Community Oil Spill Response in Bering and Anadyr Straits

November 7 & 8 • Anchorage, Alaska

Hosted by Wildlife Conservation Society

Final Workshop Summary & Recommendations

February, 2014

Workshop Summary

Quotes from Workshop Attendees

"Because of the vast size of the state and the remote location of many of its cities and communities, local residents are frequently the first line of defense in responding to oil or hazardous substance releases. In many cases outside responders cannot arrive in time to deal with the immediate impacts."
Rick Bernhardt (Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation)

"Some areas [of the state] have time, speed, or distance challenges that may delay our time [of response] up to 4 to 5 days."
Commander Decker (U.S. Coast Guard)

"We need action…we need resources."
Willie Goodwin (Alaska Beluga Whale Committee)

"We need additional villages that have the training and capacity to address oil spill issues [and] to work with state and federal agencies and oil producers to be prepared for the development that is going to occur."
Art Ivanoff (Bering Sea Alliance)

"Communities cross international boundaries, so we must cooperate with each other."
Vera Metcalf (Eskimo Walrus Commission, Bering Strait Commission)

"We don't want an environmental disaster to become a human disaster." Barkley Lloyd (Alaska Clean Seas)

Summary

Numerous factors are increasing the risk of oil spills in the Arctic. Oil and gas operations are rapidly moving offshore as technology and ice conditions facilitate new activities. Climate change and associated sea-ice reductions, as well as global economic conditions, are facilitating increased commercial and tourism ship traffic through the northern sea routes. Onshore mining in areas requiring vessel access has escalated in some Arctic regions as a result of climbing mineral prices. Most of these activities carry risks of spills in remote areas that are currently devoid of the infrastructure necessary to protect wildlife and subsistence communities from the impacts of a spill. The *Community Oil Spill Response in Bering and Anadyr Straits* workshop summarized existing efforts designed to mitigate the risks of oil spills, as well as began a dialog intended to both educate and support communities that seek to realize their desired roles in oil spill response.

The utmost priority is to prevent oil spills; however, it is also critical to be prepared to respond to accidents when and where they happen. While efforts with respect to oil and gas development operations on the North Slope of Alaska are relatively well advanced, those in northwest Alaska and Bering Strait lag far behind, leaving a substantial gap between the ideal level of capacity to respond to environmental and food security risks and current capacity in the region. This gap is particularly apparent when considering the risks presented by tanker traffic, which transits along large swaths of coastline in the region. A presentation by a Russian Federation representative also highlighted that challenges in Alaska pale in comparison to those in Chukotka where indigenous communities and wildlife are vulnerable to the same spills and share the same risks and concerns, but currently have few resources in or outside the region to respond in an emergency. In addition, housing and other inevitable demands will further challenge the Bering Strait region when large numbers of responders descend on small communities.

The *Community Oil Spill Response in Bering and Anadyr Straits* workshop was divided into two days. The first day built on briefing book materials distributed before the workshop (available at: http://www.wcsnorthamerica.org/WildPlaces/ArcticBeringia.aspx) and aimed to give attendees a basic understanding of the existing policies, planning processes, infrastructure, and efforts in place to prevent, plan for, and respond to oil spills in the Bering and Anadyr straits. The workshop specifically focused on 1) the role of communities in these policies and planning processes; 2) the location and role of emergency response equipment in the region; and 3) examples of how other communities in Alaska and

elsewhere engage with prevention, planning, and response needs. Throughout the workshop, participants discussed the desire for more action in the region alongside the need to ensure human safety. Of our original workshop goals (see Appendix 1), we found most immediate traction could be made through developing effective communication and response plans that articulate clear strategies and the roles that all parties – including communities – need to play in the event of a spill.

Despite a significant gap in regional capacity, discussions over the course of the workshop focused on identifying tangible next steps that can lead to progress in this arena. Workshop participants broadly acknowledged that more communication about existing activities and resources would be beneficial. It was also widely recognized that there are actions that can be taken to address real capacity and resource gaps. Finally, many felt that it was important to choose near-term actions that are obtainable while also seeking to achieve larger goals over a longer period of time to ensure progress is made and realistic expectations are established.

A clear need emerged to formalize mechanisms with industry and agencies for citizen involvement in oil spill planning, preparedness, and response efforts, as well as to invest in a pool of locally trained people who could be called upon along the coast to support their own community and work with other communities when they are in need. Furthermore the theme of food security pervaded much of the discussion along with the critical recognition that subsistence foods cannot be regarded as substitutable by commercial foods.

On day two, we used a group visioning exercise to surface workshop participants' ideas for moving forward. Participants identified seven key themes during this exercise:

1. Secure dedicated funding sources for training, equipment, and infrastructure.
2. Ensure meaningful community input into community-specific response plans and associated Geographic Response Strategies.
3. Develop and implement training plans for oil spill emergency response in communities.
4. Ensure adequate infrastructure, equipment, and logistical resources are available in the region.
5. Develop effective communication plans within communities, and between communities, agencies, organizations, and responsible operating bodies.
6. Facilitate cross-border communication and cooperation.
7. Improve understanding of legal authority, protocols, and roles around subsistence food security.

Participants self-organized into groups by the aforementioned themes and proceeded to develop ten-year visions with associated goals and strategies for advancing each theme (Appendix 2). Below, we summarize each theme and existing opportunities for taking tangible steps forward on each theme. These summaries are based both on the two days of workshop deliberations, as well as each table's outputs. In total, we identified 38 tangible opportunities for advancing community understanding, planning, and preparedness for oil spills.

Opportunities for Action

1. Identify dedicated funding sources for training, equipment, and infrastructure

Funding for planning, preparation, and response was central to almost all of the workshop's discussions. Providing the necessary capacity (through planning and preparation) to address known risks across the region will clearly take many resources from agencies, industry, foundations, local communities and other stakeholders. It will also require attention to novel funding approaches, particularly for those areas vulnerable to impacts from shipping rather than oil and gas.

Specific opportunities for action include:

1a. Revive the SB-264 response depots and corps, and revitalize the HB-470 oil funds to help with planning and preparedness.

1b. Establish vehicles for receiving dedicated, ongoing funds from shipping (e.g., through payment into Oil Spill Response Organizations (OSROs) or Harbor Safety Committees) to plan, train, and respond to spill events.

1c. Work with the Environmental Protection Agency to allocate Indian General Assistance Program (IGAP) funding to address regional spill preparedness and response needs.

1d. Restore Prescott Grants to fund the Alaska Stranding Network.

2. Ensure meaningful community input into community-specific response plans and associated Geographic Response Strategies

While community engagement offers a more timely way of initiating local spill response, each community is different, necessitating

unique solutions and communication strategies. Overall, there is a need to build trust between agencies and communities and to increase the understanding of mechanisms already in place to prepare for and respond to spills. There is great potential in the Subarea Contingency Planning process; going forward, efforts should maximize the potential of this process and build on it to increase the value of its outputs to all stakeholders. While efforts have been ongoing by many parties, a new strategy and toolbox is required for more effective collaboration with communities. This need starts with communication, but extends to engaging communities fully in response preparedness, training, and navigating regulatory hurdles. Examples of community oil spill response outside of the Bering and Anadyr straits (e.g., Seldovia or the San Juan Islands), or of broader threat mitigation (e.g., through the Conflict Avoidance Agreements negotiated between the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission, industry, and agencies at the annual Open Water Meetings) demonstrate that communities can play a meaningful role in developing and participating in response solutions.

Specific opportunities for action include:

2a. Provide meaningful engagement mechanisms for communities and stakeholders to inform Sub-Area Contingency Plans and Geographic Response Strategies, such as the Sub-Area Planning Committees and through Mutual Aid Agreements.

2b. Ensure community emergency response plans address oil spills in a manner that is consistent with Sub-Area Contingency Plans and Geographic Response Strategies. These plans should clearly link roles and infrastructure of communities to command structure and identify agreed upon roles and responsibilities for a local on-scene coordinator (see also 5a).

2c. Develop a Regional Citizens Advisory Committee and Harbor Safety Committee for Bering Strait and Northwest Arctic Borough.

2d. Ensure that the risks and benefits of burning and dispersant use have been fully discussed in relation to food security.

2e. Establish the role of a subsistence on-scene coordinator in Sub-Area Plans.

2f. Establish guidance on how much oil in the water would lead to a disaster designation based on impacts to the health and safety of subsistence activities. Establish protocols for monitoring and reporting these impacts.

2g. Complete, test, and communicate USCG-approved facility response plans within communities for those facilities that transfer, or are capable of transferring to or from vessels with a capacity greater than 250 barrels or 10,000 gallons (e.g., local tank farms that are resupplied by fuel barges).

2h. Establish protocols, training, and pre-authorizations required for marine mammal hazing (i.e., before a spill happens). This recommendation ties to concurrent work by National Marine Fisheries Service on marine mammal hazing.

3. Develop and implement training plans for oil spill emergency response in communities

The need to establish communication and response plans that incorporate specific needs for equipment precedes the need for a training plan; however, a clear desire exists to come to agreement on how to address community training needs, establish and foster training networks, and support regular information sharing. Currently there is no coordination or local education about training needs or opportunities, nor is there clarity over how to address liability issues related to volunteer responders or what training is necessary to ensure the safety of those who volunteer. It is also critical to develop a structure for community response teams that assigns local leaders to positions within the teams (including backup resources and people). Finally, annual drills should be conducted for each Sub-Area Plan.

Specific opportunities for action include:

3a. Establish a local oil spill primary response force in Northwest Alaska (akin to a firefighting hotshot crew). This response force should have a clear structure, established funding, defined training requirements, involvement in annual training drills, and a set number of individuals per coastal village (for example, two per community in 15 coastal communities results in a 30-person local response force). This primary response force would serve as local mentors for any additional responders trained during a spill or other emergency event.

3b. Develop an online database of HAZWOPER-certified responders in northwest Alaska (recognizing that some individuals are trained for other purposes such as fuel deliveries).

3c. Establish a working group to revisit the "Volunteer Plan" in Sub-Area Contingency Plans.

3d. Complete a large-scale equipment deployment exercise that tests the veracity of equipment lists and the ability of various agencies to coordinate their resources. While there is a lot of inventoried equipment, it is spread out and under different ownerships (see also 6b and 6d).

4. Ensure adequate infrastructure, equipment, and logistical resources are available in the region

Catering to the coupled needs of having enough infrastructure, equipment, and logistical capacity as well as regionally-appropriate tools and equipment will require an adaptive approach based on the specific characteristics of arctic environments. Understanding what is adequate will require a clear plan and working closely with OSROs, particularly Alaska Clean Seas and Chadux, which have experience with a broad range of equipment and approaches in similar environments, to ensure that the most appropriate options – from both an effectiveness and safety perspective – are considered for deployment in local Geographic Response Strategies. This later consideration might also require additional

research to help prioritize and develop response strategies for specific sites and communities.

Specific opportunities for action include:

4a. Ensure all response resources are catalogued in a centralized database associated with the Sub-Area Plan.

4b. Conduct a gap analysis of science and Traditional Ecological Knowledge informational needs to develop a clear understanding of where currents will take oil and where it is likely to come onto the shore.

4c. Establish best practices and protocols for responding to specific Geographic Response Strategy "types" (e.g., lagoon entrances, seal or walrus haul-outs) based on experience of Alaska Clean Seas, Chadux, and others (see also 4d and 5e).

4d. Test Geographic Response Strategies for a suite of prioritized sites in the Northwest Sub-Area Plan (see also 4c and 5e).

4e. Establish and stock strategic equipment warehouses and infrastructure in the region.

4f. Determine if National Marine Fisheries Service and Marine Mammal Commission marine mammal oil spill response plans for large aggregations of animals are adequate under a large spill scenario in the Arctic – both from a practical (e.g., hazing or opportunities for rehabilitation) and public perspective. If found to be inadequate, develop a more robust response plan.

5. Develop effective communication plans within communities, and between communities, agencies, organizations, and responsible operating bodies

Outside of funding, communication was the most discussed priority at the workshop. While on the one hand, there seems to be a general lack of awareness in communities about who to talk to or what the process is for oil spill preparedness and response, agencies often struggle to effectively engage with the diversity and complexity of communities (not for lack of effort in some cases). For oil spill preparedness and response, moving beyond consultation and communication appears to be critical as communities seek the tools to help be part of a process that protects individuals, traditions, and food security. Progress is being made on collection of Traditional Ecological Knowledge, subsistence mapping, the Arctic Environmental Response Management Application (Arctic ERMA), and other village resources, but these efforts still need to help inform communication and understanding among all stakeholders. Furthermore, inadequate Internet availability and connectivity in many communities requires alternate communication strategies.

Specific opportunities for action include:

5a. Implement an explicit and understood chain of command from community hunters to responsible party that effectively incorporates Traditional Ecological Knowledge, western science, and on-the-ground response needs. Recommendations include the need for a common up-to-date directory (online and hard copy) with jurisdictional roles and contact information. Contact information should be position-specific rather than person-specific to accommodate for turnover (see also 2b).

5b. Utilize lessons learned from other region-wide emergencies (such as the 2012 seal Unusual Mortality Event) about effective communication between local hunters and agencies (see also 6a).

5c. Communication strategies should be clearly outlined in the Sub-Area Contingency Plan and understood by all stakeholders.

5d. Establish communication roles for local on-scene coordinators (see also 2b).

5e. Create a structure for community leaders and OSROs to work directly with each other to develop local response strategies. This could be facilitated through regular meetings of the Sub-Area Planning Committees (see also 4c and 4d).

5f. Create an accessible set of materials that describe the post-spill compensation process, including an outreach brochure for community leaders (see also 7a).

6. Facilitate cross-border communication and cooperation

While oil spill response is not hampered by international boundaries due to new international treaties, there is a lack of community capacity to engage with spills along the Chukotkan coast. That said, a response center is planned for Providenya, which will increase regional capacity and should be coordinated with Alaska interests and efforts toward a unified international response strategy. However, local language issues exist both within Alaska and across the border with Russian or Siberian Yupik speakers. Finally, with increasing interest for shipping to and from the MacKenzie Delta in Canada, more dialogue with Canadian authorities and stakeholders is recommended.

Specific opportunities for making progress include:

6a. Utilize lessons learned from other region-wide emergencies (such as the 2012 seal Unusual Mortality Event) that had cross-border implications (see also 5b).

6b. Initiate the process for a full table-top training for a trans-boundary Spill of National Significance (SONS) in the region with participation from tribes and agencies on both sides of Bering and Anadyr straits (see also 3d).

6c. Encourage a dialogue between communities and local, state, and federal authorities in Chukotka to ensure local resources are recognized in Russian Federation spill response efforts.

6d. Obtain an inventory of response equipment available on the

Russian coast (including with respect to the new Providenya Response Center), that can be included in bilateral planning efforts (see also 3d).

6e. Promote greater discourse between Alaska and Chukotka regional governments about spill preparedness and response.

6f. Establish and maintain an international bilateral oil spill response agreement with the Russian Federation that is specific to Bering and Anadyr straits.

7. Improve understanding of legal authority, protocols, and roles around subsistence food security

Human and wildlife health are inextricably linked in this environment, but poorly addressed in oil-spill planning and response. Threats to food security are real; addressing them will require collaboration across agencies with interests in wildlife health, subsistence food safety, and human health. Furthermore, while a claims process is essential for helping communities address subsistence shortfalls during a spill event, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to put a monetary value on the natural resources affected by a spill or associated response due to the inherent local reliance on a healthy environment and the multi-faceted nature of food security.

Specific opportunities for making progress include:

7a. Create and make accessible materials that describe the community compensation process and how to successfully navigate existing compensation programs (see also 5f).

7b. Ensure baseline information is in place for damage assessments; prioritize information needs (e.g., through EPA Indian General Assistance Program grants) that must be addressed.

7c. Consider the Gulf marine mammal stranding network as a model for Alaskan efforts.

7d. Develop a working group to address human health and food security concerns with respect to oil spills and response strategies. The group could consider and address why commercial food quality is monitored but not subsistence foods, impacts of different response strategies on food safety (e.g., burning and dispersants), and how to conduct a subsistence food risk assessment. This information could be modeled on Yender et al., 2002.[1]

[1] Yender, R., J. Michel, and C. Lord. 2002. Managing seafood safety after an oil spill. Seattle; Hazardous Materials Response Division, Office of Response and Restoration, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. 72pp.

Appendix 1

Community Oil Spill Response in Bering and Anadyr Straits

A Two-Day Workshop

November 7 & 8, 2013 • Anchorage, Alaska

Workshop Overview, Agenda and Participants

"The Community-Based Oil Spill Response concept relies on community-based teams of citizens trained as first responders to protect areas – their own communities – subject to potentially large spills or spills by unregulated spillers." Nuka, 2005[2]

The Problem

- While prevention of oil spills is everyone's goal, the probability of oil spills contacting coastal areas escalates with increasing vessel travel associated with development activities and increasing commercial shipping in the Arctic.
- Capacity to initiate oil-spill response from vessel accidents in the Arctic will always be challenged by vast areas, cold conditions, limited logistical and communication capacity, and time lags to get equipment and people on site.
- Wildlife, critical habitats, and indigenous health, safety, and food security are all at risk from oil spills.
- Many critical wildlife areas are adjacent to indigenous communities, making local communities the most likely individuals to arrive first on the scene after a spill.
- Currently, little is known about the costs, infrastructure, and strategies to best aid local communities in reducing the lag between an oil spill and a safe and effective first response.

Workshop Goals

1. Recommend tools that can be safely and effectively deployed by Alaskan and Chukotkan hunters and community members to combat both small oil spills and to engage as part of a collective response to large spills in select areas around the Bering Strait region (encompassing Bering and Anadyr straits). This includes efforts to document spills, constrain or divert oil away from wildlife and key habitats, as well as diverting marine mammals and other fauna away from a spill. Any recommendations for community involvement in local first-response efforts will need to be practical (both logistically and financially); feasible from a liability and safety perspective; and respectful of the substantial challenges that exist in implementing any type of response in remote areas, some of which may preclude safe and/or effective action.
2. Establish what training and local/regional capacity is required to sustain an ongoing safe and effective local spill response capacity.
3. Develop a budget and establish a strategy for maintaining local grassroots spill response capacity in the Bering Strait region.
4. Develop a plan to train communities about existing response frameworks and tools.
5. Develop a communications plan to link communities and regional response planners, both as part of the direct response, and as part of the overall logistics where local knowledge can contribute to a safe and efficient response for everyone.

Background

Numerous factors are increasing the risk of oil spills in the Arctic. Oil and gas operations are rapidly moving offshore as technology and ice conditions facilitate new activities. Climate change and associated sea-ice reductions, as well as global economic conditions, are facilitating increased commercial and tourism ship traffic through the northern sea routes. Onshore mining in areas requiring vessel access has escalated in some Arctic regions as a result of climbing mineral prices. Most of these activities carry risks of spills in remote areas that are currently devoid of the infrastructure necessary to protect wildlife and subsistence communities from the impacts of a spill.

It is important for all communities along the Alaskan coast to understand the command structure and resources that are in place to respond to remote oil spills. The region encompassing the Bering and Anadyr straits has been chosen as a case study for this workshop due to its remoteness and the opportunity for this region to serve as a model for other remote areas. The selection of Anadyr and Bering straits is not a commentary on the importance of this region related to other areas of Alaska, nor does is assume that this area is the most important place to focus preparedness resources in Alaska.

With an increased potential for oil spills, coastal communities of the Bering and Anadyr straits are seeking ways to protect their

[2]Nuka (Nuka Research and Planning Group, LLC.), 2005. Community Oil Spill Response Forum Final Report. Report to Prince William Sound RCAC and Cook Inlet RCAC.

health and safety, as well as their long-term cultural practices and food security. These strategies include developing local capacity to participate in and support spill response. Currently, large response gaps are inevitable before larger, specialized spill response entities arrive at an incident location in the maritime Arctic (e.g., Oil Spill Response Organizations such as Chadux, Alaska Clean Seas, and SeaPro). Community leaders in the Bering and Anadyr straits want to better understand what community members – including experienced hunters – can do if they are given the proper equipment and training to safely and effectively protect their coastal environment and the wildlife that they have always relied upon.

Federal, state, and several international (e.g., Arctic Council) efforts have developed regional spill contingency plans and response agreements for sensitive coastal areas. However, it is widely acknowledged that a significant gap exists between what has been identified as important regionally and the resources available locally (i.e., available equipment, training, and personnel) to accomplish successful on-water oil recovery, and wildlife and shoreline protection. Any effective oil spill response in the Arctic will benefit from ongoing strategic engagements with trained and prepared indigenous hunters and community members close to potential spill sites to help close this response gap.

Increasing the capacity of communities to respond to oil spills in Alaska began after the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill in 1989. Since that time, the State of Alaska implemented several initiatives to help communities with response equipment, training, and funding (e.g., at Cordova). Since 1990, several communities have also established their own community spill response organizations, but numerous challenges have limited the success of these efforts. NOAA's Office of Restoration and Response has conducted two community workshops (Barrow and Kotzebue), which responded to communities' desires to learn more about their role in a spill response. Each year the Alaskan and federal governments work with the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals to host two or three community spill response trainings, but resources are not available for additional classes.

In 2005, the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens Advisory Council contracted with Nuka Research to hold a Community Oil Spill Forum. The final report included several recommendations, but very limited follow up action has occurred since 2005. Many will attribute the limited action to the acknowledged costs and challenges of developing local capacity. However, from both a conservation and indigenous food security perspective, the status-quo of limited to nonexistent capacity in many communities is unacceptable. While local response will inevitably be a small component of what is needed in a large spill, the potential for hunters and community members to protect specific habitats and/or marine wildlife early in the response offers too great an opportunity to be ignored.

Local community involvement is also critical when a spill requires support from those outside the region. In these circumstances, local knowledge helps ensure the safety of the non-resident workforce by providing valuable input on weather and marine navigation. Furthermore, local knowledge and input can help minimize impacts to sensitive areas during the mobilization of a response. Despite the lack of progress in developing local spill capacity in Alaska since the 2005 Nuka report, several events and activities offer opportunities for learning and building momentum toward the goal of a well-trained local spill response capacity. These include efforts on the North Slope, Prince William Sound, and Cook Inlet in Alaska, and Puget Sound in the Pacific Northwest. Activities in these areas vary, but include deployment of absorbent boom to protect specific areas of coastline, use of marine mammal scaring devices (to move animals away from contaminated areas), and shoreline cleanup operations.

In this workshop, the Wildlife Conservation Society initiated a dialog intended to both educate and support individuals and communities seeking to realize their desired roles in oil spill response. The workshop gathered spill response experts, local practitioners, hunters, and other stakeholders to discuss the viability of various approaches to spill response in the Bering Strait region and provide recommendations regarding the current needs, opportunities, and challenges to developing increased community oil spill response capacity in Alaska and Chukotka. This workshop, with a focus on the Bering Strait region, also provides insights for what might be done elsewhere in the Arctic.

Agenda

Thursday, November 7

Community Roles in Oil Spill Response

9:00 – 9:30 Welcome and setting the stage for the workshop
- Goals of the workshop
- Overview of the agenda

9:30 – 10:15 Regional and local perspectives on local interest and capacity to address small and large oil spills
- Robert Suydam, North Slope Borough Department of Wildlife
- Vera Metcalf, Eskimo Walrus Commission; Kawerak, Inc.
- Willie Goodwin, Alaska Beluga Whale Committee
- Eduard Zdor, ChAZTO

10:15 – 10:45 Bering and Anadyr straits as an Arctic case study (Martin Robards, Wildlife Conservation Society)
- Growing threats
- Oceanographic connections between the Bering and Chukchi seas; how an oil spill in one place could impact the other
- Vast areas that are in jeopardy and how community locations can facilitate access to wildlife aggregations
- Health, safety, and food security of communities

Efforts to Implement Community Spill Response and Lessons Learned

10:45 – 12:00 Current state and federal efforts to prepare for and respond to oil spills and support community preparedness and engagement
- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation – Rick Bernhardt
- U.S. Coast Guard – Commander Shawn Decker
- Environmental Protection Agency – Nick Knowles
- Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields Program – Nick Knowles
- NOAA Office of Response and Restoration – Sarah Allan

12:00 – 1:30 Lunch – on your own

1:30 – 3:30 Lessons learned from existing community efforts
- Prince William Sound: Scott Pegau, Oil Spill Research Institute
- Cook Inlet/Seldovia: Mark Janes, Seldovia Oil Spill Response Team
- North Slope Village Response Teams: Barkley Lloyd, Alaska Clean Seas
- The MV *Selendang Ayu*: Karen Pletnikoff, Aleutian Pribilof Islands Assoc.
- San Juan Islands, WA: Julie Knight, Islands' Oil Spill Association
- Oiled Pinniped Readiness, Treatment and Care: Carrie Goertz, Alaska SeaLife Center
- Emerging Opportunities for Spill Response
  - Hazing: Brad Smith, National Marine Fisheries Service
  - Attractants: Jan Straley, University of Alaska

Opportunities and Constraints on Closing the Response Gap

3:30 – 4:00 Key challenges for community response (Mark Janes, Nuka Research)
- Funding of distributed community capacity
- Maintaining required safety training of responders
- Insurance coverage and costs
- Maintaining responder base
- Maintaining spill response equipment
- Turnover of community leadership
- Cyclical start and stop efforts
- Policy/legal/regulatory constraints
- Coordination between local and regional efforts

4:00 – 5:00 Closing discussion about opportunities and constraints

Friday, November 8

A Conversation Facilitated by Nils Andreassen, Institute of the North

What is Necessary to Move Forward in Bering and Anadyr Straits?

9:00 – 10:00 Revisit outcomes of day one and discuss goals of community response in Bering and Anadyr straits

10:00 – 12:00 Establish basic long-term education/funding/research/equipment/training needs

12:00 – 1:30 Lunch – on your own

Next Steps in Bering and Anadyr Straits, and How to Keep it Going?

1:30 – 4:00 Next steps to move towards implementation
- Communication
- Training and strengthening existing capacity
- The value of a dedicated working group versus utilizing existing forums
- Funding
- Other

Participants

Indigenous Organizations

- Alaska Beluga Whale Committee (Willie Goodwin)
- Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission (Harry Brower)
- Alaska Nanuuq Commission (Whitney Youngman, Rhonda Sparks)
- Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association (Karen Pletnikoff)
- Association of Village Council Presidents (Tim Andrew)
- Bering Strait Alliance (Art Ivanoff)
- Bristol Bay Native Association (Helen Aderman)
- ChAZTO (Eduard Zdor)
- Eskimo Walrus Commission (Vera Metcalf)
- Ice Seal Committee (John Goodwin, Mike Pederson)
- NANA Regional Corporation (Melissa Becker)
- Native Village of Eyak (Ivy Patton)
- North Slope Borough (Billy Adams, Ray Atos, Nicole Kanayuk, Lokeni Lokeni Jr.)
- North Slope Borough Department of Wildlife (Robert Suydam, Raphaela Stimmelmayr)

State & Federal Agencies

- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (Rick Bernhardt, Tom DeRuyter, Dale Gardner, John Brown, Leah Vik, Kristin Ryan)
- Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (Kate Wedemeyer, Michael Haller)
- Environmental Protection Agency (Nick Knowles, Bob Whittier)
- Marine Mammal Commission (Michael Tillman)
- NOAA Office of Response and Restoration (Sarah Allan, John Whitney, Joe Inslee)
- NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service – Protected Resources Division (Brad Smith)
- NOAA Sea Grant (Gay Sheffield)
- National Park Service – Shared Heritage Beringia Program (Janis Kozlowski, Katerina Wessels)
- U.S. Arctic Research Commission (Cheryl Rosa)
- U.S. Coast Guard (Commander Shawn Decker)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Marine Mammals Management (James MacCracken)

Academia, Industry, & Private Groups

- AES Response Operations, LLC (Daniel Gallagher, Allyson Atos)
- Alaska Clean Seas (Barkley Lloyd)
- Alaska Ecological Research (Jen Dushane)
- Alaska SeaLife Center (Brett Long, Carrie Goertz)
- Arctic Turn (Rosa Mehan)
- Battelle (Ted Rockwell)
- BP (Bill Streever)
- Brendan Environmental (Judy Miller)
- Chadux (Matt Melton)
- Defenders of Wildlife (Karla Dutton)
- HDR Alaska, Inc. and Pacific Rim Institute (Rada Khadjinova)
- HDR Alaska, Inc. (Valli Peterson)
- Institute of the North (Nils Andreassen, Karlin Itchoak)
- Islands' Oil Spill Association (Julie Knight)
- Leonardo Technologies, Inc. (Joel Lindstrom)
- Marine Exchange (Paul Fuhs)
- McNamara Consulting, Inc. (Amy McNamara)
- Nuka Research (Mark Janes)
- Oil Spill Research Institute (Scott Pegau)
- Pew Charitable Trusts (Raychelle Daniel, Marilyn Heiman)
- Prince William Sound RCAC (Lisa Matlock)
- Statoil USA (Jocelyn Fenton, Dolly Norton)
- University of Alaska (Jan Straley)
- Wildlife Conservation Society (Martin Robards)
- World Wildlife Fund (Elisabeth Kruger)

Appendix 2
Day Two – Moving Forward

GROUP 1: Financial Resources

Goal: More financial resources available to support oil spill response.

What Success Looks Like:
- Funding for adequate equipment in strategic locations.
- Adequate funding for training, coordination, and preparedness.

Steps to Achieving Success:
1. Complete an assessment of currently available funding sources that provide funding to communities to prepare and respond to oil spills. This assessment will 1) create a baseline for funding, and 2) be made available to communities to ensure widespread understanding of currently available funding programs and resources. Current funding includes: ADEC Community Response Agreements, EPA Indian General Assistance Program (Brownfields Program), USCG Basic Ordering Agreements, Coastal Impact Assistance Funding.

2. Identify opportunities for new funding, including new partnerships. Approach philanthropic foundations as potential partners. The Denali Commission is a good example of a program that could serve as a model.

3. Encourage community leaders to work together to communicate collectively about the need for more financial resources. By working together to raise awareness, leaders will be able to foster good working relationships and be more vocal about local needs related to oil spill preparedness.

4. Gain access to the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund.

5. Foster a greater sense of corporate responsibility beyond the North Slope. Larger industries that extract minerals from the North should expand their sense of responsibly beyond the North Slope and add more resources to protecting western coastal communities at risk from increased shipping traffic and offshore development.

6. Cut costs to free up more money. By finding ways to become more efficient it allows for possible expansion of resources. For instance, is there a way to lower insurance costs to help reduce the financial burden to such groups as the Seldovia community response organization?

7. Look to OSROs for models of efficiency and training. Also explore the potential of increasing the number of trained, community-based responders associated with an OSRO (or an OSRO subcontractor).

Participants: Tim Andrew, Joe Inslee, Art Ivanoff, Michael Tillman, John Whitney

GROUP 2: Planning and Geographic Response Strategy Deployment

Goal: Each community has meaningful input into a community-specific response plan that is tied to a Geographic Response Strategy. If desired, this plan can include ongoing practice of the Geographic Response Strategy.

What Success Looks Like:
- A site plan for all Geographic Response Strategy locations with input from all interested stakeholders.
- If support exists, provide necessary and sufficient equipment on-site for training and drills including Geographic Response Strategy deployments.
- A review of each Subarea Plan every five years.

Steps to Achieving Success:
1. The first question each community should ask itself is, "Do we want to be involved in developing the subarea plan that includes our community?" If yes, then:

2. Organize community meetings to receive input on resources at risk, logistical information for the area, and identification of sensitive areas for protection; as well as input on specific location plans for exclusion/diversion booming. Conduct an inventory of existing equipment and trained personnel within the community.
**Clarity on who should convene these meetings needs to be established. The responsibility for area planning rests with the On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs) assigned to this area. In the case of the Northwest Arctic and Western Alaska, the state OSCs are Tom DeRuyter and Steve Russell, respectively, and the federal OSCs are Robert Whittier (USEPA) and Captain Paul Mehler (USCG) for both subareas. Roles for tribal and city/local government officials need to be established.*

3. Host two-day meetings in hub communities (Kotzebue & Nome) to seek input on current Northwest Arctic and Western Alaska subarea contingency plans. Adequate notice and promotion of the meeting is necessary and interpreters should be present. Outreach should include notice to tribes, village corporations, marine mammal commissions, city government, the

university branch campus in the area, regional corporations, industry, regional non-profits, and other area stakeholders.

4. Once planning is complete, local communities will decide if they want to train and practice drills for purposes of being able to take part in deployment of GRSs and during initial collection/assistance to vulnerable wildlife affected by oil. If there is interest in being able to provide a local/initial response, then it is necessary to 1) develop and initiate a training plan; 2) acquire adequate equipment for communities to practice GRS deployments (currently there is no equipment available for training purposes in these communities); 3) deploy boom, anchors, and related supplies during drills; 4) identify local vessels that can be used; and 5) identify additional equipment that may be needed during an actual response.

5. Determine who is responsible for sustaining local community capacity and identify a leader or leaders to organize and be accountable for monitoring the training plan, completing practice drills, maintaining local equipment, and ensuring the safety of participants during all activities. Decide which local community leaders, and state, federal and U.S. Coast Guard representatives are responsible for oversight.

Participants: Nick Knowles, Mark Janes, Lokeni Lokeni Jr., Matt Melton, Vera Metcalf, Rick Bernhardt, Marilyn Heiman, Julie Knight

GROUP 3: Training Plans (e.g., individual safety, response drills) Are Developed and Being Implemented Annually

Goal: Each community has local individuals trained in oil response drills annually and an Arctic Oil Spill Hotshot Crew serves the larger region.

What Success Looks Like:

- Each village has a local team of people who have expressed interest in being trained and who receive training annually so they are prepared to safely participate in an oil spill response.
- An Arctic Hotshot Crew exists that is dedicated to the region, maximizes resources, brings local expertise to local needs, and is sensitive to cultural and subsistence issues.
- Each village has completed a community resource assessment that is updated regularly to reflect changes within a community. This assessment guides and prioritizes training needs within the region.

Steps to Achieving Success:

1. A community-based resource assessment is completed for each village. This assessment provides a list of people in the community who have various types of training (e.g., HAZWOPER, boats, experience with booms and skimmers, arctic experience, survival, gun safety, wildlife knowledge, knowledge of weather and currents) that can be utilized and deployed during an oil spill emergency. The assessment will catalog what each community has available to them and identifies gaps in knowledge and resources necessary to meet the minimum requirements for oil spill response. This assessment is updated regularly to reflect changes in community dynamics.

1. From these assessments, a training schedule for each village and the larger region is developed and implemented. The goal is to ensure that interested individuals in the community have the training necessary to participate in oil spill response efforts. Each village team will have at least: 24 or 40-hr HAZWOPER training as necessary; Incident Command System training; first aid and CPR training; properly fitted personal protective equipment; and HAZWOPER physicals.

2. Regional Hotshot Crew is established (similar to firefighters) that has a combination of fulltime staff and on-call individuals prepared and ready to be deployed when an oil spill emergency emerges in the region. The Hotshot Crew will support and supplement local village response teams and will include expertise that the village may not have (e.g., wildlife rescue). This approach will focus training resources, utilize local expertise, ensure cultural and subsistence sensitivity, and strengthen local and regional community ties.

3. City officials or community search and rescue systems could provide the basis/platform/core to develop village/regional oil spill response teams. In addition, village-based communication centers and their seasonal employees may also be useful assets for local oil spill response teams. The village responders will be trained broadly (that is, they will be "generalists") so they can address a variety of small remote village response needs. Similarly, infrastructures already in place will also have multiple uses during an oil spill and outside of a response. Existing systems, infrastructure, and personnel should be utilized when developing a training plan.

4. Education opportunities will be provided annually for community members. While not all members of a community will want or be able to participate in a spill response, they might like an opportunity to understand who will be involved and what will happen if an oil spill occurs.

Participants: Billy Adams, Allyson Atos, Karla Dutton, Brett Long, Rhonda Sparks, Raphaela Stimmelmayr

GROUP 4: Infrastructure, Equipment, and Logistical Resources

Goal: Adequate infrastructure, equipment and logistical resources are available to be deployed in an emergency. Plans exist to utilize those resources and local village response teams have

been established and are coordinating effectively with state and federal responders.

What Success Looks Like:

- All available resources are catalogued in a centralized database.
- Comprehensive logistical and communication plans exist to be deployed in an emergency.
- Agreements guarantee response resources.
- Local village response teams have been established to increase local capacity for community response.

Steps to Achieving Success:

1. Identify a centralized database to catalog resources available at the local, state, and federal levels and to area OSROs. Resources should include equipment, trained personnel, and infrastructure (e.g., landing strips, rooms, food service, boats). The centralized database should incorporate/link existing databases.

2. Institute agreements involving tribes, village corporations, boroughs, ADEC, NOAA, and USCG that guarantee response resources.

3. Develop comprehensive plans to provide bed space, water, sanitation services, food, showers, etc. to responders in the remote geographic areas of the Bering Strait.

4. Create comprehensive communication plans for the remote geographic areas of the Bering Strait. Identify communication equipment and protocols that need to be available at onsite incident command centers. Determine the equipment and personnel necessary to put agreements in place to allocate those resources should the need arise.

5. Establish local village response teams and develop oil spill response equipment appropriate to the area.

6. Train locals to fill the role of Local On-Scene Coordinator in the Incident Management Team.

7. Educate all agency personnel about their responsibilities.

8. Enhance wildlife response capabilities in the region.

Participants: Tom DeRuyter, Daniel Gallagher, Robert Suydam, Kate Wedemeyer

GROUP 5: Effective Communications and Consultation with Stakeholders and Operating Bodies

Goal: Develop communication protocols that are informed by local engagement, broadly supported, and widely understood by all entities.

What Success Looks Like:

- Stakeholders are identified.
- A time is set to meet with all stakeholders to discuss and clarify communication protocols.
- The villages each have a trilateral model.
- Stakeholders in the villages are aware of the communication goals, protocols, and roles.
- All parties know their roles and the roles of others.

Steps to Achieving Success:

1. Engage all stakeholders in developing protocols to communicate effectively around oil spill planning, preparedness, and response. The following entities should be invited to participate: state and federal agencies, boroughs, tribes, village corporations, regional corporations, industry, local governments, land owners, local residents, businesses, schools, NGOs, and hunters.

2. Identify communication goals and develop protocols for achieving those goals. The incident command system provides a great model for clear roles and responsibilities.

3. Once communication protocols are established, provide education and outreach to ensure stakeholders know their roles, are capable of implementing their roles, and understand the roles of others.

Important considerations when working in any region:

1. Engage local stakeholders early to seek their involvement in developing activities or meetings.

2. Prior to traveling to a village, determine what dates work for elders, agencies, schools, biologists, etc. and choose dates that work for all entities in the village. Make sure there is no subsistence hunting, school activity, or other planned event that would preclude local engagement.

3. When in the villages, meet with local governments, boroughs, village tribes, subsistence groups, and others that have been identified as key members of the community. Meet with elders to learn about traditional knowledge.

4. Identify a local liaison.

5. Support broad community engagement by providing an educational function for kids and rides to the meeting for elders and others who might need assistance.

6. Support local entities working together by ensuring that the following are each involved: the native village of X, the city council, the Village Corporation, and the borough.

7. Ensure translators are available to support involvement of elders and to broaden participation.

What has not worked:

- Government to Government.

- Protocol language regarding Government to Government that no one understands.
- Just showing up and presenting without researching the best time to meet with the villages.
- Holding evening meetings without meeting with local entities and agencies during the day.
- Not enough notice about meetings in the villages.

Participants: Ray Atos, Jen Dushane, Dolly Norton, Valli Peterson

GROUP 6: Cross Border Collaboration between Russia and the United States

Goal: International response capacity capable of responding to oil spill and stranding incidents in the Bering Strait region in a comprehensive and cohesive manner.

What Success Looks Like:

- An international response center with comprehensive, cohesive response and communication plans for the Bering Strait region.
- Clear, open, and continuous communication between the federal governments of the Russian Federation and the United States, between Chukotka and Alaska, and between local communities on both sides of the Bering Strait related to pollution response, search and rescue, and environmental threats/news (e.g., disease events).
- Real-time, comprehensive notification system for threats and potential cases of distress; everything in Russian and English at a minimum. Of note, there area at least three distinct indigenous languages in use on the Alaskan side of the Bering Strait region.
- Representation of Strait concerns and local, eastern, and western rural community perspectives in the international Arctic arena.
- Online delivery of timely, publically accessible information related to real-time issues at sea that could impact the region.

Steps to Achieving Success:

1. Recognize that the Bering Strait region is in need of more communication and news sharing.

2. Include the private sector in international response planning.

3. Establish shipping lanes.

4. Cache response gear in rural communities and train community members (e.g., pollution response, search and rescue).

5. Establish international response protocols and develop a clear understanding of protocols through repetitive drills and training.

6. Inventory available and accessible resources and logistical support in the region that can be dedicated to cross-border needs.

7. Successfully complete bilateral drills (Spill of National Significance drill in the Strait with both countries involved).

8. Provide public access to real-time ship movements in the Bering Strait region.

Important Considerations when working on Cross Border Collaboration:

8. Two languages, at a minimum – Russian and English are the two languages of the governments, but not necessarily the regional communities or responders.

9. The Russian Federation is already advancing response planning in this region. The United States should reach out to the Russian Federation for assistance and inclusion into the response planning effort.

Participants: Elizabeth Kruger, Theodore Rockwell, Gay Sheffield, Suzann Speckman, Katerina Wessels, Eduard Zdor

GROUP 7: Subsistence Food Security

Goals:

Subsistence is addressed directly and appropriately in regulations (i.e. OPA 90) and processes.

- Subsistence is defined not just as consuming food but also as the practices, traditions, culture, and education that are intrinsically a part of a subsistence way of life.

Tools have been developed to monitor and test food safety.

- Baselines, with variability, have been established.
- Tools include Traditional Ecological Knowledge and western science approaches.

Local communities are involved as partners in the development of regulations, plans, and tools.

- Restoration/replacement of subsistence foods is redefined to explicitly be equivalent food types (not the value of the caloric equivalent from the supermarket).

What Success Looks Like:

- Communications about subsistence food safety in the event of a spill are timely, regular, and useful.
  **There was not consensus within the group about what information specifically would be useful. Some opinions included: a yes/no response about if the food is safe to eat, and analytic test results that included context for the results.*
- Food is tested for safety and test results are made available to communities in a timely manner.
- A subsistence food safety protocol is implemented in the event of a spill.
- Local experts—using Traditional Ecological Knowledge—are

involved in determining subsistence food safety.

- Scientists and regulators understand what local communities want/need to know and are providing that information consistently and through agreed upon channels.

Steps to Achieving Success:

1. Assess current regulations and policies that are relevant to community and subsistence food security and amend them as necessary to adequately address subsistence.

2. Develop community-based sampling and testing plans for baseline and response.

3. Establish regulations to protect individuals from "wanton waste" of harvested animals that cannot be consumed because of potential contamination.

4. Develop and implement a communications plan that focuses on the importance of planning ahead and saving extra food when it is available.

5. Define who is responsible for sampling, analysis, risk assessment, communications, and decisions regarding subsistence food safety.

Potential Next Step:

- Develop an ad-hoc group. Some of the entities that should be involved in this effort are: NOAA/OR&R, NOAA/NMFS, USFWS, Alaska Native Tribes/non-profits/health corporations, Alaska State Epidemiology, USDA, Incident Command, Marine Mammal Coalition, migratory bird groups, and ICC Alaska.

Additional Notes:

- The release of the *Selendang Ayu* restoration report may be a good opportunity to address some of these issues.
- ICC Alaska is working on defining food security from an Inuit perspective.
- Lessons from the 2012 seal Unusual Mortality Event and from oiled species in the Bering Strait region should help inform future planning efforts.

Participants: Helen Aderman, Sarah Allan, Harry Brower, Raychelle Daniel, Carrie Goertz, Willie Goodwin, Karen Pletnikoff, Brad Smith, Whitney Youngman

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COVER PHOTO: Martin Robards, Wildlife Conservation Society