

**Western Alaska Subarea**  
Geographic Response Strategies (GRS)  
& Potential Places of Refuge (PPOR)  
Workgroup Meeting  
January 17, 2012  
Association of Village Council Presidents  
Conference Room  
101 Main Street  
Bethel, Alaska

**Attendees:**

Larry Iwamoto-ADEC  
Don Wedll-AVCP  
Rose Kalistook- Orutsararmuit Native  
Council  
Lucille Kalistook- Kuskowkim River  
Watershed Council  
Joey Billy- Kuskowkim River Watershed  
Council  
Thomas Doolittle- Yukon Delta NWR  
Mark Janes-Nuka Research  
Steve Russell-ADEC  
Bob Carlson-ADEC

Via Teleconference-  
Catherine Berg-USFWS  
Alice Julius-Goodnews Bay  
Amy Gilson- Nuka Research  
Nora Rojek- AMNWR  
Peter Gump-Hooper Bay  
Joe Bell- Hooper Bay  
David Bunyan- Hooper Bay  
Doug Mutter- DOI

Mark Janes of Nuka Research and Planning Group opened the meeting, gave a brief statement regarding the goals of the meeting and led the introductions.

Larry Iwamoto of ADEC gave an overview of the “Alaska Federal/State Preparedness Plan for Response to Oil and Hazardous Substance Discharges/ Releases” and the “Western Alaska Subarea Contingency Plan” (SCP). A copy of his presentation is available at this link-

[http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/perp/grs/wa/Unified%20Plan%20and%20WAK%20SCP%20Brief\(January2012-reduced\).pdf](http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/perp/grs/wa/Unified%20Plan%20and%20WAK%20SCP%20Brief(January2012-reduced).pdf).

Mr. Iwamoto pointed out that the SCP for Western Alaska is in the process of being updated. He will be looking for input and information from local stakeholders to make the plans more responsive to local concerns. He reviewed each section of the plan. They include:

- Response
- Resource
- Hazardous Materials
- Sensitive Areas
- Background
- Scenarios

- Geographic Response Strategies (GRS)
- Potential Places of Refuge (PPOR)

Each section will be reviewed and edited to bring the plan up to date. The GRS and PPOR sections will be new to this plan and will be added once completed by the workgroup. A draft of the updated plan will be available for review in the Spring of 2012 and the plan finalized in the Fall.

Mark Janes presented an overview of PPOR and GRS and the process used to develop these prevention and response plans. His presentation is available at this link:  
[http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/perp/grs/wa/120105WAK&BBpresentationv1\\_lr.pptx.pdf](http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/perp/grs/wa/120105WAK&BBpresentationv1_lr.pptx.pdf)

In the presentation, Mr. Janes outlined the Alaska Regional Response Team's decision-making guidelines for the stricken vessels. These guidelines direct the USCG and other decision-makers in a Unified Command when dealing with a large vessel that requests a place of refuge. The guidelines direct the Captain of the Port for Western Alaska to choose one of the following options for the vessel:

- Continue on its voyage
- Move further off-shore
- Scuttle the vessel
- Remain in Place
- Move to a Place of Refuge

The PPOR project will be gathering information on the locations that have historically been used as places of refuge in the past. This information will be included in the document that may be used by the Unified Command to assist in making a decision about which PPOR would be appropriate based on the vessel and conditions at the time.

The group briefly discussed the challenges of the nearshore environment in Western Alaska with no natural bays, and waters that are extremely shallow extending offshore. Mr. Janes said that this would be documented and would certainly be factored into any decisions. Additional information contained in the plans will include "Site Considerations" that outline the possible environmental, cultural and economic impacts and "Operational Characteristics" that will inform on the physical capabilities, local conditions and the assets that maybe used by the vessel. All of the information will be reviewed and confirmed by the workgroup.

The next step for the PPOR project is to have a meeting with local mariners, tug operators and the Alaska Marine Pilots to identify the PPOR in the region. Then the sites will be researched and draft PPOR plans developed. These plans will be reviewed and edited by the workgroup. Follow-on meetings/teleconferences will be held to discuss any additional information that should be included.

Mr. Janes gave an overview of the GRS project. He outlined the guiding principles used in developing these pre-planned oil spill response strategies and the process for selecting sites. The criteria used for the selection of sensitive areas is based on three factors:

- environmentally sensitivity
- is there risk of being oiled
- is the site protectable with current technology

Each site is geographically limited to an area approximately 3 miles in diameter to ensure that a team of responders would be able to execute the plan and be able to maintain the boom 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.

To understand the risks in the Subarea a series of maps have been developed that will be part of the SCP. The group reviewed the risk maps and offered edits and changes to the maps.

Mark Janes presented the Site Selection Matrix (SSM) to the group. The SSM is designed to offer a 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 present at each site is entered into a spreadsheet. The current list is a preliminary draft that requires review and input from workgroup members and the public. He encouraged the addition of other sites that are of local importance.

Alice Julius of Goodnews Bay reported about research that had previously taken place in the region regarding mapping of subsistence areas. Muriel Morse of the Alaska Marine Conservation Council had interviewed elders and others in her community. She recommended that this information should be included.

Joey Billy offered that some of the subsistence species of fish are not on the matrix and that these are of importance to local communities. Additional research will be done to include these resources.

Mr. Janes reviewed the index maps that display the sites. The subarea was split into three different zones based on the size. A Northern, Southern and Island Zones were mapped.

Mr. Janes then facilitated the discussion to designate additional sites to add to the SSM. The group reviewed the index maps and added additional sites in the three zones. These will be captured in the SSM. David Bunyan of Hooper Bay expressed concern regarding changing environmental conditions near his community and the impacts they were having on the resources. The group concurred that the coastal villages in Alaska are all seeing

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unfamiliar conditions and events. Mr. Janes offered that pre-planning will be trying to prevent and adapt to these events.

He directed the group to designate the high priority sites from which the group would nominate the 25 sites for GRS development. He emphasized that although a GRS might not be developed for lower priority sites at this time, the information would be important for spill responders to have at the time of an incident.

The group decided to nominate 10 sites each for the Northern and Southern Zones and five for the Island Zone.

The group began with nominations from the Northern Zone. Overall, the group encouraged ongoing outreach to all of the communities that were not represented to confirm and acquire input on any of the sites selected.

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

Map ID#	Location Name	Lat.	Lon.
<b>Northern</b>			
N-15	Kokechik Bay	61° 43.83'N	166° 08.89'W
N-16	Hooper Bay	61° 32.17'N	165° 50.92'W
N-17	Angyoyaravak Bay	61° 17.13'N	165° 44.47'W
N-18	Opagyarak/Aphrewn/Manokinak River	61° 06.93'N	165° 20.02'W
N-19	Anerkochik/Azun Rivers	61° 03.00'N	165° 10.10'W
N-20	Ninglick River	60° 52.41'N	165° 03.72'W
N-21	Ikalugtulik River	60° 40.46'N	165° 06.46'W
N-22	Tanunak Bay	60° 35.06'N	165° 17.70'W
N-23	Cape Vancouver	60° 32.14'N	165° 24.72'W
<b>Southern</b>			
S-01	Kangirlvar Bay	60° 28.55'N	165° 08.23'W
S-02	Kolavinarak River	60° 15.44'N	164° 42.98'W
S-03	Kinia River	60° 10.76'N	164° 30.01'W
S-04	Kinak Bay	59° 58.78'N	164° 10.49'W
S-05	Kikegtek & Pingrbek Islands	59° 51.47'N	164° 19.61'W
S-09	Eek Channel	60° 08.57'N	162° 11.86'W
S-16	Kanektok River	59° 44.90'N	161° 58.15'W
S-20	Carter Bay	59° 18.39'N	161° 58.68'W
S-21	Goodnews Bay	59° 04.04'N	161° 46.35'W
S-22	Salmon River	58° 51.39'N	161° 47.97'W
S-23	Chaguan Bay	58° 46.29'N	161° 47.43'W
S-24	Security Cove	58° 41.24'N	161° 54.85'W

Island			
I-03	NE Lagoon	60° 23.75'N	172° 36.95'W
I-08	Hall Island	60° 40.76'N	173° 02.16'W
I-23	Ingriruk Hill Lagoon	59° 52.99'N	165° 57.91'W

The group reinforced the desire to get additional input from other communities.

Mark Janes outlined the process to move the GRS project forward:

- A meeting summary will be developed and circulated for review
- The risk maps will be updated with new information
- 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.

Mr. Janes outlined the process to move the PPOR project forward:

- A meeting of local mariners, tug operators and the Alaska Marine Pilots will be held to identify PPORs in the Western Alaska Subarea.
- The sites will be researched and the information gathered will be incorporated in the PPOR format.
- The draft PPORs will be placed on the web and distributed to the workgroup for review, comments and edits.
- If the workgroup requests, an additional meeting may be held to further discuss and give input on the plans.