



509 WEST THIRD AVENUE
SUITE 107
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501

Phone: (907) 771-2444

Fax: (907) 771-2466

www.institutenorth.org

Contact: Nils Andreassen, Managing Director
(907) 771-2448, nandreassen@institutenorth.org
or
Nancy Hemsath, Deputy Director, Projects
(907) 771-2443, nhemsath@institutenorth.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Institute of the North Names Three New Board Members

The Institute of the North has named Drue Pearce, Randy Hagenstein and Greta Schuerch to its Board of Directors.

They join current board member Jack Hickel and a new executive committee – Leif Selkregg, Chair; Ira Perman, Vice Chair; Gail Phillips, Secretary; Duane Heyman, Treasurer; and member-at-large, Mike Sfraga.

“This is a dynamic opportunity for the Institute as we continue to meet the vision of our founder, the late Governor Walter J. Hickel,” said incoming Board Chair Leif Selkregg. “We must continue to build an organization dedicated to the resource-rich Commons and to articulating Alaska’s role in the Arctic and around the world.”

At its recent annual board meeting, the Institute also transitioned founding board members John Hendrickson, Max Hodel and Steve Shropshire into emeritus positions. They will continue to play a unique role as advisors for, advocates of and contributors to the Institute’s mission and vision.

The addition of new members is complimented by the Institute’s expansion of program goals, including a newly formalized emerging leaders program, and capacity within its Fellows program, recently adding Robbie Graham and Mara Kimmel as Senior Fellows.

The three new board members bring significant depth to accomplishing the Institute’s mission and breadth in successfully accomplishing its goals. Randy Hagenstein, Executive Director of the Nature Conservancy, has an extensive background in conservation and natural resource issues in northern ecosystems with 25 years of experience in research, analysis, management, conservation and use of natural resources.

Drue Pearce, former Alaska Senate President and Federal Coordinator for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation Projects, has spent much of her professional life in political and government positions. Pearce has an active interest in the Arctic and Arctic Council issues, oil spill prevention and mitigation, and ANILCA implementation.

Greta Schuerch, Sister School Guide for the Rose Urban Rural Exchange at the Alaska Humanities Forum, is from Kiana and is an active advocate for Alaska Native youth and issues. Most recently, Schuerch served as the Chair of the Inuit Circumpolar Youth Council and was recently named to the Anchorage Chamber's Top 40 Under Forty.

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Founded by former Secretary of the Interior and twice governor of Alaska, Walter J. Hickel, the Institute of the North specializes in how to utilize and care for the resource-rich commons for the benefit of those living in the region. Areas of special study include Alaska, the many regions of the Arctic and other areas of the world with sparse populations yet wealthy in human cultures and natural resources. www.institutenorth.org