



Coastal Response Research Center

Workshop on Human Dimensions of Oil Spills

June 13 – 15, 2006

The Coastal Response Research Center is a partnership between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), through the Office of Response and Restoration (OR&R), and the University of New Hampshire (UNH). The goal of the Center is to reduce the consequences of spills and other hazards that threaten coastal environments and communities by conducting research, developing new response and restoration methods and transferring technology to practitioners. The Center addresses national issues and provides overall coordination. The Center focuses on the education, research, and technology involved with all aspects of spills, with an overall objective of promoting effective protection and restoration of coastal areas. To the extent feasible, advances in science and technology relating to spills are applied to other types of threats to coastal environments and communities.

One of the Center's missions is to establish research strategies and collaborate on and conduct research to advance the knowledge, technology, and practice of spill preparedness, response, and restoration. The Center fulfills this mission through its annual competitive research grants program. In order to identify research and development needs for its Annual Requests for Proposals (RFPs), the Center involves individuals and public and private institutions at the local, regional, national and international levels in workshops.

The first workshop that the Center held on November 4-6, 2003 was entitled "Research and Development Needs and Prioritization for Response to Coastal Spills". The Workshop was held on UNH's Durham campus. A diverse group of more than 30 experts in the areas of spill processes, response techniques, and habitat restoration participated. The group of invitees represented NOAA, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. EPA, U.S. Minerals Management Service, state agencies, the private sector and academia. The goals of the workshop were to identify and determine the best approach for addressing research needs related to spills. The insights gained during the workshop are serving as the foundation for the Center's and many of the participating agencies funding decisions for a three to five year period. A report on the workshop is available on the Center's website (www.crrc.unh.edu).

One of the six general topics discussed in the small breakout groups at the Workshop, was on Social and Economic Concerns and Needs associated with oil spills. The breakout groups discussed each topic and developed a list of research topics that might fill knowledge gaps identified. The groups were asked to rank each topic on technical feasibility, potential impact on resource recovery decisions, time to completion and cost. As a result of the workshop, two research themes related to the human dimensions of oil spills were identified:

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- Communication: Public and Stakeholder Participation in Response and Restoration
- Ecosystem Services: Identification and Validation

R&D statements and possible NOAA outcomes were identified for each of these themes and are included in the workshop report.

In May 2004, the Center hosted ten NOAA practitioners at UNH to discuss their views on R&D needs for oil spills. The group identified several topics for research including one on communications with stakeholders.

The Center responded to the November 2003 and May 2004 Workshops by using several of the topics in its Annual RFP issued in late May 2004 (for project funding starting in January 2005). Two of the RFP topics focused on Communications highlighting Gaming and Performance Metrics. One project was funded after an extensive peer review process: "Establishing Performance Metrics for Oil Spill Response, Recovery and Restoration" by Seth Tuler of SERI, awarded \$229,362 for two years. Information on the project is located on the Center's website (www.crrc.unh.edu).

In November 2004, the Center, along with several other UNH research groups, co-hosted a small 1.5 day workshop on Analytical Approaches to Environmental Decision Making. The presentations made at the workshops were wide-ranging and are available on the Center's website. Topics included case studies using multicriteria decision analysis (MCDA), use of normative theory in deliberative valuation, Q methodology, and stochastic multicriteria acceptability analyses (SMAA). Applications included watershed and harbor management.

The Center included a topic on Valuing Restoration into its 2005 Annual RFP. Two projects, being conducted cooperatively, were funded after a thorough peer review process: "A Convergent Validity Test of the Parameter Updating Method" (Christine Poulos; RTI; \$42,119, one year) and "Monetary Values and Restoration Equivalents for Lost Recreational Services on the Gulf Coast of Texas Due to Oil Spills and Other Environmental Disruptions" (George Parsons; University of Delaware; \$139,366, two years). Information on these projects is located on the Center's website.

The Center hosted a workshop entitled "Research and Development Needs for Making Decisions Regarding Dispersing Oil" in response to the recent NRC report on the "Efficacy and Effects of Oil Spill Dispersants". The format for the September 2005 Workshop was similar to that used in November 2003. The topics generated will be used to develop RFP priority areas. In this case, the Center is also coordinating a Dispersants Working Group, composed of fourteen federal, state, NGO and private funding entities. These members have agreed to coordinate their RFPs in response to the topics generated at the workshop. A report on the workshop will be released in June 2006. Originally, discussions of the human dimensions issues were going to be included in the September 2005 Dispersants Workshop, but it quickly became apparent that a separate meeting should occur. The Center discussed the possibility of hosting a Research Needs Workshop on the Human Dimensions of Oil Spills with its Advisory Board. The Board approved this initiative.

The Center will host the Research Needs on the Human Dimensions of Oil Spills Workshop June 13-15, 2006. The goal of the workshop is to bring together researchers and oil spill practitioners to develop a list of research needs on human dimensions that could be used in Center RFPs for a period of three to five years. The format used for the Center's other workshops will be used once again as the framework. There will be approximately 35 attendees. The end product will be a report identifying potential RFP topics resulting from discussions at the workshop. Invited

attendees will represent federal and state entities, the private sector, and academia, including practitioners and researchers. The broad categories for the discussions have been identified by the workshop organizing committee (OC). The OC assisted the Center in identifying the broad topics for discussion, the invitees, and the workshop facilitator.

All logistics of the workshop will be handled by the Center (e.g., invitations, travel, meals, and lodging). The facilitator, Eric Denny of Outward Bound, has worked with the Center and OC to organize and run the workshop and will write the R&D report.

The Organizing Committee consists of: Yvonne Addassi of California Office of Spill Response and Restoration, Mary Beth Bauer of NOAA NOA, Eric Denny (Workshop Facilitator) of Outward Bound, Duane Gill of Mississippi State University, Nancy Kinner, UNH Co-Director of the Coastal Response Research Center, Ed Levine of NOAA, Amy Merten, NOAA Co-Director of the Coastal Response Research Center, Carol Silva of Texas A&M University, and Steve Thur of NOAA NOS.