, Alaska Arctic Policy Commission
- Governments: local, municipal, tribal
- Other: Institute of the North, NE, CCHRC, ARCUS, OSRI, LCCs, NPRB, NSSI, AOOS
- NGOs: Pew, WWF, Oak Foundation, Audubon, Nature Conservancy, etc.
- Industry: BP, Pioneer, ConocoPhillips, Shell, Exxon

## Canadian Polar Commission (CPC)

Dr. David Scott, Executive Director

CPC is a knowledge broker for both the Arctic and Antarctic. Their most recent strategic plan defines this as aggregating, synthesizing, and communicating knowledge for the peoples of the North.

### Foundational documents:

- Canada’s Northern Strategy – now five years old; revision in the works – [www.northernstrategy.gc.ca](http://www.northernstrategy.gc.ca)
- A Northern Vision (Premiers of Yukon, NWT and Nunavut) – [www.northernvision.ca](http://www.northernvision.ca)  
Led to integration of Traditional Knowledge (TK) in Government of NWT and TK coordinator position
- Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) – [www.inuitknowledge.ca](http://www.inuitknowledge.ca)

### Projects:

- Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS) – science blueprint – [www.science.gc.ca/chars](http://www.science.gc.ca/chars)
- Canadian Network of Northern Research Operators (CNNRO) – interactive map of ongoing research - [www.polarcom.gc.ca](http://www.polarcom.gc.ca)
- Summary of Canadian research – post IPY

Presentations focused on federal research highlighted for Alaskans the need for stronger communication channels with federal agencies. There are processes in place for the inclusion of local and state expertise. At the same time, inter-agency groups at the federal level have a corresponding obligation of transparency and outreach.

Communication and relationship-building is key to setting research priorities and responding to change in the Arctic. By leveraging the work going on at multiple levels, state and federal agencies, as well as local communities, can coordinate implementation effectively as we work to address challenges and opportunities ahead.

