

## UMR Hazardous Spills Coordination Group

### Fall Virtual Meeting – October 31, 2023

New Chair Tony Falconio called the meeting to order and began introductions. Mike Rose spoke about the chair transition in the context of the group working toward its strategic objectives.

#### Agency Updates

*Missouri* – Rick Gann reported that several DNR staff have retired. The agency has hired new staff in the Jefferson City office. One new On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) with a military background and in-situ burn experience has been added in Kansas City. Since the last meeting there have been no spill incidents impacting the river. Gann noted a recent rise in mercury releases. One recent incident resulted in a health care facility being shut down for a week because none of the windows could be opened to allow vapor to escape. Another release happened at a US Postal Service (USPS) handling facility. It was found that a damaged package spilled mercury on a conveyor belt.

Gann shared information about a dry ice spill. The material is inert but caused concern among local residents. Gann noted that it is a by-product of ethanol processing. Producers pack pellets into 1700-pound coolers for transport. Answering a question about responder safety, Gann noted that besides the need for safe handling, the confined space of a truck trailer was the only concern due to oxygen depletion as the carbon dioxide off-gassed.

*Illinois* – Tony Falconio noted that Illinois EPA is also tracking the USPS mercury release because the packages from the Missouri facility were sent to a handling facility in Peoria, IL. A customer claims to have become sick after handling the material, although this is unconfirmed. Falconio said there have been no significant releases impacting the Mississippi River. He said that Illinois EPA is adding an OSC to specialize in oil production site releases. Illinois is the nation's seventh largest producer of oil and having a designated person who specializes in drilling sites will help greatly.

*Iowa* – Kurt Levetzow said that Iowa has seen a normal response workload this year. He shared that one incident worth noting involved an asphalt shingle recycling facility; the company operates in other states, so members should be aware. Levetzow said that any group members who need to deal with similar facilities should call him for help. The facility sets up tanks with diesel, a proprietary chemical solution, and a wash line. Processing the material produces fiberglass, aggregates, and oils. The facility in Iowa caught fire, which resulted in an explosion that severely injured about twenty people. Fire departments ended up using AFFF (PFAS) firefighting foam, which sets up concerns for runoff threats to the Iowa River, which is the water supply for Iowa City. Levetzow says staff will be watching as manure applications get underway across the state now that harvest has completed.

*Wisconsin* – Brenda Kelly said she will contact Jayson Schrank, the DNR representative to this group, and share any updates. Schrank was unable to attend the meeting but shared by email that staff have been working to keep up with a normal response workload, mainly along the interstate highway corridors. There have been no significant releases to report since the April 27 train derailment in De Soto, WI. (Post-meeting addition: Mark Ellis noted that notifications and updates were conducted through the UMR Spills Group email listserv.)

*Minnesota* – Mike Rose said the MPCA is reorganizing and boosting staff. Legislative funding for 10-12 new staff has been granted to set up a new Preparedness Unit. Now the Preparedness and Emergency Response Units will operate side-by-side under the Safety and Emergency Management Section. The manager's job has been posted so the new hire can help with the hiring of the remaining new staff. New positions will include three railroad specialists and an enforcement coordinator, among others. Dorene Fier-Tucker added that doubling the section will add more resources for preparedness. The state has statutes and policies to support and soon the agency will have ample staff to do so.

*USEPA Region 5* – Andy Maguire said that Emergency Response Branch Chief Sam Borries has retired. Shelly Lam is now the acting branch chief. New OSCs have been placed in the eastern half of the region. Maguire said the deadly ammonia tanker crash in Effingham County, Illinois was the biggest incident of note. He suggested this could make a good case study for the group at a future meeting. Tony Falconio added that the crash happened late on a Friday evening. The 7,000-gallon tanker was punctured by a trailer hitch. The released ammonia killed a man and his two children, who were in their front yard at the time of the accident, and two other motorists who were caught in the plume. Contaminated soil is still being removed from the site.

Maguire said the cleanup following the February East Palestine, Ohio train derailment continues. Over 170,000 tons of contaminated soil have been removed and shipped for disposal. Sampling was completed recently. Derailment site contact water is still being treated on-site and soil remediation is underway. The agency is also carrying out groundwater characterization and is making a surface water plan. Most of the cleanup work is being done under CERCLA, but the new monitoring falls under the Clean Water Act.

Barbi Lee said that the fall RRT5 meeting was held on October 17-18, 2023, in Lansing, Michigan. She highlighted that the regional biological assessment for the Endangered Species Act is done. USFWS' Phil Delphey looked at critical species within Region 5 for the assessment. A species of skipperling butterfly has been added to the endangered list now that only two small, isolated populations are known to exist. An RRT5 workgroup is set to develop a geographic response plan (GRP) for the county in which they are found. The plan will address different life stages and habitats. Lee said other resource trustees are welcome to take part in the planning process. This project will be used as a pilot to develop other species-specific GRPs.

Lee added that the agency has funding for states to update sub-area plans. A future joint Department of the Interior and USEPA Regions 5 and 7 exercise will be developed for the Quad Cities. The first planning meeting will be held on November 28, 2023. The RRT5 website now has air monitoring guidance built as a functional tool for users. Tetra Tech is working on a print widget and other functionality. The website library has new information on lithium battery fire response as well. She noted that an update to Subpart J of the National Contingency Plan, with products schedule and sorbents, has been signed. There is also a recently revised final definition of Waters of the US.

*USEPA Region 7* – Joe Davis reported that agency managerial ranks are stable, but new OSCs have been hired and are being trained. The ICS Institute has provided training for key leadership positions within an Incident Management Team; Davis and Andy Maguire recently helped teach the Operations portion in Pittsburgh, PA. The agency has responded to spills in Kansas but none on the Mississippi River this year. The biggest release was a TransCanada Pipeline release of 600,000 gallons of dilbit into a Kansas creek last winter. Cleanup of that site is now wrapping up with landscaping.

Davis spoke from a Superfund cleanup at an abandoned HPI pesticide plant in Saint Joseph, MO. The facility had been in violation for years and was shut down. The agency is working to deal with around 300,000 gallons of wastewater and empty containers right now. It is near the Missouri River and could pose a threat if material was released. Missouri DNR recently asked USEPA Region 7 to help with an orphan drum found on a wing dike near Sibley, MO by a fisherman who spotted a sheen. Davis helped with boat operations to recover and assess the drum and do air monitoring. The drum was found to have been open and had contained motor oil. Staff sealed the drum and turned it over to DNR staff.

Joe Krauska introduced himself as the new OSC for the Greater Saint Louis Sub-area. In June he responded to a sunken barge incident at Fenway Landing near Canton, MO. A USACE barge with an excavator was moored at a boat ramp when it sank. USCG was on-site and took the lead on the response because it was a regulated vessel, per the jurisdictional MOU between USCG and USEPA. USCG determined that a hole in the barge let water in overnight, taking the excavator and tow vessel down with it. Responding to questions about the jurisdiction MOU, Joe Davis explained that USEPA is the lead response agency for the inland zone except when the release is from a marine-related transfer facility or a regulated vessel. Andy Maguire added that because the Great Lakes are considered coastal, there is no MOU with USCG District 9. Krauska said that USCG has a database that includes fuel capacity of regulated vessels, should responders need that information in a future incident. He said in this case a light sheen was seen but there was no report of any quantity spilled. Mike Rose said the USCG has a law enforcement element in the marine zone and asked if this was also true for the inland zone. Davis was not sure of the details but does know USCG has enforcement authority on the navigable portion of the Mississippi River.

*USACE* – Jeff McCrery reported that on June 8 at river mile 473 near Buffalo, IA, a 2,000-gallon diesel tank ruptured during a dredge refueling stop. Around 100 gallons spilled, which staff cleaned up while notifying the NRC and USCG. Examination revealed a corroded seam on the inside of the storage tank, which had not been inspected as frequently as it should have been. USACE has implemented a new rule to inspect all USACE tanks quarterly.

*USFWS* – Aleshia Kenney has replaced Sarah Bowman as the Region 3 response and NRDAR Coordinator. Her previous position has been filled by Ed Karecki, who introduced himself to the group. His responsibilities will cover Iowa and Illinois. He supported the Teutopolis ammonia spill discussed earlier and took part in the Wolverine Pipeline exercise held in greater Chicago in August. Reena Bowman noted that USFWS supported the response to the April 27 train derailment in De Soto, WI. Train cars containing paint and lithium batteries ended up in the Mississippi River, but fortunately there was no release or fire involving those cars. The released material turned out to be a non-dairy creamer that did not pose a threat to the Refuge or endangered mussel beds near the site.

*Industry* – Chris Biellier reported that Seneca Companies have only had several minor surface spills from commercial vehicles, but no significant releases.

### **Mapping and Planning Updates**

Barbi Lee said she is looking for a space to host the spring 2024 RRT5 meeting. Dorene Fier-Tucker said she will reach out to Lee to talk about Minnesota hosting.

*Inland Sensitivity Atlas (ISA)* - Mark Ellis reported that the ISA data for Illinois is mostly complete. Above-ground Storage Tanks are expected to be done soon and will be added to the regional data in November. UMRBA staff are now working on Wisconsin data updates; managed lands will be included in the next update. ISA data is hosted by USEPA Region 5 and is served through the various state mapping projects that can be found on the website ([www.rrt5.org](http://www.rrt5.org)).

*Greater Saint Louis* - Joe Krauska noted that the sub-area was holding a virtual planning meeting on November 1, 2023. He will recap the summer Mississippi River reconnaissance work and discuss plan review and edits. He would like to build out exercising in the sub-area plan. Krauska is a point of contact for earthquake preparedness. He would like to include this information in the sub-area plan and asked the group for any earthquake-related material to share. The Spill of National Significance 2007 exercise held in Saint Louis was brought up; Eric Deselich and Barbi Lee will see if they have relevant material to share with Krauska.

*Great Rivers* – Eric Deselich said participants verified response strategies from Cape Girardeau, MO to the boot-heel area in spring river reconnaissance trips. Both USEPA Regions 5 and 7 took part in a coordinated effort with USCG and the states. This year we have completed visits to sites extending from Lock & Dam 24 to below the confluence of the Ohio River, covering around 325 miles of the river. The only segment remaining is that which borders Sainte Genevieve County, MO. The recon trip for that segment was scuttled due to low water again this year. The sub-area will hold a planning meeting in November.

*Minneapolis/Saint Paul* – Mark Ellis said there is a tribal consultation exercise being held on November 14 in Saint Croix Falls, WI. The aim is to train folks to become familiar with the consultation process. It overlaps the Wild Rice Symposium being held at the same time, so it is unclear how attendance will be affected.

*Quad Cities* – Joe Davis said there has not been much sub-area work going on, but the local CAER group has been active. Davis is working with Courtney Hoover of DOI and local USFWS staff to plan an oil spill exercise in the Quad Cities. The plan is to work with the CAER group and the Bettendorf Spill Co-op, with the first planning meeting to be held on November 28, 2023. Davis will share information about the North Platte River exercise as a possible template for the group to use. That exercise had one day of classroom sessions about spill response and natural resource recovery. Day two was walking through response in the field. The event had good interactions among the participating agencies. Barbi Lee said the sub-area has an old plan, and an exercise would be a good way to revitalize the planning group.

### **Strategic Planning**

Mark Ellis recapped the group's 2023 activities. This year we supported the response to the derailment in De Soto, WI, on April 27. We provided plan materials to responders and disseminated incident updates to UMR Spills Group members. During the response, Matt Stokes of STARS requested the UMR Spill Response Plan materials for the area, so it will be good to see how effective the plan was in an actual response. This summer, Ellis updated contact lists for Incident Action Plans (IAP) for Pools 7-13 and Pool 19 of the Mississippi River. The updated IAPs have been submitted to RRT5 to post on the website. In August, UMR Spills Group members took part in the river reconnaissance of Pools 25 and 26.

Regarding improving notifications during real incidents and drills, most members are aware that the old email listserv we have been using is no longer viable. Ellis found very similar functionality within UMRBA's Microsoft 365 subscription. This will allow him to actively manage group membership. It works the same way as the listserv; any message sent to the group account ([umrspillsgroup@umrba.org](mailto:umrspillsgroup@umrba.org)) will be distributed to all group members. The only difference is that the sender will not receive the message. Ellis will use the current email distribution as the initial group; if anyone wants to be dropped, contact him with the request.

Ellis reviewed possible 2024 activities for the group to consider. One is to consider identifying a Pool for a new spill response plan, a priority identified by the group in the strategic plan. Gaps include Pool 4 between Minnesota and Wisconsin, Pools 16-18 between Iowa and Illinois, and Pool 22 between Missouri and Illinois. Ellis could contribute time to organizing exercises and training; the upcoming DOI exercise would be a good way to meet this goal. Ellis will also look at developing a standard After-Action Report (AAR) for the group. Some agencies already have their own templates, this would be one that could be used by anyone else. Ellis will begin with an HSEM HSEEP form, customize this for the Upper Mississippi River, and share it with members for feedback. The group can provide support for the Mississippi River Data Viewer, which was presented later in the meeting by Eric Deselich of Tetra Tech.

Lastly, Ellis talked about finding new sources of funding. For us to expand our capacity, he asked members to see if there is any additional funding that could be secured to help the group meet its goals. This could be further plan development or organizing exercises.

Dorene Fier-Tucker said funding was earmarked already for this fiscal year but suggested talking to John Kreiser of the (MN) State Fire Marshall, who may have grants for railroad-based exercises. Brenda Kelly suggested considering a conference event so that we could charge participants for admission to recover the cost of organizing the event. Kurt Levetzow liked the conference idea, noting it is much easier to get approval to participate in an event than to find funding for new projects. Rick Gann agreed, saying the funding for programs is often set in place early, but requesting attendance at a conference is something he could take to management at any time.

Mike Rose reminded members that the agencies signed the MOA in the UMR Spill Response Plan to make a formal declaration of support for this group. This validates our time spent on group projects. In addition to funding, we need approval to use our labor time in our work. Achieving our goals will require some work outside of these meetings, so it falls on us to remind our leadership of the value of the work we do.

Eric Deselich added that Tetra Tech supports many exercises in USEPA Region 7 sub-areas, including introduction to field data collection with Survey123, SCAT and damage assessment, and technical tools. The group could team up with Tetra Tech to develop a sub-area exercise. Tetra Tech develops Health and Safety Plans, organizes and supports meetings, and develops documents.

### **Mississippi River Viewer**

Eric Deselich introduced the map viewer. New users can request access through the USEPA's Greater St. Louis Sub-area page at [https://response.epa.gov/site/site\\_profile.aspx?site\\_id=11518](https://response.epa.gov/site/site_profile.aspx?site_id=11518). Once the user has an account on the USEPA OSC website, contact Joe Krauska to be added to the contacts list. Eric Deselich and AnnMarie Pohlman of Tetra Tech can also do so. Once approved, click the "Mississippi

River Mapping” button at the bottom of the sub-area page to open the map viewer. If prompted for credentials, click cancel to continue.

Deselich noted that the viewer was used for planning the river reconnaissance mentioned earlier in the meeting. Participants met virtually and talked about which natural resource areas needed protection and how to provide it. Deselich used the edit layer to record comments at locations so that field crews knew what to validate in the field.

Deselich demonstrated the various contents, functionality, and tools available within the app. A default layer of editable features is available to all users, who can add points, lines, or polygons with notes. This is visible to all users in the application. Data from both USEPA Regions 5 and 7 are available, as well as data depicting vulnerable populations and features, National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) flow lines, jurisdictions, Facility Registry System points, critical habitat, and more. Stream gauges are served with live data that can be viewed via an active web link. Users may also upload data into their instance of the app for use with its tools.

Tools include a print widget that will print the active map view at any scale. A downstream trace tool uses the NHD data to calculate a flow line from any point on the map. This gives users a flow path that will be followed by a spill, which gives them a chance to plan response actions accordingly. A report tool lets users define a custom area and get a printable list of all data features present within that area. Deselich said the map will eventually be migrated to a new Esri platform, but current functionality and access will be the same for a while.

### **Other Business**

Tony Falconio closed the meeting with a suggestion to schedule the in-person spring meeting for late April. Members agreed to consider piggybacking the meeting on the spring RRT5 meeting if it is held near the Mississippi River. Barbi Lee is aiming for the last week of April and will keep the group apprised as plans are set. The group tentatively agreed to April 30, 2024, with the location pending decision about the RRT5 meeting.

#### Attendees:

Tony Falconio	Illinois EPA
Kurt Levetzow	Iowa Dept. of Natural Resources
Ryan Stafne	Minnesota PCA
Dorene Fier-Tucker	Minnesota PCA
Mike Rose	Minnesota PCA
Rick Gann	Missouri Dept. of Natural Resources
Brenda Kelly	Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources
Jeff McCrery	USACE
Henry Bocke	USCG
Andy Maguire	USEPA Region 5
Barbi Lee	USEPA Region 5
Carol Ropski	USEPA Region 5
Joe Krauska	USEPA Region 7
Joe Davis	USEPA Region 7
Aleshia Kenney	USFWS

Ed Karecki	USFWS
Reena Bowman	USFWS
Chris Biellier	Seneca Industries
Eric Deselich	Tetra Tech
Mark Ellis	UMRBA
Hollie Hennagir	Xcel Energy
Bill Lazarz	WCEC