

Meeting of the Northwest Arctic Subarea GRS Workgroup

January 19, 2011

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

555 Cordova Street

Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Web-based Teleconference

Attendees:

Don Dragoo-AMNWR

Matt Ganley-Bering Straits NC

Joy Baker-Nome Harbormaster

Zac Stevenson- NWA Borough

Reggie Barr-Brevig Mission

Charlie O'Reilly-Brevig Mission

Dale Gardner-ADEC

Larry Iwamoto-ADEC

Richard Vanerhook-ADNR

Catherine Berg-USFWS

Tina Moran-USFWS

Colleen Swan-Kivalina

Charlie Gregg-NW Arctic Borough

Dan Stevenson- NPS

Rob Hollinger-USCG

Tom Okleasik-NW Arctic Borough

Zac Stevenson-NW Arctic Borough

Jeff Estes-USCG

Amy Cox-NOAA

Susie Miller-USFWS

Mark Janes-Nuka Research

Doug Mutter- DOI

Tim Robertson- Nuka Research

Julie Raymond-Yakoubian-Kawerak

Tim Robertson of Nuka Research and Planning Group opened the meeting and gave a brief statement regarding the goals of the meeting.

Larry Iwamoto of ADEC reviewed the history of GRS in the State of Alaska. He pointed to the development of plans in other subareas beginning in 1998. Around 400 of these oil spill response plans have developed in 6 of the 8 coastal subareas. The areas were selected based on a high priority/risk assessment and as funding was available. The current funding for this project comes from a grant from federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management Regulation and Enforcement-Coastal Impact Assistance Program. This will allow the development of sites in the Northwest Arctic (NWA) and possibly on the North Slope Subareas.

Tim Robertson of Nuka Research provided an overview of GRS and the intent of the plans. He outline the process of the workgroup selecting sites based on the factors of:

- Environmental Sensitivity
- Risk of being oiled
- Protectability with current technology

Each site is geographically limited to approximately 3 miles to ensure that a team of responders would be able to execute the plan and be able to maintain the booms during a spill. The plans will be developed using local knowledge and oil spill responders to draft the strategies. These will then be reviewed by the workgroup for approval and submitted to the subarea committee for inclusion in the Subarea Contingency Plans. He reviewed a GRS from another subarea showing the elements of the completed document. He

emphasized the workgroup process and noted that it requires input and collaboration to make the plans as useful as possible. His presentation is available here- [http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/perp/grs/nwa/GRS Briefing \(Sept 2010\).pdf](http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/perp/grs/nwa/GRS_Briefing_(Sept_2010).pdf)

Mark Janes of Nuka Research then presented the Site Selection Matrix (SSM) for the NWA to the group. The SSM is designed to offer quick reference to the sensitive areas in the subarea and list the resources that are present at each site. He discussed how the document is developed using Environmental Sensitivity Index maps that show the presence of resources. The resource from each site is entered into a spreadsheet that lists the resources. The current list is only a draft and needs review and input from workgroup members and the public. He encouraged the addition of other sites that are of local importance.

Matt Ganley requested there be a designation between Native Allotment and Native Corporation properties because of the different oversight requirements for any cultural properties present. The group requested that the presence of whales in coastal water be designated.

The group discussed the data that was being used to make the sensitive designation. Some felt that the data was dated and would like to see additional research. Mr. Robertson explained that there is recognition of that fact. But the issue is addressed by pulling together experts and local residents who are more current on the conditions and resource present at the sites. They are encouraged to have input and identify additional sites and correct any inconsistency in the SSM.

Mr. Janes reviewed the index maps that display the sites. The subarea was split into 3 different zones based on the size. A Northern, Southern and a St. Lawrence Island Zones were mapped. Tom Okleasik with the NW Arctic Borough requested that the zones reflect the boundaries of the borough so there is consistency for planning purposes. There were no objections to the change.

Mr. Robertson then facilitated the discussion to designate high priority sites in the 3 zones. He directed the group to designate sites as high priority and from the high priority sites the group would nominate the 25 sites for GRS development. He emphasized that although a GRS might not be established in the site at this time, the information would be important for spill responders to have at the time of an incident. He discussed the selection of a site for development listing the three criteria used:

- Environmental sensitivity
- Exposure to risk of being oiled
- Ability to succeed in protecting the area with the current response technology

The group decided to nominate 10 sites each for the Northern and Southern Zones and 5 for St. Lawrence Island.

He began in the St Lawrence Island Zone. There were no representatives available from the island communities. Overall, the group encouraged ongoing outreach to the all the

communities that were not represented to confirm and get input on any of the sites selected. Numerous individuals offered to assist with contacts for Mr. Janes to follow up.

The group identified 58 high priority sites. Prior to a final selection of 25, Mr. Robertson reviewed the Risk Maps. These maps are in draft form and display risks and assets in the subarea. Mr. Okleasik noted missing resources and risks and would like to see these included. Changes were noted and the additional research will be done to make the maps more current.

The group selected the following sites for GRS development. This list is a draft document and will receive additional public review and input:

Selected	Priority	Location
Northern Zone		
N-01	High	Kivalina River
	High	Wulik River
N-02	High	Cape Krusenstern & Lagoon
N-03	High	Noatak River Delta
N-04	High	Ekichuk Lake
N-05	High	Kobuk River Channel-barge route
N-06	High	Selawik River Delta-barge route
N-07	High	Pipe Spit
	High	Kotzebue
N-08	High	Eschscholtz Bay-Buckland River
	High	Elephant Point
N-09	High	Inmachuk River
N-10	High	Cape Espenberg
Southern Zone		
S-01	High	Cowpack Inlet
S-02	High	Head of Shishmaref Inlet
S-03	High	Lopp Lagoon
S-04	High	Brevig Lagoon
S-04	High	Grantley Harbor
S-05	High	Feather River Lagoon/Cape Wooley
S-06	High	Nome River
S-07	High	Golovin Lagoon Entrance
S-08	High	Kwiniuk Inlet
S-08	High	Kwik River
S-09	High	Koyuk Inlet
S-09	High	Inglutalik River
S-10	High	St. Michael Bay
Saint Lawrence Island Zone		
SL-01	High	Camp Ayvigtek

SL-02	High	Kepivak Bay
SL-03	High	Nayghapak Lagoon
SL-04	High	Western Naayvaghak Lagoon
SL-05	High	Eastern Naayvaghak Lagoon

The group reinforced the desire to get additional input from other communities. Tom Okleasik of NW Arctic Borough requested that Nuka Research and ADEC present the list and information regarding GRS' at a Borough Planning Commission meeting list. Both ADEC and Nuka Research agreed to assist with the meeting.

Mark Janes outlined the process to move the project forward:

- A meeting summary will be developed and circulated for review
- A new SSM and Index Maps will be developed reflecting the sites selected
- Additional outreach will be made to communities in the subarea to gain input regarding the selected sites
- By the end of February, the group will review and approve the selected sites after input from the communities
- Maps will be drafted that will show the selected sites and will display the resources that need protection at each site
- A Tactics Committee will be convened consisting of local individuals, response professionals, ADEC, Nuka Research and the USCG. This group will draft response plans for the selected sites.
- The plans will be put in the GRS format and put forth for public review. Edits and comments will be collected from the workgroup and incorporated in the plans.
- The workgroup may choose to meet again for a final review and approval of the plans.