**REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM 10/NORTHWEST AREA COMMITTEE (RRT/NWAC)**

**PUBLIC SESSION MINUTES**

**0800 – 1630 THURSDAY 25OCTOBER2012**

**Hood River County Offices – Hood River, Oregon**

**Sign-in sheets can be viewed** [**here**](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/25%20October%202012%20NWAC%20Sign-in%20Sheets.pdf)**.**

**Safety Briefing, Introductions, Opening Remarks**

Ms. Heather Parker of the United States Coast Guard, District 13 (USCG D13) opened the meeting by giving a safety brief. Captain Jones, the Captain of the Port (COTP) from USCG Sector Columbia River (SCR) made opening remarks, and reviewed SCR’s area of response. Mr. Calvin Terada from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) thanked Hood River County, the City of Hood River and the State of Oregon for allowing the NWAC to use the facility. He also thanked the Steering Committee (SC) for putting together the meeting and agenda.

Mr. Mike Zollitsch of the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) thanked everyone for attending and introduced a new Emergency Response and Cleanup Manager for Oregon, Mr. Bruce Gilles. Mr. Gilles introduced himself and stated that he is looking forward to speaking with each individual, and learning to be effective in his role as Emergency Response and Cleanup Manager.

**Brief from Hood River Emergency Services Coordinator – Karl Tesch**

Mr. Tesch introduced himself, stating that he has been in Hood River since 1981. He worked for Skamania County, Washington before he came to the Oregon side of the Columbia River to work for Hood River. Mr. Tesch noted that Hood River County has many acres of orchards. The orchard business has been a source of several inland hazardous materials (HAZMAT) spills, but these were not large incidents. Other incidents have included train car derailments, and barges running aground. In one particular case where a barge ran aground, there were complications with the county’s notification procedures. From this incident, they realized the importance of the notification procedure during responses.

Mr. Dale Jensen from the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) asked Mr. Tesch about the proposed coal terminals and oil that might be moved out of Canada and Montana, along the Columbia River through Oregon. He asked if this is something that the community of Hood River has been thinking about from a response standpoint. Mr. Tesch stated that they have been opposed to any increase in the traffic.

**NWAC Overview and Northwest Area Contingency Plan (NWACP) Update – Josie Clark**

Ms. Josie Clark of USEPA introduced herself and gave a brief introduction of the NWAC. Her Power Point presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/2012%20OR%20RRT_NWAC%20Basics.ppt).

**USCG Pacific Strike Team Capabilities**

LT Mandy Le Monde gave a presentation on the USCG National Strike Force as a whole, and the capabilities of the Pacific Strike Team (PST). She covered who they are, what they do and how to contact them if you are seeking assistance. Her Power Point presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/Pacific%20Strike%20Team%20Capabilities%20Brief.ppt).

LCDR Kelly Thorkilson asked if the PST participates in exercises but LT Le Monde replied that funding is often an issue.

**Spill Response Upstream of Bonneville Dam**

* **USACE**
* **Columbia River Spill Response Initiative**

Mr. Ken Duncan, Environmental Compliance Coordinator/Sustainability Program Manager for the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) gave a presentation on the USACE and their hydro-power dams in the mid-Columbia River. You can view Mr. Duncan’s presentation [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/USACE%20RRT%20Presentation%20b%2024oct2012.pptx).

Mr. Mark Layman of Ecology gave a presentation on the Columbia River Spill Response Initiative. His presentation can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/CSR-SRI%20Presentation%2010-07.pptx).

Mr. Layman distributed a handout and asked everyone to add agencies and contacts to the list of people on the handout.

Mr. Bob McFarland of the USCG asked the USACE how they are training, with regards to the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Mr. Duncan answered that they take Incident Command System (ICS) courses taught by the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and also work with Ecology and USEPA on training. Mr. Layman added that they do application training at the dams, not just online training. Mr. McFarland asked about the outdated Geographic Response Plans (GRPs) along the Columbia River, and how the USACE can help to get these updated. Mr. Duncan stated that there is a schedule for the Columbia River GRP updates, and that USACE has some recommended changes for booming strategies.

**Railroad Emergency Response Capabilities along the Columbia River – Union Pacific (UP) and Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF)**

Mr. Justin Piper of BNSF gave a [presentation](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/resources.ppt) on the railway’s Northwest System Emergency Resources and Planning. He is a manager of hazardous materials for the railroad in Vancouver Washington and works in response and planning. Jeff Dukes is a resource manager for UP Railroad, he is Mr. Piper’s counterpart on the Oregon side of the Columbia River. The UP railroad runs along the Columbia River on the Oregon side, along highway 84, all the way from Salt Lake City. BNSF runs on the Washington side of the river.

UP and BNSF use the same contractors for response, and use similar procedures. Mr. Dukes reported numbers for commodity flow based on hazard class. Class III and Class VIII are their highest volume products coming through Hood River.

Dale Jensen from Ecology asked if the railroad companies change their equipment staging based on changing commodities. Mr. Piper confirmed that they do change their equipment accordingly. There is a big effort right now to identify where their resources are and where new ones can be placed.

Mr. Terada asked if the railroads are doing any planning for transporting coal along waterways. He added that this is an emerging issue that might be worth planning for. Mr. Piper said that because coal is not a hazardous commodity, he does not have an answer at this time, but he will look into this.

**Derelict Vessel Panel**

* + **Recent Case Studies: Penn Cove, LST-1166, Davy Crockett – Kelly Thorkilson, USCG SCR**
  + **Derelict Vessel Guidance from NWAC Task Force (TF) – Randy Clark, USCG SCR**

LCDR Kelly Thorkilson, the Incident Division Chief and point of contact for the Derelict Vessels TF stated that she was asked to provide derelict vessel case studies from the last few years. She gave a Power Point presentation, which can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/NWAC%20Derelict%20Vessel%20Presentation%2025Oct12.pptx). The Derelict Vessels TF has developed several tools and has done an update to the Northwest Area Contingency Plan (NWACP). LT Thorkilson presented one of the tools that the TF developed, the Federal and State Authority matrix and then began going through case studies.

CAPT Ferguson of USCG Sector Puget Sound (SPS) stated that derelict vessels are a national issue, and potentially an international issue. He asked the group how we can more effectively address this from a national perspective. Somebody stated that we should look at the Oil Pollution Act. Mr. Dale Jensen stated that there have been conversations about this issue between the Oregon and Washington governors, and what they can do to address this at a congressional level.

Mr. Randy Clark of USCG SCR gave a [presentation](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/DVTF%20Progress%2026%20Oct%20NWAC%20Mtg.ppt) on the accomplishments of the Derelict Vessels TF. CAPT Jones of USCG SCR stated that he thinks one of the big functions of the TF is just to make people aware of the issue. He added that if we bring enough people into the process, then prevention would be easier. CAPT Pete Mingo of USCG D13 reminded everyone that there have been successes; there have been interventions that have occurred before a vessel became a problem.

A woman in the audience noted that it seems like there are existing organizations that could get involved with this effort, such as Clean Harbors. She suggested that the TF “piggyback” some of their messaging on existing outreach efforts.

**Information Management Models – Connecting with the public during a spill**

* + **Sea River Exercise – Ray Botto, Exxon Mobile**
  + **Community Outreach Plan Components – Heather Parker, USCG D13**

Mr. Ray Botto with Sea River Maritime gave a Power Point presentation, which can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/Public%20Outeach%20Model.pptx). He was asked to speak about a recent exercise that took place in Seattle, and the successes with information management during this exercise. Mr. Botto stated that the Local On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) was essential to their success during this short exercise.

CAPT Ferguson stated that he thought this was the first exercise where the information management has worked well. He added that this is just the Joint Information Center (JIC) aspect of the operation, and that a huge component of making everything work is having the support infrastructure as well. Mr. Botto stated that the information management procedure followed during this exercise is a good model to build on.

Sea River proposes a Unified Command (UC) during a response, but when it comes to operations, that may depend on who the first responders are. As a marine entity, their first responders are local. How many people they need and how long they are needed are determined by the circumstances.

Somebody in the audience asked Mr. Botto how they deal with proprietary information during response. Mr. Botto answered that if you are dealing with the mechanics of dispersants, he does not consider this proprietary information. He added that if you cannot address the issues, how can you maintain public trust?

Ms. Heather Parker of USCG D13 presented a graphic that she had drawn, showing the flow of communication for community outreach, and gave a presentation on Community Outreach Plan Components, currently under development from an industry partner. She reviewed the goals and focus of a community outreach plan, emphasizing that they should provide support to those potentially affected by a spill. Ms. Parker reviewed the process for establishing community advisory committees, and the roles and responsibilities of the Liaison Officer, the Assistant Liaison Officer (if the event is large enough to warrant having one), the Community Outreach Coordinators, the Community Liaisons, and the Community Advisory Committee (the CAC, formed within the first few days of the spill). She talked about the flow of information between people in these roles. There should be regular interaction between the CAC and UC.

Mr. Botto stated that early-on in a response, you can only say so much because not all of the facts have been gathered yet. The liaison office and the PIER system (a proprietary, online crisis management system) can be used to help track and dissect incoming information. He added that initial press releases also tend to contain a lot of prose, and that it would be better to move towards bulleted list for these press releases, for efficiency, and faster approval.

CAPT Ferguson suggested housing this liaison aspect with the JIC, as opposed to with the command post.

Ms. Parker asked everyone not to judge this model based only on what she had presented, because it is yet not complete information, and still under development.

**State Preservation Historic Office (SHPO)**

* + **How SHPO works within an emergency response structure**
  + **Historic resources at risk along the CR**

Mr. Matt Diederich, an archaeologist with the Oregon SHPO gave a Power Point presentation, which can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/Hazmat%20Spills.ppt). Ms. Linda Pilkey-Jarvis of Ecology asked Mr. Diederich about if the SHPOs would be able to take a look at GRPs before an emergency. Mr. Diederich replied that he thought this was a good idea, and that the SHPO has programmatic agreements with some state and federal agencies.

Someone from the group asked if a spill occurs and the SHPO cannot be reached, if they would be able to bring their own archaeologist on-site. Mr. Diederich answered that yes, they would be able to, especially if it is a matter of health and human safety. As long as you initiated the process with the SHPO by contacting them, they will not hold this against you, so long as you did your due diligence.

Mr. Terada asked Mr. Diederich if there have ever been times when they have had multiple Tribes that have claimed stake in a site. Mr. Diederich answered that they have, and that they only consult with in-state Tribes. He added that even if their office approves action, if a Tribe that has a stake in the area wants a monitor, then you will need a monitor.

**OSC Reports**

USEPA: Mr. Mike Boykin gave a presentation, which can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/NWACRRT25Oct12.pptx).

USCG SCR: LT Johna Rossetti gave a presentation, which can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/RRTBriefing%20OCT%202012.pptx).

USCG SPS: LCDR Lance Lindgren gave a presentation, which can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/Incident%20Management%20Division_Oct_12_RRT_mtg.pptx).

OR DEQ: Mr. Mike Zollitsch gave a presentation, which can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/2012_10%20NWAC%20Presentation.pptx).

Ecology: Mr. Dave Byers gave a presentation, which can be viewed [here](http://www.rrt10nwac.com/files/files/Oct%202012%20NWAC.pptx).

**Operational Commander’s Roundtable**

Mr. Terada introduced the segment and reminded everyone that the NWACP Summit will be held in December, so if there are action items that need to be noted, he asked people to bring those up. As an example, he brought up the potential for a coal train derailment situation, and stated that we need to start talking about this. He added that at some point we will need to talk about what information we have on the coal source material, what impurities are present, and what happens when it gets into water. This is not necessarily a HAZMAT situation, but it could certainly become one if the coal is full of impurities.

Mr. Mike Zollitsch stated that regarding the Scappoose Venture, things are not as fluid as they should be in respect to sampling, when there is not a Federal OSC in the field. He suggested that in the future, we have a one page guide on how this should be done. Mr. Terada pointed out that we can always mobilize contractors to do this as well.

Dale Jensen stated that going back to the coal issue, there are more questions than answers. He posed the question: if we use dispersants to keep coal dust down, how will this affect rivers? Because this is a new issue, there are not many past cases to reference.

Mr. Greg Buie stated that in Region 8, there was the Trout Creek Coal Derailment in November 2006. This was one example of a situation where a large amount of coal was dumped into a deep river. This could be an interesting case study.

The information about the characteristics of this coal is not readily available. There is a lot of environmental impact data for marine environments, but none for fresh water. Coal has damaged many seaports but we do not know much about the inland effects at this point.

Mr. Terada brought up the issue of Tribal involvement. We have at least four major Tribes in the Pacific Northwest, but we often have no representation from them at the NWAC and RRT meetings. Mr. Terada urged everybody to continuously figure out ways to increase Tribal involvement.

Ms. Clark asked if anybody has an existing relationship that they can use to try and get the Tribes more involved. CAPT Ferguson stated that attending the Tribal Culture Training could be a first step in understanding how to work with Tribes.

CAPT Jones stated that there are offshore energy proposals for wave energy in Oregon, and that he is interested in harmonizing these proposals with shipping traffic. He also stated that Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) in Coos Bay is moving forward with export operations and the USCG’s role in this is to make sure that waterway issues are being suitably taken care of. A few ports on the Oregon coast are also looking at deep draft vessel traffic.

**Closing Comments**

Mr. Terada thanked everybody for participating and encouraged everyone to rekindle and form new relationships with other people in the group.