

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

4201 Wilson Boulevard  
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22230



OFFICE OF POLAR PROGRAMS

MAY 09 2012

Dear Colleagues:

We are writing to keep you apprised of the situation regarding icebreaker support that is needed for maintaining the U.S. Antarctic Program (USAP).

In September 2011, the National Science Foundation (NSF) chartered the diesel icebreaker *Vladimir Ignatyuk* from the Murmansk Shipping Company to support the break-in and resupply of McMurdo Station. We were recently informed that the *Ignatyuk* will not be available to support the USAP during the 2012-2013 and future Antarctic research seasons.

During the 2011-2012 season, OPP successfully completed work on a multi-year effort to improve fuel supplies and energy conservation for the USAP. As a result, sufficient fuel is on hand at McMurdo Station to allow the USAP to continue operations through February 2014 at a somewhat reduced operating level, should that be necessary.

The NSF Office of Polar Programs is actively examining program ramifications and developing options to maintain our operating capabilities in support of planned USAP activities.

We will endeavor to keep you apprised of all significant developments as they occur. Your best source of information will be your NSF program manager or your USAP support organization, but we will also distribute updated information when available via the USAP web site (<http://www.usap.gov>).

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S Borg".

Scott Borg  
Director, Division of Antarctic Science  
Office of Polar Programs

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brian Stone".

Brian Stone  
Director, Division of Antarctic  
Infrastructure and Logistics  
Office of Polar Programs