



**For Immediate Release  
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## **Two new appointees to US Arctic Research Commission**

**Washington, DC** - President Obama filled two vacancies on the US Arctic Research Commission (USARC) today by appointing the Honorable Edward Saggan Itta, Barrow, AK, and Dr. James J. McCarthy, Cambridge, MA. They bring significant Arctic knowledge and experience to the challenges facing not only Arctic Alaska, but the pan-Arctic region as well. Itta will occupy the seat vacated by Helvi Sandvik, president, NANA Development Corp., and McCarthy takes the place of the Honorable Mead Treadwell, who resigned his position in June 2010, before successfully running for Lt. Governor of Alaska.

Fran Ulmer, current chair of the USARC, applauds the appointments, and said, "I am pleased that the President has appointed two extremely well-qualified individuals to the commission. Edward Itta is a respected leader who knows the Arctic through a lifetime of first-hand experience. James McCarthy has been recognized internationally for his fundamental contributions to oceanography and Arctic science. Both gentlemen will undoubtedly bring great expertise and valuable perspectives to our work."

### **Edward Saggan Itta**

Itta, who resides in Barrow, Alaska, is an Inupiat whaler and hunter who served as Mayor of Alaska's North Slope Borough from 2005 to 2011. He has held a variety of leadership positions in municipal government, including Chief Administrative Officer, Public Works Director, Planning Director and Director of Capital Improvement Program Management. Itta currently serves as the Secretary/Treasurer for the Arctic Slope Community Foundation Board.

Itta brings to the Commission hands-on experience in many areas, such as the integration of local/traditional knowledge into research, subsistence and food security, and the improvement of human health through coordination of water and sanitation needs in rural Alaska, all of which are priority emphases of the USARC. His leadership skills are commendable: in addition to his mayoral experience, he is the past president of Inuit Circumpolar Council-Alaska and a local representative for Alaska on the Outer Continental Shelf Policy Committee. He is also the past president and current member of the Barrow Whaling Captains Association and a past commissioner, vice chairman and current member of the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission.

### **James McCarthy**

McCarthy, a scientist specializing in oceanography, marine systems and climate, holds faculty appointments at Harvard University in the Department of Organismic and

Evolutionary Biology and the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences. He is Harvard University's Alexander Agassiz Professor of Biological Oceanography, and from 1982 until 2002, he served as the director of Harvard University's Museum of Comparative Zoology.

McCarthy brings strong scientific experience to the USARC through service on national and international planning committees, advisory panels, and commissions focusing on oceanography, polar science, and the study of climate and global change for federal agencies, intergovernmental bodies and international organizations.

For the past two decades McCarthy has worked as an author, reviewer, and co-chair with the Nobel Peace Prize winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. For the Third IPCC Assessment, he headed Working Group II, which assessed the impacts and vulnerabilities of global climate change. He was also a lead author of the seminal Arctic Climate Impact Assessment, published in 2004.

McCarthy is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), our nation's largest scientific association, on which he served as past president and chair of the board of directors. He is also a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and a Foreign Member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. Currently, he is chair of the Board of Directors for the Union of Concerned Scientists.

The US Arctic Research Commission (USARC) is an independent federal agency that advises the President and Congress on domestic and international Arctic research through recommendations and reports.

USARC, a presidentially appointed consultative body, was created by the Arctic Research and Policy Act of 1984, and is supported by staff in Washington, DC, and in Anchorage, AK. The Commission releases a biennial "[Goals and Objectives for Arctic Research](#)" report for the nation's Arctic research program. The goals are adopted by an Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee (IARPC) that develops the nation's five-year Arctic Research Program Plan. This plan is implemented by US federal and state agencies, local governments, university partners, and private-sector collaborators.

The Commission makes available a variety of publications on its website including the "[Oil Spills in Arctic Waters](#)" white paper recently released at the [2012 US-Canada Northern Oil and Gas Research Forum](#) in Anchorage.

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