Upper Mississippi River Hazardous Spills Coordination Group Meeting

April 5-6, 2011
Davenport, Iowa

Meeting Summary

Participants

Roger Lauder	Illinois EPA
Michael Anderson	Iowa DNR
Vicki Morris	Iowa HSEM
Dennis Ostwinkle	Iowa DNR
Jim Sievers	Iowa DNR
Rodney Tucker	Iowa DNR/USCG
Mark Marcy[1]	Minnesota HSEM
David Morrison	Minnesota PCA
Tom Kendzierski	Wisconsin DNR
John Punkiewicz	USACE, Rock Island District
Rob McCaskey	USCG, Sector UMR
Bryan Klostermeyer	USCG, Sector UMR
Kody Stitz	USCG, Quad Cities MSD
Sheila Calovich	US EPA, Region 5
Steve Faryan	US EPA, Region 5
Ann Whelan	US EPA, Region 5
Joe Davis	US EPA, Region 7
Paul Doherty	US EPA, Region 7
Jaci Ferguson	US EPA, Region 7
Jim Silver	US EPA, Region 7
Mike Coffey	US FWS
David Fritz	BP America
Chris Biellier	Seneca Companies/Illinois MABAS 39
Ross Bergen	Scott County Emergency Management Agency
Bob Baumgartner	TransCanada
Larry Daily	Alter Barge Line
Luke Kusilek	Xcel Energy
Randi Stahl	McKinzie Environmental
Matt Stokes	Safety Training and Response Strategies
Megan Carlson *(1)*	UMRBA
Sanhita Chatopadhyay *(1)*	UMRBA
Mark Ellis*(1)*	UMRBA
Dave Hokanson	UMRBA

(1) = By telephone.

Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting of the Upper Mississippi River Hazardous Spills Coordination Group (Group) was called to order at 1:08 p.m. by Chair Roger Lauder. Introductions of all in attendance followed.

Approval of Previous Meeting Summary

Lauder asked if any changes or corrections were needed to the summary of the October 2010 meeting of the Group. No changes were noted and the meeting summary was approved.

UMR Hazardous Spills Coordination Group Chair Transition

Lauder noted that he had served two years as Chair of the Group, and that the Group had previously decided to rotate the Chair position between states every two years. He indicated that David Morrison of Minnesota had been serving as Vice Chair and would therefore be the likely candidate to become Chair, following the process previously agreed to by the Group. Additionally, Dave Hokanson said that if the states' rotation is followed, Wisconsin would be next to move into the Vice Chair role. Morrison indicated that he would be willing to serve as Chair and Tom Kendzierski of Wisconsin DNR said he would be able serve as Vice Chair. The Group approved Morrison as Chair and Kendzierski as Vice Chair by voice vote. Their terms will become effective at the beginning of the Group's next meeting.

Agency Updates: Reports on Recent Incidents, Exercises and Program Developments

All in attendance were offered the opportunity to provide an update or comment on behalf of their agency/organization. Reports from those entities that chose to provide updates are summarized below.

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Morrison noted recent flood response work in Minnesota, including preparation and response to Red River flooding. He also reported that budget shortfalls are currently a predominant issue in Minnesota, with cuts in all programs and agencies expected. Morrison said cuts in other agencies will affect MPCA's response capabilities, as these agencies help in response to certain situations (e.g., multiple agencies involved in meth lab response). He also highlighted an upcoming Cold Zone Hazardous Materials Conference to be held in Minnesota in May 2011.

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Rodney Tucker mentioned upcoming TRANSCAER training opportunities, directing the Group to the TRANSCAER website (www.transcaer.com) for further information. He also reported that flooding in Iowa was not currently severe, though the situation would continue to be monitored.

Mike Anderson reported on the UMR early warning monitoring network. Anderson said that approvals have been received to proceed with equipment installation at the Mid-American Energy Riverside Plant in Bettendorf, Iowa. Whelan asked Anderson to describe the number of stations now running in the network and the condition of those stations. Anderson replied that the stations at Minneapolis, St. Cloud, Minnesota, and Muscatine, Iowa were running well. He said the station at Monticello, Minnesota (Sherco power plant) continues to face challenges and that the Mid-American installation at Bettendorf would be the next station to come on line.

US Coast Guard

Rob McCaskey said Sector UMR had not experienced any recent major pollution incidents. He also noted that, in terms of Red River flooding, the expected crest of the river is between 2009 and 2010 levels with the hope that less impact will be seen this year than in previous years. Reporting on behalf of the Quad Cities Marine Safety Detachment, Kody Stitz stated that no major pollution incidents had recently occurred, though there had been some vessel groundings.

US Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7
Jim Silver said Region 7 is looking to do some regionally-specific training and would like to collaborate with facility response plan (FRP) facilities in putting on training. He added that Conoco-Phillips will be doing its own boom training in June 2011. Joe Davis said a potential new component for training is to bring in a wildlife element, as that is something that has not been practiced regionally, but does become important in large responses.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mike Coffey commented on recent responses involving USFWS, including recent activity in Illinois and cold weather response. Ann Whelan asked whether there had been closure on the Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) related to the Guttenberg, Iowa train derailment. Coffey replied that the process is nearing resolution in regard to the issue of the ramp built during response which impacted mussel beds.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
John Punkiewicz reported that flooding had not yet been as severe as expected. He said the gates at Dam 15 would soon be raised fully, allowing the river to be in a free-flow condition. Punkiewicz also reminded the Group that UMR dams have very little holding capacity, as has been discussed in previous meetings of the Group. He said there have been no recent major spill incidents on the UMR that have come to the attention of USACE.

Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management
Vicki Morris reported that J. Derek Hill had recently been named as Administrator of Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Morris said budget cutbacks and travel restricting are impacting Iowa HSEM. She also noted the upcoming Tri-State Hazmat communications exercise, which is scheduled to include a full scale exercise in the August-September 2011 timeframe.

US Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5
Sheila Calovich noted upcoming facility drills involving oil response which are scheduled to take place in May 2011 in the Twin Cities and La Crosse, Wisconsin areas.

TransCanada
Bob Baumgartner reported that, although it is activity currently outside of the region, Phase II of the Keystone pipeline expansion had been brought on line in Nebraska, Kansas, and Oklahoma. He noted that Phases III and IV are the next elements of the expansion scheduled for activation.

BP America
Dave Fritz said BP continues to exit from many facilities in the region, but to this point is still has some regional presence.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Kendzierski said there are many budget uncertainties facing the department and that many staff persons are retiring.

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
Lauder said Illinois EPA had recently been engaged in a number of incidents throughout the state. He also reported that the department is facing budget challenges, similar to what the other states have noted. Lauder said Illinois EPA is currently involved in flood preparations and is working closely with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on this effort. Punkiewicz affirmed the value of collaborative preparation and offered that the Corps is open to working with any of the Group's member agencies on flood response.

Lessons Learned from Marshall, Michigan/Kalamazoo River Spill

Steve Faryan gave a presentation highlighting lessons learned from the recent pipeline spill in Marshall, Michigan which also impacted the Kalamazoo River. Faryan said the product spilled in this incident was Canadian oil sands crude, also referred to as diluted bitumen (or DilBit), and that this product has specific properties which must be accounted for in response. Namely, he said the use of benzene as a diluent in this product results in concerns regarding airborne concentrations of benzene, which results in additional response considerations, including use of respirators and the potential need for evacuation. Overall, Faryan observed that this product requires different response techniques from a typical oil spill and that response training specific to this product would likely be beneficial.

Fritz commented that, in addition to the benzene concern, this product can have high levels of sulfur, which can also be a health concern. He also noted that when the diluent evaporates, the product becomes thicker and more dense, often sinking in a waterbody as a result.

Faryan asked Coffey if any particular wildlife impacts are observed for oil sands product. Coffey noted that the benzene component is a concern and that animals are more difficult to clean if oiled, due to the thick nature of the product. Whelan commented that many animals needed to be cleaned in the response to the Marshall spill. Davis asked whether these animals were able to survive. Whelan replied that most did, but some had to be kept over winter and needed to be housed at zoos in the region. She added that when the response first began, responders were not aware what the product involved was, how it would behave differently, or what special steps might need to be taken as a result.

Faryan asked Whelan when Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Techniques (SCAT) efforts began for this response. Whelan replied that SCAT was initiated in the first week of the response, but at that time the Kalamazoo River was flooding and when the river receded additional oil was left in the overbank area. As a result, shoreline areas actually needed to be cleaned twice. She added that, in many cases, it was difficult to get equipment into areas that needed to be cleaned.

Faryan noted that one of the questions surrounding this incident is whether or not it should have been considered a Spill of National Significance (SONS), observing that there was not consensus about having the spill classified in this way.

Morrison asked how state issues played out in the response. Whelan responded that a recent merger of Michigan's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) created some difficulties in the response. She added that the two agencies have subsequently been split back apart. Morrison asked whether the state invited US EPA to join the response. Whelan replied that a unified command was established, and noted that Michigan does not have state agency response staff.

Fritz asked why the incident would be considered a SONS event. Whelan said one reason was that resources were pulled in from numerous locations across the country. She added that the states of the region were very interested in this incident, particularly given the Deepwater Horizon spill, and that there were concerns regarding the spilled product reaching Lake Michigan, as well as a nearby National Priority List (NPL) site.

Faryan commented that the response was quite costly and involved large amounts of equipment and personnel. He added that waste and debris management was also an important part of the response. Morrison asked where the oiled waste was disposed. Faryan replied that it went to landfills in Michigan. Whelan and Calovich said that some also went to landfill in Indiana. Faryan said more could have been done in terms of waste reduction and that this may be lesson learned for future responses. He added that some of the recovered product was sent back Enbridge, which owns the pipeline, and that there was a lot of oil/water mixture resulting from the recovery efforts.

Faryan next summarized the oversight and direction of the response. He said US EPA had authority in this response under the National Contingency Plan and Section 311 of the Clean Water Act. He noted that the response was federalized under a unified command on its first day, with a Notice of Federal Interest occurring on that day as well as an EPA on scene commander (OSC) directing operations on day 1. Faryan said the unified command included US EPA, the responsible party (Enbridge), Michigan DEQ and DNR, and local officials. He stated that a CWA 311 Order to guide the response was issued on day 2. Faryan said written incident action plans (IAPs) were utilized from day 5 through day 40 of the response. He added that many resources from a wide geographic area were pulled in to assist the response, even though the Deepwater Horizon incident was ongoing at the same time.

Whelan concurred with Faryan's observation regarding the use of many resources, adding that many personnel were also called in to assist with the response, including staff from USACE, NOAA, USFWS, USGS, and many other agencies. She noted that, given the duration of the response, rotations of staff were necessary but that this was a challenge for maintaining continuity in the response.

Morrison asked whether US EPA used any of its own contractors in the response. Whelan replied that US EPA's contractor was utilized to augment the work of Enbridge's contractor. She explained that that an IAP was not in place earlier in the response because Enbridge did not

have an ICS-trained contractor available and that, since Enbridge is not a U.S.-based company, its staff was not familiar with ICS. Faryan concurred, adding that Enbridge realized the need for an ICS-ready team to have available for response. He continued by saying that, once the ICS was in place, the working relationship between agencies was successful. Whelan agreed that the ICS worked well, adding that briefings were held for multiple agencies and that tribes and NGOs were involved in these briefings in addition to agencies.

Faryan explained that many public meetings were also held as part of the response effort, and that these were also used as a means of communicating the results of air and water monitoring. He said these interactions with the public went well. Whelan concurred, observing that there were even public expressions of thanks to US EPA.

Silver asked about the working relationship with Enbridge during the response. Whelan said that initially there was a need for many conversations to clarify chain of command and work though the complexity of the response, but that ultimately things worked out well. Faryan added that one unique component of the response was the need to deal with the engagement and interest among high level agency staff and to ensure that communication with these individuals was addressed as a response function.

Fritz asked about the specifics of the spill, inquiring how it was possible that such a large volume of product was released in such a short time. Faryan said a National Transportation Safety Board report on the specifics of the release was still pending. Whelan added it appeared that all of the product released was between valves in the pipeline. Faryan circulated a report from the Natural Resources Defense Council regarding oil sands crude, noting that it includes good information on the health and safety issues associated with this product.

Silver asked whether there any detection of product in drinking water wells. Faryan replied that he was not aware of any detections, which was somewhat expected as the product moved fairly quickly downstream. Stitz asked Faryan if he knew the age of the pipeline involved. Faryan replied that the pipeline is approximately 40 years old.

Stitz asked who is the proper point of contact for inland pipelines. Whelan responded that Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) is the primary federal contact, noting also that information about pipelines is also available in Region 5's Inland Sensitivity Atlases. She commented that responders determined that the product was Canadian oils sands crude fairly quickly, but added that it was not clear immediately what all the response issues associated with this product would be.

Fritz said diluent is sent back via pipeline and therefore it is possible to have a spill of the diluent only. Stitz asked whether the diluent is solely benzene. Whelan replied that the diluent is not benzene alone but is a mix including other light oils. Davis asked whether toluene and xylene were also encountered in this spill. Faryan said he was not aware of any toluene or xylene identified as part of the response.

Faryan noted that even when the owner/operator of a pipeline is known, it can be difficult to determine the specific product that was present in a pipeline at the time of a spill. Stitz agreed, stating that it is important to talk to the operator in making this determination.

Faryan closed his presentation by noting that a further documentation of the response is forthcoming.

Cooperative/CAER Development

Matt Stokes gave an update regarding ongoing efforts to organize spill response cooperatives and Community Awareness and Emergency Response (CAER) groups along the Mississippi River.

Red Wing CAER

He began by noting the Red Wing CAER report included in the meeting packet. Stokes emphasized the importance of having strong private sector partner(s) to anchor CAER development. In Red Wing, he said CP Rail has taken the lead, with Xcel Energy, ADM, and Wilson Oil also playing important roles. Stokes added that other, smaller private sector partners such as marinas have also been contributors to the effort. In terms of public sector participation, he said Goodhue County and the City of Red Wing have been strong participants.

Stokes reported that USCG Sector UMR has supplied the Red Wing CAER with three response trailers and CP Rail has also supplied a trailer that can be used both for storage and as an office. As a result of CAER efforts so far, Stokes reported that the Red Wing CAER now has more than one mile of boom available for its use. He added that several of the local industries also have boats available for use in response and that there is an ability to deploy a barge as needed.

Stokes stated that in addition to equipment acquisition, activities have included incident command system (ICS) training. He thanked Morrison of MPCA for his role in putting on this training for the CAER and noted that the CAER is working on breaking out the assignment of roles under ICS. Stokes also noted that the creation of by-laws has been completed, though this was a time-consuming task.

Stokes said some field reconnaissance, strategy development, and associated data collection has been initiated. He reported that the county is also working on notification lists and protocols. Stokes said there is interest among the group in doing an exercise during summer 2011.

Stokes noted that the Red Wing group is trying to both learn from the experiences of Wakota CAER and leverage locally available resources and build local relationships. Overall, he said the process seems to be working quite well.

Other CAER Groups and Efforts

Stokes said Wakota CAER had asked him to give a brief update on its behalf. He reported that Wakota CAER has placed a new cache at Prescott, Wisconsin, near the confluence of the Mississippi River and the St. Croix River.

Stokes said the Winona area would likely be the next place where cooperative/CAER development would take place.

Kendzierski asked whether there had been any success in organizing a cooperative or CAER in the La Crosse area. Stokes replied that there had not been much progress in La Crosse to date. Kendzierski asked if there are any private sector firms likely to anchor an effort in La Crosse. Stokes said Midwest Fuels and Xcel Energy would be likely candidates and, given Xcel's engagement elsewhere, it might be logical choice to ask them to expand their involvement into the La Crosse area. He also said Dairyland Power might be a potential partner.
Faryan said US EPA is interested in seeing success in the La Crosse area. Stokes replied that, as noted earlier, Winona is more likely to make progress in the near term. Faryan said it is important to keep in mind the advantages of cooperatives and CAER groups in sharing costs. Stokes agreed, adding that these organizations can also facilitate the completion of FRP planning and training requirements.

Calovich asked who is able to access the response caches established the CAER groups. Stokes replied that, in Red Wing, members are able to access the cache and that for Wakota CAER there may also be a way to access the cache by notifying the state duty officer. Calovich asked Stokes if, in general, access is limited to members. Stokes replied that this is the case, but that materials would likely be made available if requested in response to a significant incident.

Conversation with Shipping Industry

Larry Daily of Alter Barge line joined the Group to provide information regarding the shipping industry on the UMR. Daily began by giving background regarding his experience in the shipping industry including work not only on the UMR but also in New Orleans, where petroleum and chemical cargoes are more common. He also described the work performed by Alter Barge, noting that the company has a local presence (in Bettendorf) but also works throughout the river system. Daily said that he has participated in a number of drill related to oil response and as such has experience in the expectations for oil-spill related response. He also mentioned that he serves as a representative to the Inland Waterways User Board. Daily then asked whether the Group had any questions for him regarding the UMR shipping industry.

Whelan asked whether Daily was familiar with the use of barges in a booming capacity and whether he felt that the industry was open to this type of barge deployment. Daily said that there was certainly precedent for using barges in this manner, as this had been done during the Deepwater Horizon spill. He added that placing a vac truck on a barge is similar to the process used when barges are cleaned, so that could also be feasible. Daily stated that his industry is ready to be used as an asset if needed in response and that vessels could be provided for training exercises if needed. He did emphasize the need for individuals to be properly trained, so that they are not putting themselves at risk in a response.

Faryan asked Daily whether he was aware of any fire boats in the Quad Cities area. Daily replied that this is something the shipping industry has investigated and that the City of Davenport has recently purchased a fire boat that can pull from the river as its water source.

Silver asked whether there is an umbrella group for the shipping industry on the UMR. Daily said American Waterways Operators (AWO) helps coordinate among the shipping industry on the river. Morrison asked whether individuals in the shipping industry are familiar with the UMR response plan and if that is integrated into vessel response plans. Daily said he was not

sure to what extent the UMR plan specifically is considered, but emphasized that vessels do indeed have response plans in place. Morrison said that two important questions are: 1) whether the shipping industry has an ability to respond, and 2) whether the industry has contractors in place to aid in response. Daily replied that, since most barges on the UMR carry dry goods, the training and response capability is not the same as it would be when oil and chemicals are more common cargoes. He added that the industry has a lot of equipment at its disposal, though its availability to others may be limited.

Davis asked what the best way of maintaining communication with the shipping industry on the UMR is. Daily replied that AWO is the best single organization to work with, as approximately 90% of UMR operators are members. Punkiewicz added that having lists of local fleeting operations is a good resource as well.

Davis asked the Coast Guard representatives present what the process is for identifying vessels that could support the deployment of a vessel of opportunity skimming system (VOSS). Stokes said that work barges are one option for VOSS deployment, and then asked Daily if Alter Barge had work barges. Daily replied that Alter does have work barges and emphasized the industry can work very flexibly, indicating that if there is a need, the industry can likely determine how to address it. Chris Bieller observed that it is important to have a location available that allows for the loading of response equipment to barges, if barges are to be used to support response.

Upper Mississippi River Spill Response Plan (UMR Spill Plan)

Plan Updates/Commodities Transported by Barge on the Upper Mississippi River
Hokanson called the Group's attention to the updated plan section "Commodities Transported by Barge on the Upper Mississippi River" that had been included in the meeting packet. He said he had updated the section using 2010 data and noted a few changes from the current (1999) data included in the plan as follows: 1) generally, less variety in the number of products shipped in the upper locks, 2) shipping of refined petroleum products typically takes place from Lock 5A and downstream, with crude petroleum products shipped from Lock 2 and downstream, 3) there is drop in the shipping of forest, wood, and paper products through Lock 5A, and 4) two categories of commodities – primary non-ferrous and primary wood products – have largely dropped from the list.

Daily said it is important to realize that these kinds of lists can be quite variable and subject to change over time due to factors including national economics and natural disasters. Whelan suggested there might be a periodic, static report available which could be integrated into this section of the UMR Spill Plan. Daily said the data may also be available on a compact disc. Coffey also suggested that it might useful to list the website link indicating where the data may be obtained, either in addition to or in lieu of the static report.

Stokes asked whether the information in the plan regarding commodities could be made more specific beyond the general categories listed. Daily said these categories are what is used in the US ACE tracking system and, as such, it is hard for the information to be made more specific. He added that, as of the last time he had looked at the form used to provide this information, it was not always clear how to categorize commodities. Daily observed that the traffic volume of tank barges is larger on the Illinois River than on the UMR.

Davis suggested that another approach to this list is to simplify it even further, reducing it to just a single page of commodity types transported on the UMR. Stitz followed up by saying that it seems two alternatives are to generalize the list or, conversely, to add more detail to it in terms of specific volumes of each commodity being shipped. Hokanson said he could create these alternatives for the Group's consideration.

Bieller commented that the list does have value, regardless of its specific form, as it provides a demonstration of the variety of products being shipped on the UMR. Whelan suggested that an analysis of commodities shipped might be more helpful than a static list, such as currently is included in the UMR Plan. Coffey said knowledge of commodities being shipped may also be useful to incorporate into the pool-based refuge planning activities.

Notification Protocol/Electronic Notification

Hokanson reported that, in response to conversations at the Group's previous meeting regarding modernizing notification processes, UMRBA staff had set up a UMR spills email notification system using *Google Groups*. He directed the Group's attention to the handout summarizing the email system that had been included in the meeting packet. Hokanson said the decisions for the Group to make were whether this type of email system appeared to be useful for the Group and if so, who should receive the messages. Subsequent discussion regarding the email system was not conclusive. Some members saw value in having this as a notification option, while others did not see how it would add value beyond methods of notification currently in place. Bieller observed that such a system could function primarily in a "heads up" capacity. Without a consensus in the use of the system, the Group suggested it be considered further and that Hokanson should send out a followup email to determine which members have an interest in being included in the email notification system.

UMR Response Equipment Inventory

Stokes reported that efforts to update the UMR response equipment inventory continue. He reported that one of the challenges is to obtain information from local fire departments. Stokes said one preliminary result of the inventory process is identifying that equipment is not always placed optimally to be used in response on the River.

Whelan asked whether the inventory included checking with federally-regulated facilities and that US EPA could provide information regarding these facilities. Davis asked whether Whelan was referring to FRP facilities. Whelan answered that yes, these are the facilities she has in mind.

Bieller pointed out that, beyond simply inventorying equipment, there is also an issue of access, in that not all equipment may available for use by others beyond the entity owning the equipment or beyond members of a cooperative. Additionally, he added that having personnel trained to use the equipment is another constraint on its ability to be used. Bieller said perhaps the best hope for early deployment is to determine what is held locally by fire departments and plan for its use.

McCaskey asked whether the inventory was a need, as within two days equipment can be brought in from a variety of sources, including from on scene response organizations (OSROs) under contract to facilities. Davis said the inventory has value as it is very helpful to know what is available locally as a supplement to facility's plans. Whelan added that there are situations where sensitive resources are present and protection is need much sooner than in two days. Coffey concurred, adding that, if possible it is desirable to try and provide protection downstream of a spill before the product reaches an area. Morrison noted that responsible parties will often jump at and buy up any locally available resources.

Echoing his earlier comment regarding tank barge volume, Daily said that a lot more product is transported on the Illinois River and that the Illinois River also has more response equipment in place. Coffey asked where equipment had come from in the case of the Kalamazoo River spill (as discussed earlier in the day). Faryan replied that equipment had come in from all over the country. Morrison again emphasized that the importance of the inventory is in helping to aid in the short term, before equipment can be brought in from remote locations. Davis agreed, saying that a lot can be done with even a relatively limited amount of equipment, if there is a plan in place. Daily said most tows are about 1,000 feet in length and could be used to park and block product in a spill situation. Vicki Morris offered to provide information regarding response equipment on the Iowa side of the UMR.

The meeting adjourned for the day at 5:00 p.m.

Reflection on Day 1 Discussions, Additional Topics for Day 2

List of Reported Spills on the UMR
Faryan distributed a list of spills reported on the Upper Mississippi River in the time period of October 1, 2010 through March 31, 2011. Fritz asked whether the spills reported with low volumes were most likely sheens. Faryan and McCaskey concurred that many sheens are reported on the UMR, particularly during periods of high water.

Follow Up Oil Sands Discussion
In followup to discussions the preceding day, Baumgartner said additional information regarding oil sands is available beyond what is in the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) report. He indicated that he would provide these additional reports to Hokanson for distribution to the group. (*Note: These documents, including both the NRDC report and materials provided by Baumgartner, were subsequently emailed to the Group.*)

2011 New Madrid National Level Exercise

Jaci Ferguson presented an overview of the upcoming New Madrid national level exercise (NLE), which will take place May 16-18, 2011. She explained that multiple types of critical infrastructure (including rail, natural gas, and petroleum pipelines) would be impacted by a New Madrid earthquake and that the ability to detect damage to facilities such as airports and bridges would be strained. Ferguson noted that, in particular, natural gas supply to the northeastern United States would like be dramatically impacted. She also said communications would likely be drastically affected. As such, she explained the NLE will include a limitation on the use of cell phones to simulate likely impacts to communication.

Ferguson reviewed Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) exercise goals as follows:

- Communications.
- Critical resource logistics and distribution.
- Mass care (sheltering/feeding)
- Medical surge
- Citizens' evacuation and shelter in place.
- Emergency public information and warning.
- Emergency operating center (EOC) management.
- Long term recovery (tabletop in September 2011).

Ferguson said expected significant areas of play for the exercise include situational awareness, unity of effort, and resource allocation. She added that the exercise does not have a large role for US EPA in the first 72 hours. As such, US EPA will be conducting a separate mini-exercise to examine information and data transfer. Ferguson noted that Whelan is also on US EPA's team for the exercise. Ferguson listed US EPA's internal goals for the exercise as follows:

- Evaluate data transfers, particularly in regard to bridging across differences in regions.
- Asset tracking for personnel and resource allocation.
- Evaluating lessons learned from the SONS 2007 exercise.
- Working on better coordination with the water supply sector.

Silver asked how successful state coordination has been in preparing for the exercise. Ferguson replied that US EPA Region 7 is working closely with the State of Missouri. Morris asked if any non-directly impacted states are participating. Ferguson said Nebraska, Kansas, and Iowa are all participating in an Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) role.

Silver asked McCaskey whether USCG is planning to participate. McCaskey said USCG is planning to participate to the extent possible, but that since the exercise is taking place during flood season, the ability of USCG to participate may be limited.

Lauder noted that one important consideration in an earthquake response is that responders may end up in harm's way when aftershocks occur. Ferguson agreed, saying it will be important for senior management to consider this issue in making decisions regarding the deployment of staff.

Morris asked whether the exercise planners had collaborated with individuals who have real experience in earthquakes, such as responders from California. Ferguson replied that individuals from US EPA Region 9, which includes California, had been involved with exercise planning. Kusilek asked about the engagement of private industry in exercise planning. Ferguson said this had been done primarily for the mass care and sheltering elements due to the focus of the exercise, but not to any great extent regarding hazardous materials components. She added that if there is a desire to bring in private industry in regard to hazardous materials, this would likely need to be done outside of the main exercise planning effort.

Whelan said Illinois would be participating, but since the scope of damages set by FEMA did not include Illinois, that they would be running their own separate exercise. Lauder followed up by

saying that Illinois would participate somewhat in the federally-led exercise, but would also have its own exercise. He noted that, overall, this particular event was not emphasizing the environmental components of response.

Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge Spill Contingency Planning

Hokanson updated the Group on the status of planning efforts for specific UMR pools within the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge (Refuge). He reminded the group that the planning process and accompanying compact disc had been completed for UMR Pool 7 and that now work in Pool 13 was nearing its completion. Hokanson demonstrated the functionality of the draft Pool 13 geographic response planning compact disc, including maps, response strategies, and planning tools. He said that, in particular, feedback was needed on the draft incident action plan (IAP) included in the CD.

The Group then discussed the contents of the IAP in detail, providing several specific suggestions for modifications. Most of the suggestions focused on the organizational chart included in the IAP and included the following:

- Keep the responsible party within the unified command.
- Add in a finance section.
- Put a law enforcement branch under the operations section.
- Place procurement under the logistics section.
- Remove the "notification" box from the chart.

UMRBA staff indicated that they would modify the organizational chart in keeping with these suggestions and then would provide an opportunity for review of the modified chart and the IAP as a whole.

Developing Habitat-Specific Guides to Aid Response

Whelan introduced the concept of habitat-specific response guides which would serve to provide information in areas where extensive geographic planning has not taken place. She described these as short (2 page) documents providing critical information to responders regarding particular habitats and the implications for response in these habitats. Whelan said some fact sheets had been developed for UMR habitats/shoreline types as part of previous Net Environmental Benefits Analysis (NEBA) work and these could be built on in creating further habitat-specific response fact sheets. She also noted that fact sheet of this type were successfully used in the recent Marshall, Michigan/Kalamazoo River spill. She distributed examples of the materials used during this incident.

Whelan said one of the challenges in working on this effort is determining what habitat types should be address and how these are defined by various entities. She said she envisioned these fact sheets as a way of filling in spatial gaps in areas where specific response strategies have not been developed and added that these could be incorporated into generally available planning materials, such has been done with the inland response tactics manual.

Coffey asked how Whelan saw this fitting in with the specific planning efforts taking place for UMR Pools, and whether she considered this a next step in the Refuge/pool-based planning process. He continued by saying that he thought this effort could fit in well and suggested that habitat categories for the UMR could possibly those defined by the USGS Upper Midwest Sciences Center (UMESC) in their mapping of land use/land cover as part of the USACE's Environmental Management Program. Coffey added that, in recent experience with Lockport, Illinois spill, natural attenuation was the best choice for some habitats. Whelan concurred, saying that in the Marshall, Michigan spill some 200 sites were left largely alone after responders "sopped up" what they could.

Coffey observed that in some cases, response orders may over-emphasize the importance of removal. Whelan agreed, saying it is important to communicate to the responsible party that, in certain cases, some oil may be left behind and that oversight agencies understand this. In this light, Whelan suggested that natural attenuation should perhaps be discussed within the habitat-specific fact sheets. Faryan said there were a few "do not cut" areas established in the Marshall, Michigan response. Whelan noted that this is often an educational effort in informing the public that it can be acceptable, or even preferable, to leave oil in place under certain circumstances.

Paul Doherty asked whether there was any concern among citizens in the Marshall, Michigan spill regarding oil left in place. Whelan replied that, in general, citizens seemed comfortable with this. Coffey said that one point of uncertainty in this response is that it's not clear exactly how and how quickly the oil sands product will degrade.

With the preceding discussion as background, Whelan then asked the group how they might like to proceed with the idea of habitat-specific response guides. Coffey in turn asked Whelan what her vision for the effort was. Whelan said she envisioned mapped habitat types with fact sheets to accompany the mapped habitats. Coffey concurred, also indicating that he saw the greatest utility in the effort being focused on the support of clean-up activities.

Coffey said he would send out the link to UMESC's list of UMR habitat types to the Group. Hokanson added that he would also distribute the existing fact sheets, which had been designed for NEBA purposes, to the Group.

Faryan asked whether this effort might create something resembling NOAA's shoreline cleanup matrix. Whelan replied that this would be possible, though the intent is to design tools that are applicable for the inland (rather than coastal) area.

Baumgartner asked when in the process of the response in Marshall the fact sheets were developed. Whelan replied that cleanup options were evaluated a couple weeks into the response, including possibilities for in situ burning. In regard to in-situ burning specifically, Whelan said Michigan does not have an expedited process for its approval and, moreover, the proximity to population was a deterrent to the use of burning. She added that burning might have been successful on some of the islands, but was not employed. Faryan said he had inquired regarding the use of burning on the islands, but that there was not much support for this approach.

Baumgartner asked whether the NEBA exercise referenced by Whelan was separate from any specific incident or other effort. Whelan replied that the NEBA effort was indeed a separate activity, but the next step can now be taken by combining the NEBA-developed tools with those developed for the Marshall, Michigan response. Coffey reiterated that he saw the primary value of the habitat-specific fact sheets as aiding in the cleanup phase of response. Whelan agreed that they definitely have strong role in the cleanup phase, but also may have other points of application in a response.

US EPA Region 7 Mapping Update

Doherty gave a demonstration of US EPA Region 7's mapping efforts related to spill planning and response. He explained that the Region 7 effort uses a *GoogleEarth* format and, in terms of the Missouri River specifically, picks up where Region 5's mapping leaves off.

Doherty showed how response strategy information is displayed in the maps and added that Region 7 has asked US FWS to review the maps and that some in the field ground-truthing may also need to take place. Doherty explained that Region 7 is working with NatureServe in regard to species data and may incorporate a link to the NaturServe website within the maps themselves. Other map features highlighted by Doherty included a navigation chart layer, township and range information, and national pipeline mapping data.

Whelan observed that, even though the Region 7 and Region 5 mapping approaches may look quite different, there is actually a lot of similarity in the underlying data structures.

Davis said advantages of the *GoogleEarth* format include the ability to zoom in and out, the incorporation of lat/long coordinates, ability to do mark-up, and transferability of files. He said he was able to do real-time plotting during the Deepwater Horizon incident using the *GoogleEarth* approach.

Doherty noted that the use of this approach is not limited to spill response alone, as it also has been used in flood situations and for flood recoveries. Specifically, he noted that it has been employed to track work completed and that photos with associated GPS points have also been tied in using this application.

Region 5 Inland Sensitivity Atlas Update

Hokanson reported that work on the Illinois atlas update continues and that it should be completed later in the year. Whelan added that updates had also recently been completed for Michigan, Minnesota, and Ohio. Faryan asked whether the atlases are available only as DVDs or whether they are also being provided online. Whelan replied that atlases are only available on DVDs for the foreseeable future.

Area and Sub-Area Planning Updates

Hokanson said work in the Minneapolis-St. Paul Sub-Area is currently focused on outreach regarding the recently-updated plan.

Davis said the Quad Cities Sub-Area Committee is currently considering language regarding volunteers, in light of the recent memo between USCG, US EPA and the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). Whelan said that the memo can be used to guide engagement with CNCS on the local level. Ross Bergen noted that, in the Quad Cities, the United Way runs a website to facilitate volunteer engagement. In terms of training for the Quad Cities area, Davis indicated that he would work on training planning and that future training sessions may address topics including wildlife rehabilitation and cold weather response.

Silver noted that the St. Louis Sub-Area Committee had hosted a workshop focused on response strategies in 2010 and now this input is being incorporated into an updated set of response strategies for the sub-area. He added that one issue still needing work in the St. Louis Sub-Area is the harbor plan, which assigns all responsibilities to the City of St. Louis, even though the city does not have the capacity to conduct a response.

Whelan commented, in regard to area planning, that the Deepwater Horizon spill had highlighted the importance of connections to local emergency planning committees (LEPCs), and that there is a lot of pressure to emphasize work in this area. Davis noted that Region 7 has an LEPC conference coming up in June 2011.

Training and Outreach Opportunities

McCaskey said a vessel of opportunity skimming system (VOSS) deployment training will be taking place in September 2011, with further details to be announced.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Group will take place in October 2011, with the location to be determined. Hokanson said he would send an email to determine final date for the meeting and will also look into location options.

The meeting was adjourned at noon on April 6, 2011.