

Presentation at the First Plenary Meeting
of the Advisory Committee on Acoustic
Impacts on Marine Mammals

3-5 February 2004

Bethesda, Maryland

This presentation is the sole product of the author(s) and does not reflect the view of the Marine Mammal Commission or the Advisory Committee on Acoustic Impacts on Marine Mammals.

Overview of NSF Program (in relation to marine mammals).

Jim Yoder, Director
Division of Ocean Sciences
National Science Foundation

Presentation to: Advisory Committee on
Acoustic Impacts on Marine Mammals

February 5, 2004



NSF Mission and Scope

NSF mission is to support **basic, curiosity-driven** research, using a competitive process based on peer-review to guide selection of grants for financial support.

Ocean Science Programs include:

- research in biological, chemical and physical oceanography; and marine geology and geophysics; (and the Biology Directorate supports research on animal behavior).
- ocean technology development, dedicated educational activities, large shipboard equipment, shared-use instruments; and
- academic fleet, submersibles, and scientific ocean drilling.



What are the roles and responsibilities for marine mammals within NSF?

- NSF supports basic marine mammal research in our own programs and in cooperation with other agencies, e.g. through National Ocean Partnership Program (NOPP) research programs.
- NSF supports oceanographic research that uses sound sources, including seismic research (recall David Farmer's presentation on Tuesday).



What are the roles and responsibilities for marine mammals within NSF?

NSF spends about \$1M per year for environmental assessments related to requirements of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and for activities (e.g. marine mammal observers) that are required as conditions for receiving Incidental Harassment Authorizations (IHA) issued by NOAA.



How does each agency develop and use scientific information?

NSF develops scientific information through the research we support. We also support dedicated ocean science education and outreach programs to disseminate this information.

NSF's Education Directorate supports science exhibits, movies, radio programs and other activities classified as informal science education.



What are the important issues NSF faces in fulfilling their responsibilities currently? In the future?

We are concerned with costs in time and money to have our funded programs in compliance with MMPA and ESA. These costs are absorbed by the research program, and costs of compliance comes at the expense of research. Is there a better way?

The threat of litigation is particularly onerous to university investigators who use sound sources for their research.

