

Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys Geologic Mapping Advisory Board – Spring Meeting

May 5, 2025, from 2:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Fairbanks: DGGs Main Office, 3354 College Rd

Anchorage: Geologic Materials Center, 3651 Penland Pkwy

[Microsoft Teams](#)

CONVENE Session (Chair)

2:30 pm

Call to order, logistics, roll call

Present – Matt Hanson, Doug Kreiner, Caixia Wang, Mischa Ellanna, Nic Kinsman, Rob Retherford, Kyle Brennan, Scott Digert

Review and approve agenda – Approved without objection

Review and approve minutes from January – Approved without objection

New Business

STATEMAP Funding and Project Overview (Athey)

2:35 pm

The proposal is currently with the Legislature & Governor's office. Geologic Hazards operating budget is now before the full Senate Finance Committee. OMB has approved the EarthMRI proposal submittal.

FY22 Haines-Takshanuk Mountains-Chilkat Peninsula Publication (Hendricks)

2:40 pm

The publication is in for the grant requirement but not published yet. STATEMAP grant is typically a 2-year period but was postponed and will hopefully be published and out to the public this summer.

FY23 West Susitna Surficial & Bedrock Mapping (Hubbard)

2:50 pm

We are working to finalize mapping in preparation for submitting to the USGS in September. Map will include PDF, report, and geodatabase products.

FY23-FY24 GeMS Compilation, Geochronology Plans (Hendricks/Goodfellow)

3:05 pm

(Hendricks) GeMS Compilation

Developing a standards-based Alaska Geologic Mapping System and having a formal governance body (Geologic Data Inquiry council) enhanced efficiency. The publication of AK GeMS Multimap Database Repository (DDS) is near completion. Establishing a Geologic Map Digitizing Master Agreement with our contractor (Kinney Engineering) and implementing advanced capabilities has greatly improved productivity for both parties.

(Goodfellow) Geochronology Plans

The objective is to update the National USGS Geochronology Database with the most recent Alaska data. Our goal is to complete the Geochronology Database in full by the end of September and submit it to USGS.

FY25 Lower Kuskokwim Mapping and GeMS Compilation Status (Athey/Nieminski)

3:20 pm

(Nieminski) Lower Kuskokwim Mapping

We want to address direct requests made by Alaska Native communities and the Yukon-Kuskokwim Regional Tribal Government, work alongside the Calista Corporation (FiberOptic Project) and provide useful geologic information for laying broadband communication cables. Federal Funds require a State Match; we are currently exploring our options.

(Athey) GeMS Compilation Status

The proposal put in for GeMS was high because we weren't expecting it to get fully funded. We create these proposals with ways to cut them back given past experiences with STATEMAP.

FY26 and Future Proposed STATEMAP Projects (Wartes/ Hubbard)

3:35 pm

(Wartes)

Future Energy Mapping areas include; The North Slope where we are continuing our research in cretaceous reservoirs, the Tanana Basin a potential target for carbon storage, Upper Cook Inlet/Susitna Basin addressing the natural gas short fall and projections, and the Lower Cook Inlet/ Alaska Peninsula jurassic and late cretaceous rocks that represent the oil

source rock and potential reservoirs.

Q – Rob Retherford: does this involve field work?

A – Wartes: Yes, this would require boots on the ground Geologic maps field work.

Q – Rob Retherford: Are they going to be addressed in the order you listed them?

A – Wartes: No, I believe the Cook Inlet would be the higher priority for Energy, that the Southern Alaska would rise to the top of the priority list.

Q – Rob Retherford: In the Lower Cook Inlet/ Alaska Peninsula, there is a lot of Land in Katmai National Park, would you work on that being a state mapping project?

A – Wartes: That is a great question, in our experience it has been extremely positive interaction and them wanting to know more of their Geology.

Potential STATEMAP Projects for Hydrology & Surficial Geology (Hubbard)

Target regions/communities with sand and gravel sources needed to support community development/ maintenance; for aviation infrastructure improvements, where contractors have identified needs, and areas with landslides, flooding, and permafrost degradation. There are collaborative opportunities with Coastal Hazards Program, Landslide Hazards Program, Alaska DOT & Public Facilities.

C - Matt Hanson: In respect to sources for gravel, Andrew Tunnell with Doyon researches opportunities and sources out to DOT for community improvement. I'm assuming other Native Regional corporations are going to have someone with a similar job.

C – Doug Kreiner: I also suggest areas with potential infrastructures development for Surficial Mapping, consider the proposed Ambler Road corridor where surficial mapping might aid in development opportunity that the State or Federal government might be considering.

Q – Rob Retherford: Do you have a map of all the areas surveyed by Lidar and if you have more targets in the future?

A – Hubbard: Yes, we have access to the areas with Lidar; we can get with Leslie about putting that map together.

STATEMAP Funding and Timing Discussion (Athey)

3:45 pm

We need to have the match funds in hand before we can propose something and consider the timing on how these proposals work. The legislature is still looking at cuts for State programs, if DGGs ends up taking a large budgetary cut we would not be able to absorb that well.

Q – Mischa Ellanna: Are there any guidelines on how you would prioritize the discretionary funds?

A – Athey: It is internal priority, it is a limited pot, we must be very careful on how it is spent, the priority is set by the division for that funding.

C – Mischa Ellanna: Seems to me, the increase in tariffs might be something discretionary funds would be intended for.

C – Athey: Yes, I agree, a lot of that money is generated by the GMC Seismic sales, when it comes to priority's we do tend to prioritize items that are associated with GMC. We have data that comes from DOG because DGGs has the infrastructure to sell it. We collect the money for the sale of that data at reduced costs for companies, educational institutions receive the data for free, but DGGs does get some of the funds and those are the kind of reserves we can use to offset costs, like the tariffs situation.

Q – Rob Retherford: Does Seismic Hazards or AVO receive any money from other sources?

A – Athey: Those are almost exclusively through federal program money. We may be able to consider offsetting the timing between asking for the State funds then proposing the projects. In the FY27 budget cycle we could ask for State funds for the match then in FY28 we could propose a STATEMAP project. That way we know if we would have those matching funds in hand, if in fact we were able to secure them in FY27.

Q – Doug Kreiner: Thinking about the future of STATEMAP how are the State budget reductions going to factor into all the mapping projects?

A - Athey: This year, we were able to pitch STATEMAP by combining it with EarthMRI and to promote Geologic mapping as a benefit to all the sectors, critical minerals is such a hot topic right now. Geologic mapping itself is very important to the State and its resources and Geologic Hazards. I think EarthMRI was such a big, ticketed item that it kind of swallowed up STATEMAP for several years, as EarthMRI goes back down to base funding there will probably be more of an even playing field between the two programs, either we pitch it separately or continue to sell them together.

C – Doug Kreiner: I would be curious too to see how other State Geologist are playing that, I can't imagine this is unique to Alaska, that the appropriation cycles don't just line up for a given fiscal year.

C – Athey: Yes I agree we cannot be the only State that's in this situation.

Public Comments

4:30 pm

No Comment

Board Public Comments

4:32 pm

C – Doug Kreiner: We appreciate the collaboration we have with DGGs, even in these hard financial times, keep up the great science.

C – Scott Digert: I just wanted to say thanks again to all the folks who presented today, it was well presented.

Closed, Executive Board Business

ADJOURN

4:35 pm