NPRB Vision and Mission

Vision Statement: Building a clear understanding of the North Pacific, Bering Sea, and Arctic Ocean ecosystems that enables effective management and sustainable use of marine resources.

Mission Statement: To develop a comprehensive science program of the highest caliber that provides a better understanding of the North Pacific, Bering Sea, and Arctic Ocean ecosystems and their fisheries. The work of the NPRB will be conducted through science planning, prioritization of pressing fishery management and ecosystem information needs, coordination and cooperation among research programs, competitive selection of research projects, enhanced information availability, and public involvement.
Integrated Ecosystem Research (IERP) Program

The NPRB Integrated Ecosystem Research Program studies mechanistic processes in marine ecosystems that link ocean physics and chemistry to marine life and include studies of the interactions among species. These are multi-disciplinary, multi-institutional, multi-year, and multi-million-dollar programs with intensive coordination support from NPRB. They convene researchers to collaborate for a period of at least five years and include a separate funding opportunity for synthesis following the field program.
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Integrated Ecosystem Research (IERP) Program

Bering Sea Project
2007-2014

Gulf of Alaska Project
2010-2018

Arctic Program
2016-2021
Synthesis 2022-2025
Integrated Ecosystem Research (IERP) Program

>$50 million
Coordination with NSF

>$17.5 million

>$20 million
Funding partners: Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, North Slope Borough/Shell Baseline Studies Program, Office of Naval Research Marine Mammals and Biology Program
In-kind support from National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, University of Alaska Fairbanks, National Science Foundation, and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Synthesis funding partner: NOAA OAR Arctic Research Program
ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The North Pacific Research Board's (NPRB) Arctic Program is the newest integrated ecosystem research program (IERP) to date. The Arctic Integrated Ecosystem Research Program (IERP) will invest approximately $8.6 million in studying marine processes in the northern Bering and Chukchi Seas in 2017-2021, beginning in the summer of 2017. The program is sponsored by NPRB, Collaborative Aleutian Arctic Studies Program (formerly the North Slope Borough/Desh Baseline Studies Program), Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), and the Office of Naval Research Marine Mammals and Biology Program. Generous in-kind support has been contributed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the University of Alaska Fairbanks. This coordinated program was developed in cooperation with the International Arctic Research Policy Committee, Chukchi and Bering Sea Ecosystem Collaborative Team and the U.S. Arctic Research Commission.
Northern Bering Sea
Integrated Ecosystem Research Program (IERP)

The next IERP will continue integrated research in the Bering and Chukchi Seas, centered on the Northern Bering Sea.

Items of interest include how shifts in environmental conditions and processes may influence species of commercial, ecological and subsistence importance, and implications for state and federal fisheries management and communities that depend on these resources.

https://nprb.org/northern-bering-sea-ierp/
WHY STUDY THE NORTHERN BERING SEA?

The Bering Sea is a productive and diverse marine ecosystem that supports important fisheries and coastal communities in western Alaska. More than 40% of the annual U.S. catch of fish and seabirds are harvested in this region. Large populations of marine birds and mammals migrate to these summer feeding grounds to graze open led ice, copepods, though bivalves, and bektic invertebrates. Coastal communities have been an integral part of this ecosystem for millennia. But with recent warming conditions in the Bering and Chukchi Seas and rapid sea ice loss, this once productive ecosystem is showing signs of profound transition. Populations of Bering Sea salmon and lamprey stocks of laisse and Andeven River Chinook and chum salmon have collapsed, prompting fishery closures. Meanwhile, tribal and Alaska Native communities continue to sell run and canned salmon. More information is needed to better understand why these changes are occurring, how they will affect this ecosystem in the future, and the implications for subsistence and commercial activities in this region.

DOWNLOAD FACT SHEET

NORTHERN BERING SEA DEFINED

The Northern Bering Sea is defined as the area of the Bering Sea shelf north of 60°N (see shaded in dark blue). The declination lines to 69°N. This ecosstem typically has relatively colder water temperatures and higher salinity than the more southerly waters. This region is home to some of the most productive and commercially valuable marine fisheries in the world. The ecosystems are relatively diverse, with a range of species and habitats that support a variety of human activities.

The Northern Bering Sea IERP will focus on the northern Bering Sea and will include consideration of upstream and downstream impacts on the southeastern Bering Sea, western Bering Sea, and Chukchi Sea, respectively.

https://nprb.org/northern-bering-sea-ierp/
Northern Bering Sea
Integrated Ecosystem Research (IERP) Program

Anticipated timeline for NBS IERP:
Invite pre-proposals          Oct. 2023
Pre-proposal deadline        May 15, 2024
Full proposal invitations     Sep. 2024
Full proposal deadline        Mar. 2025
Funding decisions             Sep. 2025
Northern Bering Sea
Integrated Ecosystem Research (IERP) Program

NPRB will offer up to $10,000 to those invited to submit a full proposal to further develop the proposal with Indigenous Co-Investigators. Indigenous-led proposals may apply the funds to seek Western science Co-Investigators. NPRB intends these funds to support the travel and/or time of individuals to do one or more of the following:

- explore how the proposed project might address different/additional questions relevant to the interests of Indigenous individuals and/or Alaska Native Organizations;
- design the project to use western science alongside traditional, local, and/or Indigenous knowledge; and/or
- articulate how the project will involve Indigenous partners directly in the research.
NPRB is interested in hearing the perspectives of the AICC about the feasibility of supporting multi-disciplinary field research in summer 2026 given the Board’s plans to announce funding decisions in September 2025.

NPRB is interested in learning about opportunities to coordinate plans for logistics support with other institutions.
Contact Information

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