

RRT-III MEETING NOTES
May 3, 2023
USGS Patuxent Research Refuge, Laurel, Maryland

Wednesday May 3, 2023

Introduction

Cindy Santiago welcomed all participants and partners.

Training Workgroup Open Session – Sabina Bastias, EPA

- Potential Training Opportunities and Presentations Document edited live:
 - Two new presentations suggested/added
 - 1. USGS flow modeling (ModFlow) – oil travel time and other flow modeling tools. – POC John Nelson
 - 2. Challenge of finding/ speedily deploying contractors / OSROs, specifically truck drivers who aren't already over time with their CDL hours – Brian Moore

Information Management Workgroup Session – Brian Moore, PADEP

- Presentation: NRT Information Management Platforms for the RRT3 Website - Joe Shaeffer, EPA ERT
 - Focused on how to use the existing RRT website template to increase functionality without the expense of making a whole new site
 - Walked through the features of the template as he described them
 - Discuss how to get more value out of the tool we have:
 - Organization, layout, data information, embed links
 - Calendar function
 - Maps
 - Ideal for the R3 RRT site is to bring users directly to the RRT3 site instead of having to start at the NRT site and go from there
 - Has the ability to embed social media posts
 - Elisha: it's particularly difficult to locate needed documents- is there a way to streamline that?
 - It comes down to organization of content, if there are standalone documents that need to be more accessible, Joe suggests using links to the sub-sites to send users from the main site to the key places work groups would need
 - Elisha: Is it possible to have work group members be able to access specific pages or sub-sites with content relevant to their group?
 - Issues posting content: Is that an issue of admin rights or user error?
 - It's likely that she doesn't have posting rights or permissions
 - It is very possible to have and add sub sites

- There has been difficulty finding archived presentations from years past: Is it possible to still access those?
 - Archived documents still exist difficult to find with lack of search functionality and organizational layout
- Is there a search function?
 - No because of the permissions restrictions
 - Joe suggests showing all documents and using control F short cut key to search for a specific item
 - Only works within one sub-site at a time
 - May need to pull all documents from all RRT3 sub-sites into one
- If someone wanted to move a document from one site to another, is that possible?
 - No: the document needs to be downloaded and reuploaded to the preferred location
- The map section: Is it possible to imbed multiple maps?
 - Maps must be linked to separate sub sites
- Joe recommends using the html edit and edit the site abstract to dress up
 - Brian: Who would do that?
 - START contractors have identified a web developer with experience on the NRT platforms
- Could ERMA be pulled into this site?
 - Yes, ERMA can be linked or imbedded
- There are tradeoffs as always: Do we want to spend a lot to create a whole new site or find work arounds to make the existing site more functional?
 - Mike Towle: From the landing page and down, how much do we have control over?
 - Joe: Essentially all of it
 - Utilizing the existing site is intuitively challenging
- Finding plans is the real challenge: The link to access that page should be made obvious on the landing page using icons
 - Mike wants to “map what we have” and make it easier for users to find the important documents
 - Access rights: remain another barrier
 - The key documents and pages are suggested to be made publicly available
- Is it possible to show past events in the schedule tab and link the content from the past meetings into it: Yes
- Who does the website work group call for support if needed: ERT for tech support
- Is translation available: Not without building an entirely new site

- **Action Item** –The information management workgroup plans to reconvene, discuss the website, and map the needed material. Discuss via polls, surveys, next information management workgroup meeting to determine what users need from an updated RRT3 website.
 - The workgroup plans to put together the survey questions for the desired mapping of the site, desired documents for quick access, etc. START can develop the survey, share it to workgroup, send out, then START and the workgroup can identify key elements for website improvement together. Provide gathered information to START web developer.
 - Plan to get this survey out before the next RRT3 meeting.
 - Need main point of contact from ERT to be put in touch with the START web developer.
- Round Table Discussion: Social Media Coordination and Responses – Brian Moore, PADEP
 - Currently utilizing traditional style press briefs, draft the press brief and post on a social media platform. Current hurdle: Noticed public desire for shorter reads, better graphics, videos, the information becomes popular on another site, then shared with presumed edits and efforts for virality (lack of fact checking and intent to gain internet popularity).
 - Each individual agency has their own policies, procedures, public information officers.
 - The struggle within the RRT is how do we use social media as an organization?
 - How do we leverage the traditional media and modern media?
 - Idea: we are using social media incorrectly. Most of the federal information is released as a press release, this does not line up with HOW people consume information in the modern age.
 - Information sharing happens faster than response agencies can handle anymore.
 - 1000 people accessed an official press release.
 - 1.5 million watched the less accurate TikTok video. This is propagating misinformation and mistrust.
 - It is our responsibility to provide the public with information in a format that they can understand and consume.
 - Platforms exist that we have not leveraged sufficiently in the past. We need to find ways to provide factual information related to an incident quickly, prior to misinformation post that can result in unnecessary hurdles (such as community distrust or panic resulting from misinformation).
 - Having to react to nearly instant misinformation coming from these social media platforms is preventing us from sharing the accurate information, in a timely manner.
 - Videos are posted instantaneously from the public prior to responders arriving on site to address a response.
 - Has any organization ever live streamed from a response site?
 - Not that the group was aware of.
 - We need to have an assertive JIC

- Liability in relaying information on TikTok related to security and unknown data sharing that occurs behind the scenes
 - “Armchair scientists” missing context are driving the messaging or “alarmist influencers” who are less concerned with being factual than with being interesting
- Failure of official agencies related to capturing interest – most PIOs are sharing out information slowly, on platforms that users aren’t seeing, and in a way that doesn’t engage users (bureaucratic language, not flashy videos)
 - Coast Guard perspective – verbal press statements are fine but written needs to be vetted
 - Social media is both verbal and written; making it increasingly difficult and time consuming to share information in an instantaneous manner
 - One strategy that was used successfully in the past was having a group of dedicated “slammers”, which are responders that specifically comb through web and social media traffic to shut down and correct social media misinformation
 - Perhaps the RRT3 could come up with a recommendation for how to better use social media in responses

Presentations and Outbriefs:

- Presentation: Dianna Highbie, Patuxent Research Refuge
 - Presents slides related to urban wildlife program and the research refuge
 - Research is conducted on one tract of land; the other two tracts of land are open to the public
 - Working to invite underserved communities to discover the urban refuge and develop a long-term relationship to the outdoors
 - Six common activities encouraged on wildlife refuges include hunting, fishing, wild life observation, environmental education, environmental interpretation, and photography
 - Other activities hiking, biking, and walking. Patuxent holds various programs and events such as night hikes, life cycle exhibits, pollinators garden, art gallery, photographers club, and other special events
- Outbrief: Joint NC/VA Prep Exercise – USCG
 - Announcement: Area Contingency Plan; Prep exercises occurring later this summer Delaware Bay and Maryland.
 - Did a four-hour seminar on the National Contingency Plan, how to organize, concepts, priorities, discuss oil spills and impact on environment, response plans for oil spills
 - Field activities
 - 1. Monkey Island, Albemarle Sound side, NC
 - 2. Ruby Inlet, VA Beach: postponed due to weather
 - Created a challenging exercise, 30 miles off the coasts of NC and VA, related to large car carrier vessel and focused on assumed spill of 5,000 barrels of heavy bunker oil

- Two states, multiple counties, two sectors, two regional response teams (RRT3 and RRT4)
 - Created a challenging exercise design with approximately 120 people in a ballroom for the exercise
 - The value in bringing all the folks together outweighed the challenges and exercise execution
 - Discussions on dispersants toward the beach during tourist season and contingency plans for concurrence
 - 45 different agencies came together and was a valuable experience
 - Social media jic pio at unified command in 2 different states role playing reporters incorporated a live media spot: had to have concurrence to put out to stakeholders
 - Stress test the system, come together and combine a unified command
 - Discussions about the beach, divergent interest related to the oil (tourism or the beach)
 - Tactical decisions and building relationships was the most valuable
- Presentation and Outbrief: Broadkill Beach – Todd Wardwell, Port Recovery Specialist USCG
 - Case happened years ago during covid, jurisdictional boundaries, multiple states, multiple partners: restrictions in place, no more than 20 people to a room, no room available to host a unified command post, OSRO contractor manpower/availability was limited. Shipped from other states during covid challenges.
 - Called late by OSC DNREC related to tar patties rolling onto the beaches, message notification completed, most of the recovery was land based
 - Used drones, ATVs, drones were created to detect oil spills through camera named “Oscar”
 - Drone: Pixis camera, computer, GIS tracking system every time it spots a tar ball it dropped a georeferenced pin while flying
 - There are no more aviation contractors available through VOA
 - Dauphin helicopter \$21,000 for 30 min vs. \$1,200 for 8 hours with drones
 - Approaching \$1 million budget
 - Put in a congressional request
 - The commitment totaled \$2.5 million
 - Used beach rakes after 4x4 vehicles continually broke down
 - Beach rakes were successful in cleaning up
 - Tracked down RULET suspect vessel
- Presentation: Oil Spill Preparedness Division (OSPD)– John Calvin, BSEE
 - Regulatory authority for renewable energy OSRPs: Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM)
 - Preparedness verification branch and response research branch
 - Attend and audit, build trainings, build exercises, inspect response equipment
 - Anticipate a request for participation in future exercises

- Anything mounted to the seafloor is considered a facility
 - 25430 CFR 254
 - 30 CFR 585
 - NEPA Compliance
 - 33 USC 1321
 - 111 Turbine generators
 - One offshore substation
 - VA: 176 turbines, three substations
 - Highlighted nuances of geographic boundaries and response team boundaries
 - Considerations of colorless, odorless, dielectric oil discharges in marine and estuarine environments
- Presentation: NOAA National Weather Service– Wayne Weeks, NWS Marine
 - Provide outreach and trainings
 - Employ incident meteorologist, then issue specific incident related forecasts and warnings
 - Ocean Prediction Center, National Hurricane Center, National Ice Center
 - Marine Pollution Program in 2011: analyze satellite data in conjunction with weather forecast to provide guidance and trajectories
 - Presentation: Native American Graves Protection and Reparation Act– Dick Polley, FEMA
 - Deceased found in other situations were often overlooked, collected, disposed of, or taken as souvenir
 - Native Americans hold very unique rights because they are sovereign
 - The US doesn't have the right to disturb native graves
 - Special considerations during a response related to cultural resources
 - Do not make immediate media notifications of findings to protect the location of the site
 - Historical preservation specialist are available to assist
 - Do not move or store, unless absolutely necessary
 - **Action Item-** add the document that details what to do with remains, also include in the area contingency plans when document is updated

Additional Sessions

The Executive Committee Meeting, RRTIII Co-Chairs, Coordinators and START Meeting were held on Wednesday, May 3rd. These were closed sessions and the notes are available to respective members.

Concluded at 1630

Meeting Attendance Roster	
Attendee Name	Attendee Organization
Daniel Alexander	DC DOE
Anderson Sr, Bennett	DNREC - DE
Baer, Matthew	DHS
Bailey, David	START- Tetra Tech
Bannon, Sheena	USCG - Fifth Coast Guard District
Bartos, Myles	US EPA
Bastias, Sabina	US EPA
Boyd, Kevin	US EPA
Brett, Workman	USCG
Britton, Peggy	USCG - Fifth Coast Guard District
Brown, Holly	VADEQ
Collins, Charlie	USCG- NC
Concepcion, Roberto	USCG- MD
Cook, Elisha	USCG - Fifth Coast Guard District
Csulak, Frank	DOC-NOAA
Dermigny, Robin	Former RRT Support
Dick, Polley	DHS-FEMA
Dinkins, Sam	ORSANCO
Donahue, Geoffrey	MDE
Elfguinn, Erica	USCG - Fifth Coast Guard District
Fish, Bradford	Energy Transfer
Fish, Lieschen	GES Inc.
Gaynor, Kevin	US EPA
Hielscher, John	National Response Corporation

Higgins, Kevin	USCG- DE Bay
Jolley, Justin	USCG- Ohio Valley
Langley, Susan	SHPO
Miller, Mark	VADEQ
Montoya, Duban	USACE
Moore, Brian	PADEP
Nelson, John	DOI
Nichols, William	EPA
Oconnell, David	USCG
Oravitz, Craig	USCG- MD
Ormes, David	USCG - Fifth Coast Guard District
Pillow, Lauren	VADEQ
Polley, Dick	FEMA
Raju, Nitander	DOT-PHMSA
Reinhart, Amanda	NOAA
Robertson, Jay	Lewis Environmental
Santiago, Cindy	US EPA
Scharr, Ruth	EPA
Scheaffer, Kate	National Aquarium
Scheaffer, Sarah	USFWS
Scheaffer, Joe	EPA
Schiano, Francis	USCG
Scholz, Debbie	Former RRT Support
Smith, Jessie	START- Tetra Tech
Starks, Natalie	DOL
Stelmack, Mark	DOL-OSHA

Thorkilson, Kelly	USCG - Fifth Coast Guard District
Towle, Michael	US EPA
Wall, Steven	DOC- NOAA
Watts, Courtney	START- Tetra Tech
Wickersham, Jon	Colonial Pipeline
Wilkinson, Jay	MSRC
Wiseman, Rebecca	WVDEP
Young, Bruce	DOE