

UMR Hazardous Spills Coordination Group

Virtual Meeting: November 3, 2022

Mike Rose welcomed the group and noted that we will be busy while the group moves forward with implementing its strategic plan. He provided background about the strategic plan development and changes to boost engagement within the group. Rose highlighted for new members that this group provides a bridge between agencies and partners during an incident. The group acts as a facilitator for unmet needs that the response and regulated communities may have. This forum can help facilitate discussion and action on important topics of interest. Mark Ellis began introductions by describing UMRBA and its role.

Ellis described the background of how the UMR Spills Response Plan update led to the development of a strategic plan. The spill response plan update process began in winter 2021 with the group updating content. Review followed in the spring of 2022. The plan is now in the process of being routed for signatures. Our goal is to have it completed by the end of calendar year 2022. Iowa DNR and Illinois EPA have signed, the plan is still being routed within other partner agencies. Ellis will provide a supporting presentation that outlines the plan changes and group background to those who need to show their leadership what they are being asked to sign. The UMR Spill Response Plan is currently available as a final draft on the UMRBA website: <https://umrba.org/document/umr-spill-response-plan-and-resource-manual-final-draft-aug-2022>. Ellis reviewed the plan table of contents to familiarize new participants with the plan.

Agency Updates

Wisconsin – Brenda Kelly noted that Wisconsin DNR has moved into telework for most employees. Offices are still running but staff have the option to work from home. The agency encourages staff to continue to meet with other partners remotely, as well.

Iowa – Kurt Levetzow said there was no update to report for the DNR.

Illinois – Tony Falconio said he began his position in March of 2022 and is new to the group. Illinois EPA also hired one new On-scene Coordinator (OSC) based in Springfield.

Missouri – Rick Gann said Missouri DNR have hired three new OSCs who are now in training. St. Louis received up to 11 inches of rain on July 26, which washed out many containers from various businesses. The containers made it to the Mississippi River. Investigation showed that many were concrete finishing or application chemicals. Staff identified the responsible facility, who then retrieved the containers.

USCG had no updates to report.

USEPA Region 5 – Andy Maguire said that due to retirements and one transfer, the agency hired three new OSCs in Chicago. One is a transfer who can step in right away, the others are in training. The Green Bay OSC left for another position within the agency, which is now in the process for hiring a replacement. The agency is also going through a reorganization. With increased funding, there is a lot of hiring in the Remedial and Water Sections. There will now be a separate Oil Section instead of having that function under the Remedial Section.

USEPA Region 7 – Joe Davis said there are similar changes within Region 7, including hiring of new OSCs in the Kansas City office. Sharon Kennedy has taken the lead in the Great Rivers Sub-area. Jessica Evans added that three new OSCs in St. Louis are presently going through an on-boarding process. She will be transitioning out of the OSC role in the next few months so she can focus on remediation of a high-profile site in St. Louis with radioactive material and smoldering issues.

USFWS – Sarah Bowman said the agency does not have any updates to report. In response to a question, Bowman said there was not a hiring freeze within Ecological Services, as was the case within the Refuge program.

National Response Center (NRC) Reports

Mark Ellis had shared a spreadsheet of NRC reports affecting the Mississippi River prior to the meeting. He said one incident of note was the Marathon Petroleum pipeline release in Edwardsville, Illinois, and asked if the responders present would describe the incident.

Andy Maguire said that Adam Vrabec was USEPA's OSC for the incident and gave an overview for the group. On March 11, 2022, a pipeline break released around 3,900 barrels of Wyoming asphaltic sour crude into Cahokia Creek about nine miles upstream of the Mississippi River. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) conducted an investigation into the cause of the incident. Maguire said that although there was an obvious cause, he is not at liberty to say it was definitively the cause until the NTSB report is released. He said there was a seven-inch gap at a failed gird weld in the pipeline. Maguire shared a photo of the gap at the end of the presentation. Responding agencies included PHMSA, NTSB, USCG, DOI, USEPA, Illinois DNR and EPA, Madison County EMA, and the Edwardsville Fire Department. A wildlife recovery and rehabilitation contractor was brought in and set up nearby.

Along the eight miles of impacted creek, Unified Command (UC) set up four divisions to organize response. The primary aim was to keep oil from reaching the Mississippi River, which was successful. Due to the season, there were weather variations that affected response. Given the nature of the crude, during cold spells the material hardened and could not be removed by vac truck. Crews were able to rake sheets of the oil off the creek instead.

Marathon Petroleum brought in an Incident Management Team and were joined by USEPA and Illinois EPA. Maguire shared some site photos with the group to illustrate various phases of the response, including boom sets, oil recovery, and shoreline protection. Cahokia Creek is prone to flooding during rains, so the shoreline was reinforced due to predicted rain that ended up not coming.

Adam Vrabec added that the incident happening only a half mile from a refinery with extensive response capacity was fortunate. The facility and nearby Oil Spill Removal Organizations (OSRO) were able to be on site very quickly. Had this happened in a more remote area, it's likely the oil would have reached the Mississippi River. Maguire said that much of the release went into a wetland adjacent to the creek, which created some air monitoring needs due to nearby residences and businesses. However, this likely also contributed to no oil reaching the Mississippi River. Sheen was seen as far as the Illinois Highway 3 bridge, but none below.

Tony Falconio added that this event happened on only his eleventh day on the job. However, his previous position had been as Director of the Madison County Emergency Management Agency, so he already knew many of the folks involved in the response. Working relationships have proven invaluable, especially in a larger release such as this. Falconio reiterated the effects different weather conditions had on the oil and thus the response techniques employed.

Ellis asked if the strategies employed could be recorded and added to the USEPA map data. Maguire said that Marathon had implemented their Facility Response Plan. However, there were some lessons learned about how this type of crude solidified in the cold. The innovative response techniques could be added to a document of best practices. Ellis will contact Vrabec to talk about this.

Strategic Plan

Review of 2022 Activities

Ellis provided background about the development of spill response strategies in Pools 24, 25, and 26. This covers around 70 miles of river upstream of the Greater St. Louis Sub-area. Folks took part in river reconnaissance to vet strategies in Pool 24 in fall of 2021. On October 17-19, 2022, we scheduled recon for the remaining reach of the river. However, high winds prevented the use of boats on the 17th and 18th. Instead, Adam Vrabec, Barbi Lee, Ellis, and Kennedy Domerchie of UMRBA visited sites along the banks of Pool 26. Ellis suggested scheduling river recon in spring 2023 to complete Pool 25 and the remaining island sites in Pool 26.

Ellis said that planning for the river recon was helped by a scheduling website developed by Eric Deselich at Tetra Tech. Deselich said that with the large area and number of potential participants, the site was set up to allow people to visit the calendar of recon events and choose what fits their schedule. Within each event are several roles users can choose to fill. Each event was started with the availability of a boat. Participants request a position; organizers will accept the best person for that role, and the site will generate a message to confirm. Each crew has an associated schedule and related documents such as site maps. Crew contact information is listed once participants have been confirmed. This tool has been set up to assist with future recon events. Deselich noted that recon was completed for the Greater St. Louis Sub-area, but downstream events were canceled due to the very low water conditions on the river at present. However, contact was made with many key participants. Data is being processed by Tetra Tech now and will get uploaded into the map viewers used by USEPA Regions 5 and 7. The scheduling website is found at: <https://www.ttemiprod.com/river/>.

Ellis said our goal of formalizing and improving notifications was met through the UMR Spill Response Plan update, though we can revisit this next year as well.

2023 Activities

Ellis reminded the group of its decision to review existing Pool spill response plans to consider bringing them up to date. He suggested that the group decide over the winter which plans to update and also to select a Pool for development of a new plan. Brenda Kelly will take the list of plans and gaps to the River Teams to discuss priorities from the resource trustee perspective. She will work with Ellis to identify Pools for both updates and possible new plans to suggest to this group.

Ellis said another goal for 2023 is to develop an After-Action Report template for use by UMR Spills Group members. This would be optional, as some agencies already have a form they use. He will draft a template the group can react to and consider making it available to members.

Mapping and Planning Updates

USEPA Region 7 – Joe Davis said that in the week of October 17, he had supported a joint USEPA Regions 7 and 8 exercise in Fort Laramie, WY. The exercise was hosted by DOI. Participants went through a Shoreline Cleanup and Assessment Techniques (SCAT) review and then went to the North Platte River near some pipeline crossings to use SCAT in the field. On day two, attendees had an Incident Command System (ICS) review class; participating agencies presented their roles and responsibilities. Day three held a tabletop exercise with a scenario of a million-gallon release of diluted bitumen into the river. The exercise went well. In response to a question, Davis said there was no responsible party in the exercise, but Marathon Petroleum took part in the training. Davis said Marathon is well-equipped to manage a response like this.

Davis said the Quad Cities Community Awareness and Emergency Response (CAER) group has talked about doing SCAT training. John Nelson of DOI is interested in holding a training similar to the North Platte event along the Mississippi River. Barbi Lee said that USEPA Region 5 would be happy to help with an event in the Quad Cities. The agency has been working to revitalize the sub-area planning group and this could be a way to tie in response strategy development, as well.

RRT5 – Barbi Lee said the RRT met in October in a hybrid format. Around thirty people attended in person and another thirty connected remotely. The spring meeting will be held jointly with USEPA Region 7 in St. Charles, MO on April 5-6, 2023. Organizers are open to presentations and may set up a panel for Tribal response.

Lee said USEPA Region 5 is looking at areas within Illinois, Minnesota, and Wisconsin that do not fall within a planning sub-area. The agency is evaluating hazards and vulnerabilities to identify potential worst-case discharges that can be covered by a plan.

Inland Sensitivity Atlas – Mark Ellis reported that most Minnesota data layers have been completed. The exceptions are hazardous materials and oil storage facilities, as UMRBA has been unable to get the state Tier II data. Updates will be delivered to USEPA by Monday, November 7, 2022. Staff have begun updating Illinois data. Ellis added that there have been two changes to the boat access layer. The first is a listing of the river stage at which the access is or is not usable, and the river gauge used for the stage information. This data has been entered in St. Louis, western Wisconsin, and southeast Minnesota. Ellis asked anyone who tracks this type of information to please share with him so it can be added to the ISA. The second enhancement is a listing of the parking capacity at every boat ramp within USEPA Region 5. This work was done by the Great Lakes Commission, a partner on the ISA project.

Greater St. Louis – Jessica Evans reported that in-person and virtual trainings were held in April and June to go over the UMR River Viewer application created by Tetra Tech for the UMR sub-areas. Participants got a chance to use the application in scenarios. Lessons learned include feedback that the in-person format better allowed support from contractors during the sessions. Evans reiterated the October river recon discussed earlier, noting that almost the entire sub-area was completed other than just below the Chain of Rocks due to low water. Recon was done from Melvin Price Lock and Dam downstream to river

mile 138 at the southern boundary of Jefferson County, MO. Evans thanked the USCG for providing a boat and personnel for three days. She plans to hold a meeting in early December to review the recon with the sub-area planning group.

Great Rivers – Eric Deselich said that much of the last few months involved the river recon planning. Although events were postponed, the planning will allow us to resume once river levels come up in the springtime. OSC Sharon Kennedy currently has a sub-area plan update in process. The draft should be out for review in approximately one month. An in-person river viewer application training session and sub-area meeting are being held in Cape Girardeau, MO on November 10, 2022.

Minneapolis/St. Paul – David Morrison reported that the sub-area focused on collecting worst-case discharge (WCD) information for Minnesota counties outside of sub-areas. USEPA gathered WCD information there to understand what risks we are planning for. This may lead to creation of geographic response plans along the Mississippi River up- and downstream of the sub-area. USEPA also held a tribal talking circle with Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission and four tribes with treaty rights around the St. Croix River to discuss what emergency consultation looks like for a large oil spill incident. Morrison said there was a recent tabletop exercise with Red Wing CAER for a hazardous materials incident involving a train derailment.

Quad Cities – Kevin Turner said sub-area planning has had a down time, but the Quad Cities CAER group has been active. The idea of a SCAT-based training as described by Joe Davis earlier is gaining momentum. Turner said there is also talk about having a sub-area meeting, which has not happened since before the pandemic. The group would also look at revisiting the old response strategies and developing new ones in the area. There has also been talk of expanding the sub-area up- or downstream on the Mississippi River. Turner sees 2023 as an opportunity to revitalize the planning efforts. Davis said that USEPA Region 7 has been working more with the CAER group and Matt Stokes of STARS, who held a boom training this summer. He agreed that there is enough interest to put a SCAT training together. Davis shared a link to the sub-area planning page, which also has other documents and the Mississippi River viewer discussed earlier: https://www.epaosc.org/site/site_profile.aspx?site_id=11807. Barbi Lee suggested that we bring the viewer training to the Quad Cities Sub-area planning group to boost engagement. This could build up toward a future exercise.

BP Pipeline – Kristen Hancock said BP began looking at what could go wrong with their project in Niota, IL, and then preparing for a drill to mobilize their OSROs and look at response options in the event of a release. Mark Ellis met with BP staff for an overview of planning that has been done in the area (Pool 19). BP then met with an OSRO to discuss potential booming strategies. The planning exercise was held on October 20. Plans are to do similar work in 2023 to ensure BP is prepared in case any release does happen.

Other Business:

Answering a comment from Barbi Lee, Mark Ellis gave the group background of the UMR Spills Group and how we ended up where we are today. The group had historically used a meeting format of two half-days and filled the agenda with case studies and important topics. These were often held in the Quad Cities, so there was good engagement from the water suppliers, local industry, and the counties. However, industry farther afield did not attend simply because the meeting was not in their area. Most participants appreciated the in-person format because we all value the face-to-face conversations that

come with gathering, not just the meeting topics. However, considering that attendance was almost entirely local, we may have twelve people attend while twenty-five connect remotely. This led to the group agreeing to go with the changes brought on by the pandemic and hold the meetings virtually instead of in-person. Ellis suggested the group consider holding one of the semi-annual meetings in-person and the other virtually. His priority is to ensure that the group finds the forum useful and purposeful. Lee suggested adding a topic focus for each meeting, as well.

Ellis asked the group to consider setting a date for the spring meeting. Andy Maguire suggested piggybacking on the joint RRT5/RRT7 meeting being held in St. Charles, MO on April 5-6, 2023. The group agreed to hold the UMR Spills Group meeting on April 4, 2023, at the same venue as the RRT meeting. Eric Deselich is helping organize RRT7 and said the city of St. Charles has a good venue they've used in the past. Maguire added that we would have a formal signed plan that we could present to the RRTs. Ellis will send a hold-the-date calendar invite for an in-person meeting April 4, 2023.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Attendee List:

Tony Falconio	Illinois EPA
Kurt Levetzow	Iowa DNR
Mike Rose	Minnesota PCA
Rick Gann	Missouri DNR
Brenda Kelly	Wisconsin DNR
LTJG Evan Bledsoe	USCG MSD Quad Cities
MSTC Ryan Erpelding	USCG MSD St. Paul
Kevin Turner	USEPA Region 5
Barb Lee	USEPA Region 5
Andy Maguire	USEPA Region 5
Carol Ropski	USEPA Region 5
David Morrison	USEPA Region 5
Adam Vrabec	USEPA Region 5
Sarah Bowman	USFWS
Reena Bowman	USFWS
Aleshia Kenney	USFWS
Joe Davis	USEPA Region 7
Jessica Evans	USEPA Region 7
Sharon Kennedy	USEPA Region 7
Jerry Shirk	Rock Island Co.
Charles Brown	City of Moline
Kristen Hancock	BP Pipeline
Greg Aust	Molo Companies
Chris Biellier	Seneca Companies
Eric Deselich	Tetra Tech
Brian Black	Xcel Energy
Mark Ellis	UMRBA