



**NW Arctic Subarea Contingency Plan Update  
Final Meeting Summary**  
NW Arctic Borough Assembly Chambers, Kotzebue, AK  
September 21, 2010 (Tuesday)

Time: 0900 – 1600

**MEETING PURPOSE & AGENDA:**

This meeting was held at the request of NW Arctic Borough representatives who are actively participating in the update of the NW Arctic Subarea Contingency Plan (SCP), which supplements the Alaska Unified Plan (also known as the Alaska Federal/State Preparedness Plan for Response to Oil and Hazardous Substance Discharges/Releases). State and federal agencies involved in the joint planning activity are requesting assistance from subarea organizations and residents to review and update the contingency plan information. The current SCP was published in 2001, and state and federal agencies are in the process of adding additional sections to further improve response protocols and capture lessons learned from incidents that have occurred since 2001.

**MEETING ATTENDANCE:**

The meeting was attended by representatives of the NW Arctic Borough, the Native Village of Kotzebue, the Native Village of Kivalina, the Maniilaq Association, Oceana, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. One person participated by teleconference. The attached meeting attendance sheet provides a complete list of attendees including contributing agency representatives from ADEC, EPA, DOI, and USCG. The Alaska Area Planner for EPA Region 10 facilitated the meeting. Copies of meeting materials (presentations, SCP documents, etc.) can be accessed at: <http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/outreach>.

**MEETING RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The NW Arctic Borough representatives made the following recommendations during the meeting in response to information provided by agency representatives during various presentations:

- The NW Arctic Borough Planning Director recommended that agencies hold a joint meeting with North Slope Borough and NW Arctic Borough representatives to further discuss preparedness issues associated with these regions. Representatives from both boroughs will be present at a joint meeting of the borough planning commissions to be held in Barrow on March 24-25, 2011. Since oil exploration strongly influences both boroughs, this may be a good time to have a 30 to 45 minute presentation on preparedness issues.
- The NW Arctic Borough Planning Director recommended that agencies consider asking Alaskan Natives to identify their top two critical infrastructures that may require protection and their top two subsistence areas to better define the input being requested for local areas of concern in the community profiles section of the plan.
- The NW Arctic Borough Planning Director recommended that agencies consider expanding the organizations contacted during an incident to include both local (i.e., village) contacts, and regional contacts (e.g., regional health consortiums, etc.) that may be located outside of the impacted village, but that could have resources or information that could assist responders.

- The NW Arctic Borough Planning Director recommended that the Scenarios Section be expanded to include an Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) well blowout scenario in addition to the three scenarios presented by the USCG during the meeting. Although a moratorium currently exists for OCS exploratory drilling, the borough strongly feels that drilling will occur sometime in the future and that the government and public cannot begin to adequately prepare for offshore drilling unless the scenario is included in the SCP. EPA and ADEC planners indicated that they were not opposed to the addition of the OCS scenario, but that USCG personnel may need to gain approval from their command staff. USCG representatives have briefed the designated FOSC (i.e., the Captain of the Port for Western Alaska) regarding adding an OCS scenario and will add an appropriate scenario based on current information to the SCP. NWAB staff did not have any comments regarding the proposed inland scenarios to be included in the plan. These proposed scenarios included a release from a community tank farm for the worst case discharge scenario, a fuel transfer release from a barge for a medium discharge scenario, and a day tank overflow for a small discharge scenario. EPA will review Facility Response Plans (FRPs) and spill data for inland communities before developing these inland oil discharge scenarios. EPA will also develop and add a hazardous materials scenario to the plan, most likely involving a truck rollover along the Red Dog Mine haul road.
- The NW Arctic Borough (NWAB) asked whether a gap analysis had been done within the subarea to document current capabilities and identify any necessary improvements. ADEC responded that a gap analysis had not been done, but that risk analyses had been done in the past. The NWAB is concerned that government is relying totally upon industry response capabilities and the recent incident in the Gulf of Mexico indicates potential problems with that approach. The ADEC representative indicated that an informal gap analysis could be performed as part of the worst case discharge scenario development. Specific federal, state and other contracted resources could be identified for responding to the discharge, including assets from other spill cooperatives in the state.
- NWAB staff expressed concern that their input on sensitive areas of concern would be discounted as DNR has discounted similar information submitted for the Coastal Management Plans in the past stating that it is not science-based. EPA, DOI, and ADEC planners responded that inputs based upon traditional knowledge are encouraged and would not be ignored by the planning staff.
- Participants expressed concern about identifying Potential Places of Refuge (PPOR); they do not want foundering ships to be near their coastline. ADEC and NUKA representatives encouraged participants to join the workgroup to have a say in the potential PPOR sites. While the USCG Captain of the Port has the final authority on vessel disposition, State and local concerns are often addressed in cases where sufficient time allows for consultation and discussion.
- NWAB staff will provide information on Cape Blossom which is being evaluation for a potential port expansion project. ADEC will include the future port expansion in the PPOR planning documents (this has been done before for other subareas).
- NWAB staff recommended that more field trials be conducted with spill response equipment to test their capability at removing oil in Arctic conditions. Staff suggested that

edible oil or other simulants be used during the equipment tests. Tests should also be conducted under seasonal variations to observe the effectiveness of the response equipment and techniques. One of the concerns expressed was the inability to effectively respond to an oil spill in ice-infested waters. Additional effort may need to be focused in this area, possibly under the purview of OPA 90.

- NWAB staff expressed interest in participating in the Geographic Response Strategy (GRS) work group. Work group members will be identified and the process will be underway shortly. Initial plans call for the development of 20-25 GRS for the NW Arctic subarea. NWAB staff expressed concern that this would not be sufficient to address all sensitive areas in the subarea. The ADEC representative indicated that this is the initial phase of the project which is limited by funding at this point. The goal is to identify and prioritize all GRS sites for the NW Arctic subarea and develop GRS planning documents as additional funding becomes available.
- NWAB staff requested clarification regarding facility drills and exercises and training for village responders. One NWAB community had asked when the next response drill would be conducted at their tank farm facilities. USCG and EPA representatives responded with information regarding Government Initiated Unannounced Exercises which can be conducted for facilities subject to Facility Response Plan Requirements under 40 CFR Part 112.20. EPA representatives also discussed the types of training (HAZWOPER, oil spill response, etc.) that can be offered to villages using contractor resources, and opportunities for tribal representatives to attend ICS and oil spill response training at venues such as EPA IGAP training seminars and the Alaska Forum on the Environment. EPA representatives also discussed opportunities for tribal response capacity building under Brownfields grant programs. Since the meeting, USCG has made contact with Denali Commission for funding to conduct facility inspections/training for village responders. The USCG is awaiting a response to this request.
- Village teams (e.g., firefighting teams, search and rescue teams) were also raised as a possible resource that could be employed in an oil spill response. Initial and refresher training requirements would need to be addressed to ensure team members were properly trained and certified to respond to oil or hazardous substance release. Alask Clean Seas maintains a cadre of trained local responders as part of their Village Response Team program. Currently, this program is applicable only to North Slope Borough communities.

### **MEETING DECISIONS:**

- EPA, ADEC, and USCG staff agreed to allow a three month period for organizations and residents within the subarea to review and comment on the updated draft plan. The deadline for submitting comments is December 31, 2010.
- The joint planning team will review the comments and incorporate the information into the planning documents. A Public Review draft will be produced and released for public comment to meet ADEC requirements. The plan will be finalized after the public comment period closes. The date of finalization will occur no later than the Fall of 2011,

assuming that the GRS and PPOR sections to be developed will be completed by the end of June 2011.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

1. Determine whether a presentation should be made to North Slope Borough and NW Arctic Borough representatives during the March 2011 economic conference.
2. Develop a detailed OCS worst case discharge scenario for inclusion in the plan using information from Shell's Chukchi Plan as a starting point. Consider conducting a discussion-based tabletop exercise with NSB and NWAB staff to validate the scenario and identify potential areas for improvement.
3. Look for opportunities to hold joint meetings with NW Arctic Borough and North Slope Borough to discuss spill planning, preparedness and emergency response.
4. The NWAB Coastal Management Plan has identified 17 areas of importance for local subsistence use; this information will be provided to DOI. The Native Village of Kotzebue will also forward sensitive area information to DOI. Oceana has also provided the *Arctic Marine Synthesis: Atlas of the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas* to the federal and state planning staff.
5. Review any Memoranda of Agreements (MOAs) between NWAB and NSB to understand whether there is a need for a more specific mutual aid agreement to provide assistance during an incident.
6. Review the MOA between USCG and Russia (if any), to determine whether PPOR locations could be identified in international waters or Russian waters.
7. The state and federal planning team will contact the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to determine if they have any useful information that could help the PPOR process.

<b>Northwest Arctic Public Outreach Meeting Attendees (September 21, 2010)</b>			
<b>Individual</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Email Address</b>	<b>Phone Contact**</b>
<b>Kotzebue Meeting – September 21, 2010</b>			
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