

**REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM/NORTHWEST AREA COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 15-16, 2004**

LOCATION: Astoria Holiday Inn Express Hotel, 204 West Marine Drive, Astoria, Oregon

PARTICIPANTS: [Attendance list](#).

MEETING AGENDA:

Wednesday, 15 September 2004 (RRT/NWAC Meeting)

- 8:30 – 12:00 Executive Session
- 12:00 – 1:00 LUNCH (No Host)
- 1:00 – 1:10 Welcome by hosts Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (Chuck Donaldson, Emergency Response Manager) and US Coast Guard District 13 and Marine Safety Office Portland (Captains Chip Boothe and Paul Jewell)
- 1:10 – 1:30 Overview of the RRT/NWAC and the Northwest Area Contingency Plan--NWACP (Beth Sheldrake, EPA)
- 1:30 – 4:30 Astoria Mass Rescue Operations Lessons Learned and NPREP 2006 Development Facilitated Discussion (LCDR Randy Clark, USCG District 13)
- 4:30 – 5:00 Access to Secure Marine Facilities by Response Personnel (Roger Mowery, WSMC, and Capt Danny Ellis, USCG)
- 5:30 – 7:00 Informal Evening Social (No Host)

Thursday, 16 September 2004 (RRT/NWAC Meeting)

- 8:00 – 8:15 Overview of DHS and FEMA Region 10 Organizations (David Boughton, FEMA)
- 8:15 – 8:45 National Response Plan (NRP) and National Incident Management System (NIMS) Update Briefing (David Boughton, FEMA)
- 8:45 – 9:15 New Resource Typing Requirements (David Boughton, FEMA)
- 9:15 – 9:30 Overview of the RRT/NWAC Strategic Plan (Matt Bernard, USCG)
- 9:30 – 10:00 Army Corps of Engineers Response Capabilities (Paul Peloquin, USACE)
- 10:00 – 10:15 BREAK
- 10:15 – 10:30 Lewis and Clark National Wildlife Refuge (Charlie Hebert, US Fish & Wildlife Service)
- 10:30 – 11:15 DOI Migratory Bird Best Practices Policy (Charlie Hebert, US Fish & Wildlife Service)
- 11:15 – 11:45 Workgroup Updates (All)
- 11:45 – 12:45 LUNCH (No Host)
- 12:30 – 1:30 Lewis and Clark National and State Historical Parks (Scott Stonum, National Park Service)
- 1:30 – 2:15 Columbia River Bar Pilots (MSO Portland)
- 2:15 – 2:30 BREAK
- 2:30 – 3:15 Agency Updates (All)
- 3:15 – 3:30 Announcement of Meeting Dates for 2005 (Beth Sheldrake, EPA)
- 3:30 ADJOURN

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SEPTEMBER 15, 2004 MINUTES:

Chuck Donaldson (ODEQ) and Captain Boothe (USCG) called the meeting to order at 1307 hours and conducted general introductions of participants, provided a brief overview of their agencies, and an explanation of the role of the RRT/NWAC.

OVERVIEW OF THE RRT/NWAC AND THE NORTHWEST AREA CONTINGENCY PLAN

Beth Sheldrake (EPA) presented a brief overview of the response authorities for the RRT/NWAC, including the federal and state statutes. She discussed the implementation of response authorities in accordance with the National Contingency Plan and the Regional Contingency Plan. She outlined the history behind the development of the National Contingency Plan following the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill, which produced the OPA90. She detailed the organization of Area Committees and their associated Area Contingency Plans. She also discussed the National Response System from the NRT to the RRT to the LEPCs, TERCs and SERCs. The discussion continued with the roles and authorities of the FOSC, the SOSC, and the TOSC and the EPA, USCG and the DoD jurisdictional areas.

Ms. Sheldrake continued the discussion with an overview of the Region 10 RRT and NWAC, including the current organization and membership for the Region 10 RRT/NWAC. She explained why the two groups had been combined and outlined the responsibilities of both the RRT and the NWAC. She then discussed the expectations of members and offered ways for the public to get involved with the RRT/NWAC. She concluded with an overview of the Northwest Area Contingency Plan and offered the public website for the RRT/NWAC at www.rrt10nwac.com as a source for more information.

NPREP 2006 DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

Commander Bill Whitson (USCG) provided an overview of the National Preparedness for Response Exercise Program and discussed the USCG intent and a proposed development timeline for the upcoming Columbia Challenge NPREP in 2006 on the Columbia River. Commander Whitson proposed making this full-scale exercise into an event that simultaneously exercised several contingency plans. To that end, he appointed Sean Schenk (MSO-Portland) and Randy Clark (USCG D13) to develop the exercise plan for Columbia Challenge.

Sean Schenk was introduced and he [presented](#) an overview of the personnel involved in the development of the exercise plan. Lieutenant Commander Schenk then discussed the broad objectives of the 2006 NPREP, which included exercising multiple plans simultaneously, responding to a complex incident at multiple locations, not conducting a SONS exercise, and developing a timeline that allows for sequential development through CPXs, TTXs and FTXs. He then discussed the timeline and the plans that would be exercised during the 2006 NPREP, which included the NWACP, the Mass Rescue Operations Plan, the Area Maritime Security Plan, and the Counter-Terrorism Plan that is still under development. Shawn Schenk then discussed a detailed development timeline that incorporated the planning and scenario development meetings where participants and objectives would be determined. He then discussed the next steps for the 2006 NPREP development, which included the initial NPREP Design Committee Meeting on October 20, 2004, where the participants, objectives, and locations for the exercise would begin to take shape. He then provided the contact information for Lieutenant Mike Block (MSO-Portland) for interested parties/agencies to be able to contribute to the development of the NPREP.

Bill Whitson concluded the presentation by stating that the goal for the 2006 NPREP was to stress the system and the only way to do so would be by having the most qualified representatives in critical positions for the exercise. However, he emphasized that the scenario for the exercise will not be an incident of national significance, but it would be challenging. He also mentioned that it is possible that any terrorism incident could be considered a SONS, but that participants will be allowed to manage the incident, rather than being directed. Finally, Commander Whitson emphasized that the sequential development, or “crawl, walk, run” method of exercising would be used to maximize lessons learned and increase the overall preparedness of all participants during the NPREP.

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ASTORIA MASS RESCUE OPERATIONS LESSONS LEARNED

Lieutenant Adam Merrill (USCG – Air Station Astoria) presented an overview of the exercise, which involved the response to a collision between a commercial fishing vessel and a charter boat in the Columbia River. The joint exercise was conducted in conjunction with local and county first responders and other community resources. The scenario had several peculiarities to exercise multiple plans and tax response resources, including a search rescue component, hazardous materials and criminal investigation components in the form of a simulated methamphetamine laboratory aboard one of the vessels, an oil spill component resulting from leaking fuel from both vessels, and a salvage operations component.

Lieutenant Merrill outlined the objectives of the exercise, which were to validate the Mass Rescue Operations Plan, work together with local response resources, and capture lessons learned into the USCG system. He then discussed the conclusions drawn by the evaluators and summarized them into the following four common themes that surfaced from the exercise:

- The Incident Commander must remain detached from the tactical resources.
- There is no common communications network for all response resources.
- There was no visual representation of the incident scene or the incident command structure.
- Implementation of ICS was driven by the incident, rather than by NIMS doctrine.

Captain Michael Ferrell (USCG – Air Station Astoria) then conducted a detailed overview of the specific actions taken during the exercise by all participants and how each of the lessons learned was manifest during the scenario. He then fielded several questions from the audience about the conclusions drawn in the after-action report, especially regarding the strategies taken to alleviate communications barriers between responders and the lack of experience with ICS and Unified Command amongst all response agencies. Finally, he concluded with a discussion about how the exercise conducted in Astoria could assist with the development of the 2006 NPREP. He also mentioned that there would be more exercises in January and May that could be integrated into the sequential development process for the 2006 NPREP.

NPREP 2006 FACILITATED DISCUSSION

Randy Clark led a discussion with the audience about the 2006 NPREP on the Columbia River. He opened the discussion by inviting attendees to think about how to exercise multiple simultaneous functions, as in the Astoria Mass Rescue Exercise example given. He then asked for attendees to suggest scenarios that are a cause for concern when compared with the plans for any particular type of incident. Some of the scenarios that were put forth by the meeting attendees were as follows:

- Accidents involving cruise ships and other passenger vessels.
- Illness and disease forcing quarantine of cruise ship crew and passengers.
- Aircraft accidents into the river.
- Vessel hijackings.
- Tanker groundings.
- Vessel fires.
- Breached dams or collapsed bridges across river channel.
- Earthquakes and tsunamis.
- Casualties amongst responders and/or loss of resources.
- Labor strikes/closures at port facilities and the economic consequences.
- Severe weather variables.
- Dirty bomb/WMD in shipping containers.
- Political and jurisdictional issues along the Columbia River between WA/OR.
- Criminal and terrorism aspects within the response.
- Secondary devices and evidence preservation concerns.
- Communications issues among responders.
- Transportation/access issues to facilities/ports.
- Logistical concerns related to incident footprints.
- Ammonia shipments.

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Randy Clark concluded the discussion by inviting attendees to volunteer to participate in the design committee meeting. There was a discussion that followed about the plans that need to be exercised based upon various agency missions. Some of the plans that were offered were the ESA Wildlife Plans, the NRDA and tribal ERPs. Randy Clark finished the discussion by reiterating the need for additional volunteers for participation in the 2006 NPREP Design Committee.

MARINE FACILITY SECURITY

Phil McCrudden (Washington State Maritime Cooperative) provided an overview of the role of the Washington State Maritime Cooperative in the response community as a spill management agency for various maritime facilities. As a result of the WSMC reviews of facilities and their response plans, and in light of recently implemented MTSA port security requirements, the WSMC discussed the paradigm occurring throughout the response community related to access to port facilities during emergencies. First responders will likely continue to have access during incidents within port facilities, however, at elevated MARSEC levels the contracted spill response crews and spill management representatives may not be permitted entry during the initial stages of an incident. Mr. McCrudden also mentioned the need for additional credentialing and vetting for contractors, vendors, and suppliers to be implemented uniformly throughout the maritime community in the region. The long-term solution is the proposed Transportation Worker Identification Card (TWIC), but it will not be implemented for a few years.

Mr. McCrudden and Roger Mowrey of WSMC asked the NWAC to look at this issue from a regional perspective and consider implementing a standard or issuing guidance amongst the regulated facilities that requires each facility security officer and facility response plan to determine how security and access issues will be resolved. WSMC suggested that the USCG and port facilities consider conducting outreach or training programs for facility security officers to prevent any potential future problems during oil spills or terrorism responses, given the MTSA requirements. Additionally, Mr. McCrudden suggested that response contractors should not be subject to the same vetting process as other contractors and vendors, since it will reduce the number of qualified, locally available response resources at any incident and prevent the timely clean-up without USCG intervention required.

Captain Ellis (MSO-PS) addressed the issue and pledged to address it within the region. He also mentioned that everyone, including response contractors, would likely have to undergo some vetting process to establish approved employee access lists, verify credentials and identify scenarios where exemptions to MARSEC protocols would be permitted. Captain Ellis also mentioned that he would address the issue with facility security officers and vessel security officers at an upcoming meeting and invited WSMC to the meeting to voice concerns. He didn't think it would be a big issue over the long-term, but that it may need to be addressed by the incident commander on-scene for staffing reasons. There was further discussion related to several theoretical security scenarios at various MARSEC levels and examples mentioned by a spill responder from Clean Sound gave support to sustaining requirements for vetting all vendors and contractors, regardless of their role in the response. However, the examples given did not address all the homeland security issues addressed by WSMC and the need for efficient or effective response, as highlighted by Dale Jensen (Ecology).

WEYERHAUSER/LONGVIEW FIBER OIL SPILL

Paula Stoppler, Brian Wood, and Paul Hughes of the spill response team at Weyerhaeuser's Longview Fiber facility in Longview, WA, briefed the RRT/NWAC on an incident that occurred just after midnight at their tank farm on August 26, 2004. Weyerhaeuser reported that a tanker was breached when a skid-steer loader slid down a containment berm into a valve on the tank, releasing 18,000 gallons of diesel fuel. EPA OSC and Ecology responded. Paula Stoppler provided an overview of the incident and some background on the preparations Weyerhaeuser had made prior to the incident that proved helpful during the incident management. She mentioned the response plans and drills that Weyerhaeuser had conducted with Ecology and how those efforts allowed them to implement ICS early and rapidly contain the oil. Ms. Stoppler highlighted the need to rapidly get the planning section executing the planning cycle to alleviate some of the chaos within the operations section prior to the end of the first operational period.

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Brian Wood presented a more detailed account of the incident chronology, and of the response, recovery, and mitigation phases of the incident. He then discussed the lessons learned and the successes of the incident, including the ability to rapidly get the planning section ahead of the operations section, the performance of the PIO and the communications plan. The federal jurisdictional boundary issues between USCG and EPA were discussed as they related to the incident, which was adjacent to the Columbia River. Upon notification, the National Response Center asked the responsible party whether the facility was within EPA or USCG jurisdiction. The consensus reached on-scene by the EPA OSC and representatives from MSO Portland was that it was within EPA jurisdiction until or unless the diesel reached the Columbia River. Additionally, the question was raised about whether the structural integrity of the leaking tank was a concern during the initial phase of the response. The Weyerhaeuser spill response team mentioned that the issue was not addressed, since the containment berm would hold the contents of the ruptured tank and an adjacent tank. The final discussion was related to how Weyerhaeuser would handle the recovered product. Brian Wood stated that most of it would be returned to the industrial processes once all water was removed, thereby greatly reducing waste disposal costs.

ADJOURNMENT

Matt Bernard (USGC) concluded the formal portion of the day's meeting at 1554 hours. The RRT/NWAC Meeting will reconvene at 0800 hours on September 16, 2004.

SEPTEMBER 16, 2004 MINUTES:

Beth Sheldrake (EPA) called the meeting to order at 0808 hours and introduced all new participants for the second session of the RRT/NWAC meeting.

OVERVIEW OF DHS AND FEMA REGION 10 ORGANIZATIONS

David Boughton (FEMA) [presented](#) an overview of the integration of FEMA into the Department of Homeland Security during the ongoing restructuring of the federal government. He mentioned that the current structure of FEMA would likely remain roughly the same for the foreseeable future, despite the gyrations of DHS. Mr. Boughton explained that since the Department of Justice's Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP) was incorporated into DHS in 2002, FEMA no longer provides grants, including the Emergency Management Performance Grants, Citizens Corps Grants and Assistance to Firefighter Grants, which have all been exported to ODP. He outlined the current structure of FEMA, the mission of each of the divisions, and how each of the divisions was affected by the government reorganization. He stated that the main role of FEMA had not changed and that most of the 3,400 nationwide employees were actively deployed in support of hurricane-ravaged communities in the Southeastern U.S. David Boughton then discussed the proposed organization of DHS as he understands it. He speculated that the final structure would involve 8-10 regions and two area offices, in Anchorage and Honolulu, respectively. He didn't anticipate any changes or announcements would be made until after the elections in November.

NRP AND NIMS UPDATE

David Boughton discussed the historical context behind the development of the [National Incident Management System and the National Response Plan](#). He discussed the Homeland Security Presidential Directives (HSPDs) that have been issued since September 11, 2001. He highlighted HSPD-5 as the foundation for the development of NIMS and the NRP. The goal of these efforts is to standardize an all-hazards approach for emergency management and to enable a coordinated response from all levels of government. Mr. Boughton further explained NIMS and the requirement for the use of ICS at all incidents. He then discussed the NRP, the incorporation of the National Contingency Plan, and the plans that it supersedes, including the Federal Response Plan, the Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan, the CONPLAN and the Interim National Response Plan that was promulgated shortly after 9-11. He explained the role of the NRP as a guide for the federal government's response to an incident of national significance, which he also defined. Finally, he outlined the organization of the NRP, the content of the associated annexes and Emergency Support Functions (ESFs), and the development timeline through the final document approval date in January 2005.

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NEW RESOURCE TYPING REQUIREMENTS

David Boughton continued the discussion of FEMA and DHS initiatives related to emergency management, including the [National Mutual Aid and Resource Management Initiative](#), which is designed to foster mutual aid agreements between all jurisdictions (both horizontally and vertically), standardize resource typing definitions for use in mutual aid, develop a secure automated database of all mutual aid resources available, and establish a nationwide standard for credentialing emergency response personnel that are certified for specific duty positions. Mr. Boughton presented an update on the status of each of the components of the initiative and mentioned that some of the projects have been outsourced to contractors, including the resource typing definitions. He stated that the Automated Resource Management System (ARMS) will not be available in prototype version until 2005 and the final version will be produced once the resource-typing project has been completed. Mr. Boughton stated that the entire program is primarily directed at the state and federal level and that it will cover both fire and hazardous materials resources. Additionally, he mentioned that FEMA is considering developing an ICS 700-level course related to requesting, using and tracking mutual aid resources at large or complex incidents. Following his presentation, there was a brief discussion about the ARMS, the eventual public and stakeholder comment period and the integration of FEMA and DHS into NORTHCOM.

OVERVIEW OF RRT/NWAC STRATEGIC PLAN

Matt Bernard [presented](#) an overview of the final draft of the RRT/NWAC Strategic Plan. He discussed the changes that had been made to the draft since it was presented at the RRT/NWAC Meeting in May. He went through the purpose and vision for the RRT/NWAC. He reviewed the mission statement and provided a detailed review of the objectives, strategies and prioritization for each. He then reviewed the proposed timeline for implementation of the Strategic Plan. He mentioned that the Steering Committee had additional modifications to make, including the creation of a performance metric to measure the progress of the RRT/NWAC in accomplishing their strategic objectives, prior to final approval by the Executive Committee. Following the presentation, there was a brief discussion about the changing priorities of some of the objectives and the need for incorporating lessons learned about spills into the strategic plan objectives.

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS RESPONSE ORGANIZATION AND CAPABILITIES

Paul Peloquin (USACE) briefed the RRT/NWAC on the environmental compliance and spill response organization of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers within the local districts and nationally/globally. He mentioned that within the Northwest Division there are three districts, Seattle, Portland and Walla Walla. In each of the divisions there are Environmental Compliance Coordinators, who are charged with maintaining spill response plans and for training facility personnel at facilities throughout the district. These Environmental Compliance Coordinators (ECCs) have established a response network that has the capability to reach back to resources at the national level. This network has been established and is maintained by regular conference calls and regional meetings. These ECCs are selected based upon qualification standards, including the requirement for an advanced technical degree in either Environmental Engineering or Natural Resource Management and training in ICS. The Northwest Division ECCs are now partnering with Ecology, ODEQ and the EPA.

Mr. Peloquin acknowledged that despite the efforts made by the ECCs within the Northwest Division, there were some significant spills that occurred in the last year. He mentioned that the USACOE has redoubled efforts to review and update containment and SPCC plans and to conduct additional response training at each facility to enhance the immediate response to and containment of spills by on-scene personnel. He said that the USACOE generally trains its maintenance personnel to serve as the initial responders and they are trained to deployment of absorbent booms and pads. He also stated that there is a broader effort throughout the Army to institutionalize environmental stewardship, called the Environmental Management System (EMS), which is required training for all personnel. He also mentioned that the Northwest Division has established contracts with NRC Environmental for larger spills and incidents that cannot be contained by local personnel.

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Carolyn Markos, the Northwest District ECC then discussed the facility-specific EMS protocols the USACE will be implementing to improve environmental stewardship and prevent future spills. She highlighted the hazardous waste minimization and product recycling programs, the increased employee awareness, improved communications and response procedures, healthier rapport with regulators, and an overall improvement in readiness and coordination. She made it a point to thank the Washington Department of Ecology for their assistance in providing training on the basics of incident management to USACE employees at Bonneville and The Dalles Dam.

Following her presentation, there was a discussion between representatives of USACE, EPA, Ecology, and ODEQ about the funding for EMS training and spill preparedness, and about the role of the USACE representatives as the responsible party within the Incident Command System during a response to a spill at a USACE facility. The USACE representatives stated that the funding for spill preparedness was allocated to districts based upon a gap analysis that heavily weighted recent spills and regulatory citations. There was an extended discussion about the ICS issue that included input from Tammy Brown (Navy), who contradicted Gordon Taxer's position that NIMS and ICS are irrelevant to USACE operations. Ms. Brown offered training and qualifications standards for ICS and stated that DoD agencies are not exempt from the requirements placed on other responsible parties when there are spills at DoD facilities. Mr. Taxer stated that he was unaware of any previously established standard or uniform policy within USACE or DoD that required the use of ICS or the application of NIMS at responses to spills occurring at a USACE facility.

LEWIS AND CLARK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

http://willapa.fws.gov/LC_Website/LeCl_index.htm

Charlie Hebert (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) provided a [presentation](#) of the Columbia River Estuary and its vulnerability to an oil spill. He discussed the species of migratory birds that inhabit and feed in various areas of the estuary. He also discussed the geographic and ecological variability in different locations within the relatively small refuge complex. He discussed the habitat and diet of a variety of shorebirds, waterfowl, and birds of prey. He also mentioned the dynamic nature of the estuary, with species that are seasonal inhabitants, including the migratory birds and the spawning salmon, and the delicate ecosystem that exists at the tidal boundary between fresh and salt water. He concluded the presentation with a discussion of the possible ecological impacts of a even a small oil or hazardous materials release into the Columbia River.

MIGRATORY BIRD BEST PRACTICES POLICY

Charlie Hebert (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) continued with a [presentation](#) on the recently developed and approved Migratory Bird Best Practices Policy, which was signed on April 27, 2004. The policy addressed major concerns the agency had about the lack of standardization amongst wildlife rehabilitation organizations and the lack of federal oversight or regulation requiring their certification prior to oil and fuel spills. The goals of the policy document are to incorporate emerging scientific data regarding effective and humane rehabilitation techniques, and to ensure the health and safety of volunteers and rehabilitation organization employees. The policy document also provides federal support for state and local legislation that would require permitting of rehabilitation organizations.

Eric Larsen (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife) continued with an overview of the proposed regulations promulgated in Washington related to wildlife rehabilitation. In the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Rehabilitation Standards Rule, rehabilitation organizations would be required to comply with the minimum standard of care rules, which provide for humane and ethical decontamination techniques, effective feeding and rehabilitation principles, and safe and hygienic conditions at rehabilitation centers. Mr. Larsen announced that the WDFW is soliciting comments and stakeholder input for this proposed legislation. He recommended that the RRT/NWAC support this legislation by making modifications to the NWACP that incorporate the spirit and intent of the Migratory Birds Best Practices Policy and by encouraging bi-lateral agreements related to wildlife rehabilitation

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within the CANUSWEST program. Specifically, he mentioned the need for developing a Wildlife Response Plan within Chapter 3000 of the NWACP, adding the Migratory Birds Best Practices document to the NWACP in Chapter 9000, adopting the WDFW minimum standards of care, and developing a Wildlife Unit within the ICS structure for oil and hazardous materials spills. Finally the Alaska and California Area Contingency Plans were cited as having model wildlife protection plans already in use.

There was also discussion about the potential for more conclusive scientific data related to the success or failure of wildlife rehabilitation for particular species. Unfortunately, there have not been a lot of studies that have tracked animals from recovery through decontamination, rehabilitation, and release. Additionally, very few studies address survival rates of particular species as they relate to the toxicity of the spilled pollutant. As a result, the legislation and policies developed to date are based on the best available data and may need to be changed as more information and better techniques become available. Finally, there was a discussion about the limited number of wildlife rehabilitation agencies.

WORKGROUP UPDATES:

Before turning the discussion over to each of the workgroup chairs, Beth Sheldrake reviewed the modifications that were made to the workgroups, including the creation of the Communications and Outreach Workgroup from the former Public Affairs Workgroup and the development of a Logistics Workgroup from the disbanded Communications Workgroup. She mentioned that the Communications and Outreach Workgroup was set to meet on October 5, 2004 to discuss their charter and action plan. She stated that the EPA Region 10 Public Information Officer, Mark MacIntyre (EPA) has volunteered to chair the workgroup. Ms. Sheldrake also mentioned that the Logistics Workgroup is still working to determine membership and objectives, but that the workgroup chair, Scott Knudson (USCG, D13), has been selected and will be developing an action plan and charter soon.

GEOGRAPHIC RESPONSE PLANNING

Jack Wylie [presented](#) a detailed overview of the progress the GRP Workgroup has made since May in completing a variety of tasks including the Deschutes River GRP. He discussed the outcome of the meeting held with the GRP Workgroup on August 20, 2004. He explained that the public comments and stakeholder feedback on the Deschutes River GRP have been incorporated into the document, which is the first inland GRP in Oregon, and the final document should be published by November. He mentioned that there would be additional inland GRPs drafted in the next year for areas in Washington, including the Cedar River, the Sammamish River, the Green River, the Duwamish River, the Snohomish River, the Wenatchee River and the Spokane River.

Mr. Wylie mentioned the joint efforts of the GRP Workgroup, Washington Department of Natural Resources, and NOAA to enhance, update, and link their existing shoreline databases. He discussed an upcoming meeting to be hosted by the Navy on September 28, 2004 to discuss improved functionality and mapping capabilities for all shoreline database information. He then discussed the biological opinion update that was being conducted in accordance with the Endangered Species Act to outline the responsibilities of the Federal and/or State On-Scene Coordinators at spills and hazardous materials incidents and what information should be included in GRPs to help OSCs evaluate the risks to endangered fish species, including salmon. The biological opinion, which relates primarily to NOAA fisheries, requires that the GRPs include information about seasonal fish passage through regional rivers and watersheds. There is an effort underway to simplify the data and include it in GIS layers within GRPs.

Jack Wylie also explained the work Dick Logan is doing on Archaeological Issues with the DOI and Ecology, including the training of archeological and cultural resources specialists and gathering sensitive information from tribal groups about the locations of these resources to ensure that the GRPs will provide warning to OSCs when responses are near tribal or historical resources to allow for additional protection. Jack also announced plans to develop written

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standards for the formatting of inland and coastal GRPs. The workgroup plans to finalize these standards by January to be included in the 2005 NWACP. Finally, Jack announced the need for GRPs to address the protection of economic resources, which would need to be defined by the RRT/NWAC. He mentioned that the Executive Committee has asked the Steering Committee to investigate the ways that other regions have addressed this requirement.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Beth Sheldrake [presented](#) an overview of the current projects in the Hazardous Substances Workgroup. The workgroup is working to complete revisions to Chapter 7000, Hazardous Substances, of the NWACP. The group is working to include WMD-specific information in Chapter 7000. Also including information derived from the Oregon Chemical Terrorism Plan, which was included in the 2004 revision of the NWACP, and to address the unique operational, logistical, financial, and administrative aspects of a WMD or hazardous substance response. USCG and EPA working together to develop these protocols. She also discussed the need to include WMD-specific response organization changes required by the NRP and technical information related to agents and response resources that are WMD-capable. She said that the Hazardous Substance Workgroup would request guidance from the NRT about what information can be included in the NWACP before publishing a draft of the document in October.

MARINE FIREFIGHTING

Lieutenant Commander Amy Cocanour (MSO-Puget Sound) briefed that the Marine Firefighting Workgroup has been incorporated into the USCG D13 Marine Firefighting Commission. She mentioned that Lieutenant Jason Purbaugh (MSO-Puget Sound) has been attending all of the monthly meetings for the RRT/NWAC. She [presented](#) an overview of the projects that the Marine Firefighting Commission has been working on related to updating the Marine Terrorism Response Plan, including defining training standards for marine firefighters, planning upcoming drills and exercises, and developing a marine firefighting response resource database to provide real-time information on the availability of apparatus, vessels, and crews. They are working to integrate the drill and exercise schedule into the preparations for the upcoming NPREP in 2006.

RESPONSE TECHNOLOGIES

Ruth Yender (NOAA) discussed the progress made toward pre-approval for the focused application of dispersants on open water. There is an Environmental Risk Assessments underway by the USCG, which is seeking preauthorization areas and an analysis of risks and benefits related to the use of dispersants. The USCG and NOAA are interested in conducting a workshop to review oil spill scenarios related to dispersant use and the alternative mechanical recovery techniques within Washington along the Outer Coast and in Puget Sound. They are hoping to have participation from industry, response contractors and local, state and federal agencies. In addition, the workgroup is working to revise the existing dispersant checklist in the NWACP to make it user-friendly. Ruth also mentioned that the National Academy of Sciences is developing recommendations regarding the use of dispersants, which the workgroup will use to develop RRT/NWAC policies. Ruth also mentioned the goal of reviewing and revising the protocols for In-Situ Burning following inland oil spills.

STEERING COMMITTEE

Beth Sheldrake [presented](#) an update on the status of initiatives the Steering Committee is responsible for completing. She discussed the progress the committee was making on finalizing the Strategic Plan for the RRT/NWAC, which will go into effect in January 2005. She stated that the Steering Committee was beginning its annual review of the NWACP, with the goal of completing revisions in January and publishing the plan in February. Beth also discussed the effort to develop an Information Officer/Liaison Officer policy to enhance the trust and

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credibility of the unified command at incident response. She mentioned the continued development of the RRT/NWAC website, membership revisions and upcoming meeting dates.

LEWIS AND CLARK NATIONAL AND STATE HISTORICAL PARKS

<http://www.nps.gov/lewi/index.htm>

Scott Stonum (National Park Service), the Resource Manager at Fort Clatsop, discussed the development of a joint initiative between the National Park Service, the State of Washington and the State of Oregon to preserve the historic and cultural resources at sites where the Lewis and Clark Expedition completed their westward trek to map portions of the Louisiana Purchase. The initiative to develop the Lewis and Clark National and State Historical Parks combined several state parks in Oregon and Washington with the existing Fort Clatsop National Historical Park on the bi-centennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. The Lewis and Clark National and State Historical Parks now include Ecola State Park, the Salt Works Heritage Site, Sunset Beach Heritage Site, Fort Stevens State Park, Netul Landing Heritage Site and Fort Clatsop National Historical Park within Oregon, and Dismal Nitch Heritage Site, Station Camp Heritage Site, Fort Columbia State Park, Cape Disappointment State Park and the Discovery Trail within Washington, on the north banks of the Columbia River. Mr. Stonum stated that there are plans to develop a trail that links Fort Clatsop and the Pacific Ocean at the Sunset Beach Heritage Site. He said that conservationists are working with Weyerhaeuser to purchase an additional tract of land to connect the Fort Clatsop National Historical Park with existing state and federal lands. He anticipated that if a deal could be brokered, the new trail could be dedicated by November 2005.

COLUMBIA RIVER BAR PILOTS

<http://www.columbiariverbarpilots.com>

Captain Jewell introduced Captain Robert Johnson of the Columbia River Bar Pilots to discuss the role of the pilots in navigating large vessels through the Columbia River near Astoria, OR. Captain Johnson provided a thorough historical review of the Columbia River Bar and the role of pilots in navigating commercial vessels safely through this extremely hazardous navigable waterway that connects the Pacific Ocean to the Columbia River Shipping Channel. He explained the seasonal hazards at the Columbia River Bar, the protocols of the Columbia River Bar Pilots when boarding, navigating, assessing the serviceability of vessels, and responding to vessel equipment failures. He made reference to the hazards posed by uncontrollable commercial vessels to the jetties and other structures in the channel, such as the bridge supports and piers, during allisions. He cited a couple of past accidents and averted crises in the Columbia River Bar and explained the factors that led to the problems and the outcome of each incident. There was extended discussion about foreign vessels and about government vessel pilotage, including whether pilots are used on Navy or Coast Guard vessels, which are not required to take pilots.

AGENCY UPDATES:

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

Tammy Brown stated that the Navy had no updates.

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

Steve Gossman (OSHA) explained the administration's efforts to develop standards for emergency response personnel safety and for conducting on-scene inspections during emergency responses. The agency is continuing training in ICS and their roles and responsibilities for supporting the incident commander during emergency responses. OSHA is also working to develop standards to assist Safety Officers in completing their health and safety planning during an incident.

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

Gordon Taxer referred to the briefings given by Paul Peloquin and Carolyn Markos.

REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAM/NORTHWEST AREA COMMITTEE

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FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Ron Britton mentioned the deployment of a majority of FEMA resources to support the hurricane relief efforts in Florida. He talked about the agency's request for volunteers and the requirement to extend the mobilization of some employees already serving in Florida after the first two hurricanes. Mr. Britton also explained that he is part of the Technical Hazards Group (THG), replacing Mike Hammond. His focus as the new director of the THG will be to expand the scope to be more service oriented with a focus on providing support to local, state, and federal agencies. He envisions providing training and hazards analysis, including providing a regional database for both training and response resources, including equipment and personnel. When completed, he hopes to be able to have FEMA provide monthly updates to the database for use by response personnel throughout the region.

IDAHO BUREAU OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mary Halverson explained the upcoming Idaho Prepare conference, which was formerly the SEPC. She also mentioned that she is updating the state's hazardous materials response plan. Finally, she mentioned the fact that IDEQ is also working on its first two GRPs in Idaho, as previously mentioned by Jack Wylie.

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Mark Miller discussed an upcoming two-day CAMEO training and directed those interested in participating to contact Damien Bailey for more information. He also mentioned that NOAA has compiled the Columbia River Atlas and he asked those interested in getting a copy to contact Ruth Yender. The electronic versions of the document will be available shortly on the NOAA website. Finally, Mr. Miller mentioned that the Office of Response Restoration was undergoing reorganization and as part of that change the Hazardous Materials Response Group will be combined with the Natural Resource Damage Assessment Group, which will provide better support to the unified command at spills.

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Jack Wylie, filling in for Chuck Donaldson, discussed the continued partnership between ODEQ and the Oregon Department of Homeland Security and the Oregon Emergency Management Office on issues of homeland security. Mr. Wylie stated that Chuck Donaldson is an active member of the Governor's Homeland Security Council Steering Committee. He stated that ODEQ has also been very active in reviewing and commenting on the NRP and NIMS documents that have been drafted in the past year. Finally, Mr. Wylie mentioned a personnel change involving Mike Greenberg, formerly the WMD SOSC with ODEQ, has taken on the additional duty as the Northwest Region SOSC, replacing Chris Kauffman.

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Chris Field discussed the deployment of 11 personnel from Region 10 and over 150 nationwide to support hurricane relief efforts in Florida. He also mentioned an EPA initiative to develop regional incident management teams. He explained that over a dozen Region 10 OSCs are in Dallas for an ICS Academy that is designed to train OSCs on 12 specific positions within the ICS structure as part of the Region 10 IMT. Mr. Field also discussed one of the major areas of focus for EPA Region 10 was the Upper Columbia River near Roosevelt, Washington, where there is an ongoing \$1.5 removal project. He also discussed the potential for another large removal in the Columbia River for possible widespread elemental mercury pools from smelting operations in southern British Columbia and northern Washington. He recently assigned an OSC to investigate the novel techniques for locating elemental mercury underwater and he requested the support of any other agency within the RRT/NWAC who might have historical information about elemental mercury contamination on the Upper Columbia River. Preston Sleeper (DOI) offered his experiences in the area during his former service with the Bureau of Land Management and the Bureau of Reclamation. He agreed to discuss it with the assigned OSC.

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Finally, Chris Field mentioned upcoming OSC Readiness Training to be held in Phoenix, Arizona on November 15-18 and there are slots available an OSC from each of the states in the region.

U.S. COAST GUARD, DISTRICT 13

Captain Chip Boothe mentioned the continued development of the Sector Command concept, which is the reorganization strategy for the 13th Coast Guard District. He stated that while this is not yet ready for public scrutiny, he wanted to highlight the fact that however the district is structured, the goal will be to maintain continuity for response by designating two officers to serve as FOSCs throughout the reorganization. Captain Boothe also mentioned that the USCG D13 is developing incident management assistance teams (IMATs) and that Commander Bill Whitson has been helping to develop what will be referred to as Area IMAT - North. He also mentioned the USCG IMAT participation in the SONS exercise in April, a military deployment operation in the Port of San Diego, and staff participation in the hurricane relief efforts in Florida.

WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

Dale Jensen discussed several recent responses, including a methamphetamine laboratory aboard a vessel and responses to spill events at Weyerhaeuser and USACE facilities. He provided an overview of his role on the Governors Emergency Management Council and how it directly correlated to the initiatives within Ecology's Spill Prevention, Preparedness and Response Program. He discussed the initiatives of the Preparedness Section, which include the development of the Contingency Planning Rule and the Oil Transfer Rule. He stated that the Contingency Planning Rule would be released in mid-summer 2005. Mr. Jensen mentioned that the Oil Transfer Rule has been making measured progress with an advisory committee that has begun studies of similar legislation, but has been delayed by the inability to fill a project position. He stated that Ecology has also developed an IMAT team by conducting drills and exercises with several SOSCs at Lake Chelan.

U.S. COAST GUARD, MARINE SAFETY OFFICE – PORTLAND

Captain Jewell mentioned that there have not been very many responses in the MSO – Portland jurisdiction since May. However, he did mention that due to the upcoming campaign visits scheduled by President Bush and Senator Kerry, the MSO would be heavily involved in security operations.

U.S. COAST GUARD, MARINE SAFETY OFFICE – PUGET SOUND

Captain Ellis discussed the recent purchases made with the \$1.5 million allocated by Senator Murray for security initiatives, including the purchase of two regional weather sensors, 12 vessel sensors, and infrastructure for a regional Vessel Traffic Operations Support System, which can track movement of vessels from the Strait of Juan de Fuca to the San Juan Islands and throughout the Puget Sound. He mentioned that this system would be provided to any response agency partner that would like to have it on their vessels as an outreach and preparedness initiative for oil pollution prevention. Second, Captain Ellis mentioned the Automatic Identification System (AIS) repeaters would be installed by November 2004 to allow vessels with VTOSS transponders to identify themselves with the USCG at elevated MARSEC levels. Next, he mentioned homeland security training initiatives related to vessel and facility security that would be held in October 2004 and November 2004 and sponsored by the National Security Reviewing Center. He concluded with a summary of the joint full-scale exercise conducted with the Seattle Police, Seattle Fire, and the FBI at the Port of Seattle, which simulated a response to a terrorism incident on a cruise ship. Captain Ellis stated that there were a lot of lessons learned about conducting a multiple agency response under unified command and that they should continue to exercise with challenging incident scenarios.

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DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR

Preston Sleeper announced the Environmental Safeguards Plan that is being developed within the context of the NRP, specifically ESF 11, in conjunction with the USDA and the natural and cultural resources specialists within DOI. The problem that has arisen during the development of this plan is one of funding and staffing. DOI management has recognized the problems and is developing a plan to identify data gaps. He also mentioned that he has increased the staffing within his office by one with the birth of Allison O'Brien's son, Brendan. Mr. Sleeper stated that Ms. O'Brien would be back to work in October.

FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

Miriam Burbach reported on the participation of the FDA in the response to the Koopman Dairy chromium-poisoning incident. The multi-agency response involved the FBI, the EPA, and the Washington Departments of Agriculture, Ecology and Health as a possible case of agro-terrorism. The dairy, located in Enumclaw, Washington, experienced three mysterious cases of dairy cow deaths from chromium poisoning. Ms. Burbach stated that the two biggest lessons learned from the response were the need to dispose of large quantities of contaminated food products, such as milk and cheese, and the need for established protocols regarding carcass disposal. Additionally, the dairy provided milk for the school lunch program, and it was critical to sample and analyze food product that had already been packaged for delivery. Fortunately, all of the samples came back below hazardous levels for chromium.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

L.E. Harrick from the Division of Pipeline Safety in Washington D.C. introduced herself to the RRT/NWAC. She stated that she tries to get out to each of the RRT/NWAC meetings to ensure that contacts are made between her office and the response agencies throughout the country. She was asked whether her office was responsible for any aspect of pipeline security. She replied that there is a Critical Infrastructure Section that is focused on reviewing security plans from pipeline operators.

CO-CHAIR FINAL COMMENTS

Captain Boothe thanked participants and welcomed them to participate in the meeting in January.

ADJOURNMENT

Beth Sheldrake closed the meeting at 1626.