

**Minutes of the
Upper Mississippi River
Hazardous Spills Coordination Group Meeting**

May 8, 2001

**Melvin Price Locks and Dam Visitor Center
Alton, Illinois**

John Grump of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. on May 8, 2001. The following Spills Group members and observers were present:

Jim O'Brien	Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
Daniel Bowen	Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
John Whitaker	Missouri Department of Natural Resources
John Grump	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Susan Hampton	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi Valley Division
Frank Catalano	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District
Dan Erickson	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District
Theresa Kauzlarich	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District
Dave Pertuz	U.S. Coast Guard, Eighth District
Ann Whelan	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5
Barbi Lee	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5
Sheila Calovich	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5
Scott Hayes	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7
Marc Callaghan	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7
Joe Davis	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7
Barb Naramore	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association

John Grump thanked Jim O'Brien for his two years of service in chairing the UMR Spills Group. Grump also thanked O'Brien for his efforts in planning the May 9 equipment demonstration.

Minutes of the October Meeting

The minutes of the October 25, 2000 meeting were approved as drafted.

FOSC/Corps Coordination Protocol

Susan Hampton reported that the draft FOSC/COE coordination protocol she drafted has not yet cleared MVD's counsel. She noted that this process has been slowed because a key person in the counsel's office is on overseas duty. John Grump said the Spills Group is eager to make progress on the coordination protocol and asked whether it would be helpful for the group to communicate its interest to anyone at MVD. Hampton said she would continue to pursue the

matter, but did not think any further action by the Spills Group was necessary. In the interim, she said the Corps' response to any incident would likely be consistent with the Rock Island District's policy outlined in Colonel Mudd's July 1999 letter to Rick Karl. Grump said the Spills Group needs the protocol in writing before it can incorporate it into the Spills Manual, training, and exercises.

Grump asked Frank Catalano and Dan Erickson how lockmasters would currently react to a spill. Erickson explained that the lockmaster's first priority in the event of a spill is to protect life and safety. The environment would be a secondary concern. Grump observed that all responders share these same priorities. Erickson said attempting to collect material in a lock chamber could be dangerous to people and, potentially, to the infrastructure due to the concentration of vapors. He also noted that the lock chambers are not watertight. In response to a question from Dave Pertuz, Erickson said lockmasters do not have hazmat training beyond the first responder level.

Hampton said she recently received a packet of information describing the Navy's ship salvage and oil/hazmat spill response capabilities. According to these materials, the Navy will assist FOSCs upon request in both marine and freshwater environments. Dave Pertuz said he was not certain whether the Navy would respond on freshwater other than the Great Lakes. Barb Naramore agreed to request copies of the information packet from the Navy for distribution to the Spills Group.

UMR Early Warning Monitoring Network

Updated Survey Results

Barb Naramore briefly summarized the updated survey results provided by Rich Gullick of American Water Works Service Company (AWWSC). Gullick surveyed 22 drinking water operators on the UMR and has received 16 responses to-date. Naramore noted that the survey results are fundamentally similar to the interim results provided to Spills Group members in January. Respondents identified bacteria, oil and petroleum products, and algae as the most common contaminants. According to the intake operators, the leading sources of contaminants on the UMR are barge/boat spills, industrial spills, low flows, wastewater treatment plants, and runoff, with transportation and industrial releases viewed as the biggest threat. Respondents report learning of spill events most frequently from public agencies, upstream intakes, and their own monitoring. Their response strategies when faced with a spill include closing intakes, modifying treatment processes, and increasing monitoring. The majority of drinking water intakes report being able to go off line somewhere between zero and 12 hours. Daily monitoring by intake operators generally includes basic physical and chemical parameters such as pH, turbidity, nutrients, suspended solids, color, odor, etc. No facilities report having spills monitoring equipment or conducting watershed monitoring. In addition, most do not have sophisticated analytical equipment. Only one intake reported being part of a monitoring network, but the substantial majority had at least some interest in a Water Users' Coalition and an early warning monitoring system.

Potential Funding Sources

Naramore provided an update of potential funding options for the monitoring network project. Subsequent to the group's January 26 conference call, Gullick and Ann Whelan consulted further and decided against seeking EPA Project EMPACT funding for the monitoring network, at least in Project EMPACT's current funding cycle. Their judgment was based on the very limited time to prepare an EMPACT proposal, uncertainty at this early stage whether our project would be a good fit for Project EMPACT's strong emphasis on real-time public access to data, and the high level of competition for EMPACT awards. More recently, Naramore said she heard from Gullick that the American Water Works Association Research Foundation (AWWARF) has elected not to issue its anticipated RFP for a project on innovative early warning systems. Naramore said Gullick indicated that the potential for AWWARF funding still exists through a "tailored collaboration" project, which would require a 100 percent match from other sources. Naramore expressed the opinion that active pursuit of funding should await a more detailed project scope.

Existing Monitoring Efforts

Naramore noted that, on the group's January 26 conference call, the states agreed to take the lead in identifying monitoring work that is already being done on the UMR by those other than drinking water operators. John Grump reported that Wisconsin DNR monitors monthly at L&Ds 3, 4, 8, and 9 for fecal coliform, conductivity, chlorides, dissolved phosphorous, inorganic nitrogen, NO₂-NO₃, dissolved oxygen, and temperature. In addition, Wisconsin DNR participates with the USGS and the other four states in the Long Term Resource Monitoring Program (LTRMP). The LTRMP includes six state-operated field stations on the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers that sample fixed and randomly selected sites for nutrients, dissolved oxygen, temperature, pH, and conductivity. The field stations are located at Lake City, Minnesota; Onalaska, Wisconsin; Bellevue, Iowa; Alton, Illinois; Havana, Illinois; and Cape Girardeau, Missouri. Grump said Wisconsin has also conducted various special studies, including an extensive sediment study with USGS. Other on-going water quality-related monitoring includes fish tissue and sediment sampling. Grump also reported that Dairyland Power has a sophisticated organics lab and also monitors for zebra mussels.

Jim O'Brien reported that Illinois EPA currently operates 11 ambient monitoring stations on the UMR. The state takes quarterly grab samples at each station and analyzes them for a wide range of parameters. Field measurements include pH, conductivity, temperature, and fecal coliform. Lab analyses include turbidity and heavy metals. Many of the 11 stations are new and the state only has historic data at four of the locations. O'Brien noted that the state also conducts fish tissue monitoring.

John Whitaker reported that Missouri does not do much monitoring on the Upper Mississippi River, other than annual tests of finished water pursuant to the Safe Drinking Water Act. He said there may be some special monitoring projects on the river of which he is unaware. Whitaker also reported that drinking water intake operators on the Missouri River have a data sharing and notification network.

Barb Naramore explained that staffing and travel budget constraints precluded Dave Perry from attending today's meeting. She said Perry told her that he is gathering information regarding water quality monitoring in Iowa and will share it with the group at a later date. Naramore also reported that Minnesota PCA is facing some significant budget problems that

may reduce the state's level of participation in the Spills Group. Naramore said she would continue to keep MPCA informed of the group's activities and solicit Minnesota's input when they are unable to attend meetings.

Susan Hampton asked about certification standards for the labs that analyze the states' water quality samples. Grump explained that Wisconsin's requirements regarding certification vary depending on how the data are to be used. O'Brien noted that labs in general are adopting international certification standards.

Theresa Kauzlarich reported that the Corps does not conduct routine water quality monitoring. Instead, the agency's water quality monitoring is generally study- or project-specific. Kauzlarich said the Rock Island District is doing some modeling work that may be useful to responders. The model is designed to predict the transport of surface material. Grump asked to see a copy of the model when it is available.

Grump asked whether EPA does any monitoring of its own. Ann Whelan said EPA Region 5 analyzes historic data but does not collect data. Scott Hayes said he does not believe Region 7 does any direct data collection.

Next Steps

Spills Group members discussed how best to proceed regarding the monitoring network. Naramore emphasized the importance of clearly defining the purpose and scope of the effort before seeking funding. Whelan suggested looking at what is already being done, what people would want monitored, and who might best accomplish various tasks associated with the network (i.e., sampling, analysis, information dissemination, etc.) O'Brien said he understood the primary purpose of the proposed network to be meeting the needs of drinking water intake operators. O'Brien recommended a joint meeting between the Spills Group and the Water Users' Coalition, with a focus on identifying what contaminants should be monitored, how much advanced warning intake operators need, etc. Grump said he thinks VOCs should be among the contaminants monitored, but noted that the required analytical equipment is expensive. O'Brien expressed the opinion that petroleum products are much more likely to be spilled on the UMR than are VOCs. He advocated focusing efforts on the most probable contaminants and noted that the equipment and training to monitor for petroleum products are much simpler.

Naramore observed that industrial and power plant users may differ from drinking water operators in their needs, perspectives, and capabilities. She suggested that the Spills Group consider reaching out to these other intake operators before initiating extensive discussions with the drinking water intakes. Grump agreed and recommended that each state Spills Group member assume responsibility for surveying the other UMR intake operators in their state. At O'Brien's request, Naramore agreed to draft a letter and brief survey that the states could use when contacting the other intakes. Susan Hampton suggested that floating plant water users might also be interested in the monitoring network.

Whelan noted that there is considerable interest in the monitoring network idea, but also observed that no agency has exhibited strong leadership in pursuing the possibility. Whelan

and O'Brien said these circumstances suggest an incremental approach, starting with a careful scoping and then perhaps moving to a pilot project.

Planning and Mapping Updates

Barbi Lees reported that the Greater St. Louis Sub-Area Plan was finalized in March. Committee members are currently doing a series of outreach sessions at LEPC meetings in the sub-area. The relatively brief presentations are designed to familiarize people with both the plan and maps. John Whitaker said he was pleased with the response at the sessions he has done. He noted that participants have been particularly enthused about the atlas product.

Scott Hayes reported that the Quad Cities Sub-Area Committee has distributed the relevant page(s) from the Pools 10-15 atlas to each of the sub-area fire departments. Hayes said the committee plans to undertake a response strategies effort similar to what has been done in the Twin Cities. Unfortunately, the committee had to cancel a river survey scheduled for last week due to flooding. Hayes said the survey will likely be rescheduled for sometime this fall.

Barb Naramore reported that the Minneapolis/St. Paul Sub-Area Committee has completed its review of the text and maps detailing response strategies for portions of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers. UMRBA staff hopes to distribute those materials, which will be a formal part of the Twin Cities plan, in the near future. However, printer problems have resulted in some delays. Naramore said the committee may do additional field assessments this summer. In addition, MPCA is encouraging regulated industries in the area to field test the strategies that have been finalized. The strategies will be modified as needed based on the evaluation results.

Ann Whelan reported that maps are complete for the UMR from the Twin Cities to Cairo. She also noted that the Wisconsin River and Region 5's portion of the Ohio River are also complete. The maps for the Illinois River mapping area are in draft form. Whelan said there are continued difficulties obtaining and releasing threatened and endangered species data from Wisconsin DNR. Efforts are on-going to resolve these issues. EPA has enlisted assistance from David Woodbury, Wisconsin's representative to the Region 5 RRT. Whelan also distributed copies of the Region 5 RRT's field guide to its *Oil and Hazardous Substances Integrated Contingency Plan*. She explained that the guide excerpts key portions of the full plan, including major policies and essential phone numbers.

Agency Updates/Reports on Recent Incidents

John Grump said there have been no major incidents recently in Wisconsin. Grump said there have been several incidents involving spills from the saddle tanks of trucks.

Jim O'Brien reported that a barge containing fertilizer lost product after it struck a lock and dam. However, the release was not discovered until the barge was moved two or three days later. As a result, there was no opportunity to warn intake operators. Some intakes measured a spike in nitrogen levels through their routine monitoring. O'Brien said Illinois' emergency operations center has been activated due to flooding for approximately the last three weeks. There have been some sewer breaks, but O'Brien said there have not been any major flood-related incidents in Illinois. However, Davenport, Iowa's wastewater treatment plant was

inundated and has been releasing approximately 25 mgd of raw sewage. According to O'Brien, Illinois' nearest downstream drinking water intake is approximately 100 miles away and has not been affected by Davenport's releases. O'Brien noted that many other drinking water and wastewater treatment plants were successfully protected by sand bagging and diking. He reported that Illinois expects a second, lower flood crest soon. Officials are monitoring the waterlogged levees closely.

John Whitaker updated the group on Equilon's intermittently leaking abandoned pipeline on the Missouri River. Last fall, the pipeline was identified as the likely source of mystery releases that had been reported at various times in recent years. Some of the larger sheens had reached the Upper Mississippi River. Equilon plugged the pipeline several hundred feet from its end, and the releases appear to have stopped. However, Whitaker said it remains to be seen whether the problem has been fixed permanently. Regarding the recent flooding, Whitaker noted that Missouri has not had the same problems with floating tanks that it did in 1993. O'Brien concurred, crediting the agricultural chemical suppliers with being very proactive this year in relocating their tanks in advance of the flood.

Theresa Kauzlarich reported that Bill Koehlner retired. She said she will inform the Spills Group of Koehlner's replacement in the Rock Island District.

Dave Pertuz reported on a December 6 incident on the Lower Mississippi at RM 63. A tank ship had a steering failure and dropped anchor. The tank ruptured, releasing an estimated 500,000 gallons of crude oil. The river was closed for approximately two days. The Coast Guard considered declaring a Spill of National Significance (SONS), but ultimately did not do so. Recovery efforts were facilitated by current and wind conditions, which drove the spilled product to one of the riverbanks.

Pertuz said La Crosse requested high capacity pumps from the Coast Guard during this year's flooding because a local private vendor was charging exorbitant rates. However, the Coast Guard could not respond to the request because federal law prohibits providing such equipment when it is available privately. Pertuz explained that the law is intended to prevent federal agencies from competing with the private sector. Grump asked whether the circumstances would have been different if the Coast Guard had federalized the incident. Pertuz said there was no incident to federalize. The city was simply requesting the pumps so it would be prepared if the area flooded.

Other Business

The Spills Group scheduled its next meeting for October 24-25, 2001 in the Quad Cities.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m. [Subsequently, the group received a brief tour of the Melvin Price Locks and Dam and then joined the Region 7 RRT at the Alton Holiday Inn for a briefing regarding the May 9 equipment demonstration. The May 9 demonstration was held at sites on the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers. On May 10, the Region 7 RRT and UMR Spills Group held a joint meeting at the Alton Holiday Inn, minutes of which will be prepared by staff to the RRT.]