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Northwest Oil and Hazmat Materials Response Community –

Thank you to everyone who participated in our 2016 Task Force selection process. We received and discussed many projects that would improve our preparedness. This letter explains which task forces were selected for 2016, which projects may be completed in 2016 outside of the task force structure, and why some of the projects were not selected. We highly encourage you to go to the Northwest Area Committee (NWAC) website and volunteer for a 2016 Task Force! [www.rrt10nwac.com](http://www.rrt10nwac.com).

The purpose of the Task Forces themselves is primarily to update and revise the Northwest Area Contingency Plan (NWACP), as part of its annual update. As an Area Committee, our focus is to continue to find areas to improve our readiness to respond as a whole community. While there is much work to be done, there are only so many resources to accomplish this large workload. Given these constraints, we are unable to select every Task Force that is proposed each year. Priorities are based on a range of factors, which can shift year to year.

The NWAC Leadership selected four task forces for 2016 based on important input from our active partners and stakeholders. This is fewer than in previous years due to both the large workload associated with the selected task forces and the ongoing Endangered Species Act consultation on the NWACP.

The four selected Task Forces are:

**96 Hours**

1. Develop a tool that outlines milestones in the first 96 hours of a major response; 2. Document how the Area Plan works with other contingency plans (LEPCs, industry plans, etc.);

3. Pre-identify tools, talking points, FAQ sheets, for effective external communication;

4. Develop policy on timing of communication (Liaison).

**Tribal Engagement**

1. Create a clear process for tribes to join the RRT, RRT expectations of tribal participation;

2. Create a Tribal Integration Strategy: identify short- and long-term goals and objectives for tribal engagement and sovereign interests; capture on-going tribal engagement efforts to identify effective strategies and gaps; include best practices and recommendations for future actions for improving tribal involvement;

3. Update tribal policy in NWACP

**Air Monitoring for Community Safety**

1. Identify private and government air monitoring capability and how those will be coordinated for community air monitoring; 2. Identify roles and jurisdictions of Health Departments and Local Air Authorities and how they would integrate into the response.

**Dispersant Tool Update**

1. Revise dispersant memo and checklist. Include info that clarifies how we pick a dispersant and include the required testing protocols; 2. Create/update the map that shows dispersant use zones (case by case and PS and Straits)

The following pieces of proposed TF work will be done by individual agencies or the RRT10/NWAC outside the TF structure:

*Transboundary Planning Explanation* – Add language to the NWACP to better explain the coordination structures established by the CANUSWest and CANUSPAC Annexes. Assigned to Steering Committee.

*GRP Usability* – Hold training and conversation between GRP users and planners re: new GRP format in WA. Assigned to Ecology, ODEQ and USCG.

*NWACP Improvement* – Address remaining comments from technical editor. Assigned to Steering Committee.

*SCAT Segmentation* – Maintain connection to this evolving process to include volunteers in pre-spill planning. Assigned to Ecology.

*Rail Response Outreach* – Public outreach & education about rail hazmat and oil response. At a NW Area Committee Meeting, host a panel discussion to walking attendees through a mixed freight train derailment scenario. Cover the differences between an urban derailment vs a rural derailment. Invite environmental groups & citizens. Assigned to Steering Committee.

*Risk Analysis Incorporation* – Invite authors of risk studies to present at NW Area Committee meetings. Assigned to Steering Committee.

The following issues will not be addressed in 2016. Although they all add benefit, the following issues were not a high enough priority to be selected for 2016. Any additional information NWAC leaders used to determine importance are included below with each topic that wasn’t selected.

*Plan Accessibility* – *Research and recommend options for using tablet technology to improve the usability of the NWACP in the field.* The Steering Committee will follow up on recommendations from the technical editor to further ready the NWACP for a transition to an ebook in the future.

*Non-Floating Oil* – *Update the 2012 Emerging Risks White Paper and Section 9412 with information specific to different types of Oil Sands products.* Much of this information exists from other sources and a number of other groups are doing work on these subjects. The added benefit would be compiling it for easy access. Federal and State responders can access the necessary information on the range of the Canadian oil sands types from existing relationships with NOAA. Section 9412 is not oil type specific, it is designed as a tool to address a whole range of non-floating oil types so doesn't need to be adjusted to address specific Canadian oil sands types.

*Risk Analysis Incorporation* – *Create a list of recommended changes to the NWACP based upon key findings from published studies/reports.* Some NW Area Committee members also participate in the Harbor Safety Committee. This provides a pathway for marine transportation reports to inform the Area Committee and guide NWACP updates. Additionally, Ecology is currently studying vessel traffic in the Columbia River. Recommended inviting authors of studies to present at NWAC Meetings.

*Surface Washing Agent Approval Process* – *Develop a clear, incident specific process for the RRT to approve or disapprove the application of surface washing agents.* The NOAA ARTES tool will help the RRT make a case by case determination. Surface washing agents have a long window of opportunity, making it less critical to have a streamlined decision process.

*Volunteer Task Force* – *Update Section 4326.*

*Dispersants Literature Review* – A comprehensive, vetted, review or overview of all the DWH Dispersant studies by organizations such as NOAA or NRT is not yet available. The NWAC needs this to be completed before it can incorporate any of these study results into the NWACP. Recommended from break out group: Add a sentence or two to the NWACP that we are aware of numerous dispersant studies post DWH and that a comprehensive literature available is not yet available. Steering Committee recommends placement of the statement in a Factsheet rather than the NWACP.

*Transboundary* - *Clarify transboundary response issues and readiness. Identify if the NWACP adequately addresses concerns and issues.* Suggestions from Break out group participants included: provide 3 annual updates; and, make process permanent via group. No consensus was achieved for these suggestions. This product was determined to be outside NW Area Committee work because transboundary response issues are handled by the Joint Response Team under the CANUSPac and CANUSWest Annex plans. It was taken as an action to better explain the transboundary response planning structure within the NWACP.

Thank you again to everyone who participated in the 2015 NWACP Summit. We are looking forward to another productive year. Please remember to register for a task force!

Sincerely,

***NW Area Committee Leadership***

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| *Dale Jensen, WA Ecology* | *Captain Travers, USCG Sector Columbia River* |
| *Jeff Rylee, ID BHS* | *Captain Raymond, USCG Sector Puget Sound* |
| *Bruce Gilles, OR DEQ* | *Calvin Terada, EPA R10* |