



# DEEPWATER HORIZON DISPERSANTS MEETING

May 26 – 27, 2010

## Deepwater Horizon Dispersant Use Meeting

May 26 – 27, 2010  
Baton Rouge, LA

The Coastal Response Research Center (CRRC), a partnership between NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration (OR&R) and the University of New Hampshire (UNH), was formed in 2004 to address the need for improved spill response and restoration. The Center oversees and conducts independent research, hosts workshops, and leads working groups that address gaps in spill research with respect to the fate, behavior and effects of oil released into the environment, natural resource damage assessment (NRDA), and compensatory restoration. The Center brings together representatives of federal and state agencies, industry, the private sector, academia, and NGOs from within the United States and around the world. Since its inception, CRRC has hosted over 20 workshops on a variety of topics across the spectrum of oil spill R&D to determine the state-of-the-art in spill response and restoration and identify knowledge gaps and the research needed to address them. The workshops result in reports that specify research needs and serve as guidelines for research plans and proposals. Working groups, formed in response to the reports, coordinate funding for specific R&D projects to avoid duplication of effort and ensure that the research meets accepted standards of peer review.

The Deepwater Horizon incident has resulted in the release of millions of gallons of crude oil into the Gulf of Mexico. Efforts to stop the release have thus far proved ineffective or incomplete. Efforts to manage this spill have included the largest use of chemical dispersants for any spill response in the world – more than 700,000 gallons have been applied as of May 22, 2010. Most of the application has been from aircraft, but the U.S. Coast Guard and USEPA have sanctioned their use at the source 5,000 ft below surface. This unprecedented use of dispersants in the response has caused concerns. Given that the release may continue for several additional weeks or months, prudent planning for future dispersant operations in this incident requires a thorough review of dispersant operations conducted to date.

The goals of the Deepwater Horizon Dispersant Use Meeting will be to: (1) assess the efficacy of subsurface and aerial application of dispersant in this incident, including an estimation of dispersant efficiency; (2) assess the physical transport and chemical behavior of the dispersant and dispersed oil resulting from subsurface and aerial application; (3) assess the exposure pathways and potential acute and chronic effects associated with the aerial and deepwater application of dispersants on the spill including, but not limited to, those posed to individuals, populations, habitats and ecosystems and the attendant human activities (e.g., seafood safety with respect to hydrocarbons and dispersants; recreational, subsistence and commercial fishing, beach use); (4) provide specific recommendations to the Region 4 and Region 6 Regional Response Teams (RRT) on the advisability of continuing the current level of dispersant operations including changes in dispersant use and application methods; (5) identify possible monitoring protocols in the event of continuing aerial and subsurface application of dispersants.



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The 40 to 60 participants in the meeting, plenary speakers, and breakout group discussion topics will be selected by a planning committee chaired by the CRRC. Attendance at the meeting is by invitation only.

The two day meeting will be held in Baton Rouge, LA on the LSU campus from May 26 – 27, 2010. The end result of the summit will be a written report describing the discussions, detailing recommendations to the RRTs about continued dispersant use based on the information available to date, and identifying protocols needed. The report will include all notes taken by recorders and copies of all presentations made. All of the information will be posted on the CRRC's website.

Presentations will be given during the morning session of Day 1 that will set the stage for the workshop, and will include an overview of the spill response to date; a review of the tradeoff analysis made that resulted in the selection of dispersant use as a response option; an overview of the aerial and subsurface application of dispersants to date; and a review of the laboratory and field data collected thus far.

During the afternoon of Day 1 and the morning of Day 2, participants will divide into four breakout groups to answer specific questions regarding their topic, and ultimately make recommendations about continued dispersant use and possible monitoring protocols. The afternoon of Day 2 will be a plenary session to develop final recommendations for the RRTs. Breakout groups include:

- A. Efficacy and Effectiveness of Aerial and Subsurface Dispersant Application
- B. Physical Transport and Chemical Behavior of Dispersant and Dispersed oil (Subsurface and Aerial Application)
- C. Exposure Pathways and Acute and Chronic Effects to Individuals, Populations, Habitats, and Ecosystem: Commercial Species
- D. Exposure pathways and Acute and Chronic Effects to Individuals, Populations, Habitats, and Ecosystems: Non-Commercial Species