

Summary Notes
The Pacific Oil Spill Prevention Education Team (POSPET)
2008 SPRING MEETING
3/20/2008
Washington Department of Ecology

Attending: Eric Olsson, Washington SeaGrant; Mary Ellen Voss, Washington Department of Ecology; Chris Wilke, Puget Soundkeeper Alliance; Kathy Weed and Jacqui Brown-Miller, Washington Oil Spill Advisory Council; Kurt Torgerson and Harry Ota, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary; Charles Martin, City of Des Moines; Cheryl Maynard, Port of Olympia; Jean Cameron, Pacific States/British Columbia Oil Spill Task Force.

Participating by phone: Steve Russell, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation; Glenn Dolphin, Oregon Marine Board; Mike Richards and Pam Murray, Georgia Strait Alliance; Pete Anderson, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ); Fran Recht, Pacific States Marine Fisheries; and Rob Hughes, California Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR).

Member reports:

- Mike Richards and Pam Murray of the [Georgia Strait Alliance](#) reported that their Green Boating Program has several components: 1) Educational outreach; 2) "Oceans Solutions" focused on establishing pump-out stations in remote areas for sewage and oily bilge water (they're currently negotiating for both federal and provincial funding for this project); 3) the Clean Marina BC project - they're working on their first audit and have 20 more marinas applying. The audit will be done by an independent auditor from Ontario, which will keep the British Columbia program consistent with the Clean Marina program in Quebec; and 4) their bilge pad program for recreational boaters which Pam is helping to coordinate. Their bilge pad packets include a green-boating guide, the *Spills Aren't Slick* brochure, and pads with instructions for use and disposal. These are distributed through marinas and power squadrons, plus at boat shows and yacht club events.
- Rob Hughes, who represents the [California Office of Spill Prevention and Response's](#) information office and does outreach to small-craft refueling docks in California, reported that OSPR's Communications trailer will be used for public outreach. Their spills database captures small spills, so they have data to target their efforts, and plan to focus on Bay Area counties.
- Pete Anderson, [Oregon DEQ](#), explained that he focuses on businesses operating adjacent to the Willamette River; his outreach benefits from the POSPET information and the *Spills Aren't Slick* material.
- Glenn Dolphin of the [Oregon Marine Board](#) reported that Oregon's Clean Marina program is now two and half years old, and has certified 25 marinas, with approximately another 25 on a pledge list. They're starting to conduct annual renewals. He's also planning a recruitment

workshop in Southern Oregon. He distributed approximately 300 spill kits at the Portland Boat Show in January; these included the *Spills Aren't Slick* brochures. Glenn further explained that certified Clean Marinas get the *Spills Aren't Slick* sign as well as an invasive species sign. He's also developing signs on recycling and the Clean Marina program, as well as setting up fish cleaning stations. Certified marinas also get the Clean Marina flag. They also get two newsletters each year. Glenn noted ongoing challenges getting all pledged marinas to follow-through. He also reported that he's updating clean boating guidelines.

- Steve Russell, representing the [Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation Spills Program](#), reported that the majority of their "nuisance" spills occurred in harbors. They have a grant from Conoco Phillips to target Homer and Soldovia with a focus on reducing spills from fishing and recreational boats. The outreach will focus on fish-cleaning stations, spill kits, and tanks for collecting used oils. They hope to take the program statewide eventually; harbor masters in Alaska are supporting the program.
- Chris Wilke, representing the [Puget Soundkeeper Alliance \(PSA\)](#), noted that Washington's Clean Marina program began in 2005 with 13 marinas already certified through the EnviroStars program. There are 32 certified marinas in Washington State now. He also noted that the program is getting good feedback, and marinas are enlisting. Chris reported that - according to Marina Dockage magazine - three of the top four "clean marina states" are on the West Coast - Florida being the only East Coast state in the top ranking. He provided copies of their first-ever newsletter, which has proven to be a good recruitment tool and which gives them a forum to advertise their regional seminars. The first such seminar was scheduled for March 28th in Kennewick, WA; a later seminar was to be held in SW Washington. Chris also reported that Washington State Parks, which runs the state's mandatory boater education program, offers a "boating handbook" that includes information on environmentally sound boating practices. Chris noted that PSA handed out 600 boater kits at the Seattle and Everett boat shows; these kits include a spill prevention pledge, bilge pad, gloves, disposal bag, a boater's guide, and *Spills Aren't Slick* materials. Boaters must complete a brief survey which includes their names/addresses before they get a kit. PSA is also working with Ecology responders and inspectors on boater outreach and education. They plan to do 4-5 clean boating seminars, working through marinas and yacht clubs.
- Mary Ellen Voss of the [Washington Department of Ecology](#) noted that she served on the Steering Committee for the Clean Marine program. Ecology's primary outreach is to the "Class 4" docks. Mary Ellen has been distributing *Spills Aren't Slick* signs throughout the Puget Sound area, to fueling docks, pump-out areas, and boat launches. Ecology has also put an "ad" on the Puget Sound Boaters Guide, a steel/porcelain map, as well as 40,000 related paper maps, which includes the OILS 911 number and *Spills Aren't Slick* information. Mary Ellen is also developing a Clean Boating Tips poster for distribution, and plans to have a booth at the Harbor Safety Committee Conference in Seattle in May.

- Harry Ota, the Marine Safety Officer for the [U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary for District 13](#), explained that D13 covers Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and part of Montana. He noted that the oil spill data for the Puget Sound area indicates a reduction in the volume of spills, but an increase in the number of spills reported. (Steve Russell stated that the same is true in Alaska.) The average Puget Sound spill is about 10 gallons in volume, Harry noted. He noted that the Auxiliary Commodore's priorities include environmental education and outreach through the Sea Partners program. They recently completed a "train the trainers" event for both Sector Seattle and Portland, and another is planned for Coos Bay, Oregon in late April. Sea Partners do outreach at schools and boat shows, and "Officer Snook" is quite popular! The Auxiliary has also provided oil spill response support by staffing phones and escorting media during incidents. In addition, the Auxiliary supports the Citizen's Action Network (CAN), which trains persons who have commanding views of the waterways to be observers and provide them with communications technology. (It was noted that the Department of Ecology and Puget Sound Alliance have similar programs). Harry also teaches an Oil Spill Observer course.
- Kurt Torgerson represents the [U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary for Sector Portland](#), where the Auxiliary provides vessel inspections as well as outreach services to boaters. Kurt works with the outreach program, and provides literature and stickers to boaters at both boat and sportsman shows in the Portland area. He also posts signs at boat launch areas.
- Eric Olsson, who chairs POSPET and represents [Washington's SeaGrant program](#), reported that the course he developed for the University of Alaska Southeast (which provides oil spill prevention, preparedness, and response information for the marina industry) was now available on-line. He provided copies of a brochure promoting the University's career training for ports and marinas; more information on the certificate program is available at: http://www.uas.alaska.edu/sitka/coed/Ports_and_Marinas. Eric continues to do safety programs for both recreational and fishing vessels, and he includes pollution prevention messages. He also promotes pollution prevention through his participation in the Pacific Coast Conference of Harbormasters, which will be meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia in April. Eric is also working with the Department of Ecology on development of state regulations for used fuel tanks. He's also been providing spill response training for shellfish growers in collaboration with Ecology's distribution of response equipment trailers to various areas/groups around the state.
- Jacqui Brown-Miller and Kathy Weed of the [Washington Oil Spill Advisory Council](#) reported that they will be hosting public meetings before each of the Council meetings. The next OSAC meeting will be in April in Vancouver, WA. They hope to share the POSPET materials there. Jacqui also noted that OSAC is participating in the Puget Sound Partnership hearings, which are leading to development of an "action agenda." Eric noted that he had attended a Puget Sound Partnership program in Sequim and was disappointed that there was no mention of oil spills. OSAC wants the agenda to recognize the importance of oil spill issues, ranging

from catastrophic events to small spills. She hopes that POSPET will coordinate with OSAC to bring that message to the Partnership.

- Jean Cameron reported on various [Pacific States/British Columbia Oil Spill Task Force](#) activities, including the Database project, a Green Ports Roundtable to be held in Long Beach, CA in April, her work on the U.S. Coast Guard's Incident Specific Preparedness Review Team for the *Cosco Busan* oil spill, development of planning guidelines for convergent volunteers, a panel she'll be on for the Harbor Safety Committee conference, a stakeholder project focused on U.S./Canadian transboundary spill response, and preparations for upcoming Coordinating Committee meetings. She also noted that the Task Force's 2008 Annual Meeting will be September 18th in Victoria, British Columbia.
- Jon Neel, Senior Policy Analyst with [Ecology's Spills Program](#) joined the POSPET meeting to brief the group on outcomes from Washington's legislative session as well as U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell's bill in Congress. He noted that the Neah Bay rescue tug was funded without a reduction in the Oil Spill Response Account when the Legislature provided \$3.65 million for year-round coverage. The Legislature also provided a temporary fix for the Oil Spill Prevention Account's shortfall, but a permanent new funding source is needed. Regarding Cantwell's bill, it had not been reported out of committee at that point, nor had a similar bill been passed in the House of Representatives.

POSPET Projects

- Web page: Jean reported that she'd added a "POSPET featured program" to the web page in December, using the Puget Soundkeeper Alliance for this first feature. She encouraged POSPET members to send her information and photos so she can feature their programs next. The POSPET webpage is at: <http://www.oilspilltaskforce.org/pospet.htm>.
- OILS 911 usage: Jean reported that a total of 319 calls had been made on the system from July 1, 2007 through February, 2008; 219 of those calls were in California, 79 in British Columbia, eight in Washington, and 13 in Oregon.
- Spills Aren't Slick Campaign: POSPET members shared information on how many signs, brochures, and decals they either had in stock or needed. Jean will survey the full group regarding their 2008 needs in order to determine whether more will need to be printed for the 2008 outreach season.

Input from Marina Operators

Charles Martin, from the City of Des Moines and Cheryl Maynard from the Port of Olympia participated in the meeting and offered the following information:

- Ms. Maynard explained that Olympia has 700 boat slips and more than 70 guest moorage slips. Users are primarily pleasure craft. They also have a boatyard, a boat landing, and a travel lift. Their marina is in the Clean Marina program and has almost attained certification.

- Mr. Martin is the Environmental Coordinator for the City of Des Moines Marina. They have 800 private slips and 40 guest slips, as well as a boatyard and boat launch. They are a certified Clean Marina. The Spills Program is their primary contact point in the Department of Ecology.
- Ms. Maynard reported that the marina staff or security staff are on site at all times, and watch for problems such as sinking boats. They also have an Ecology response trailer on site. Global Salvage trained their team, and Ecology replaces used equipment. She said this program is "wonderful." She also stated that more education for boaters should be the primary goal, and the Port of Olympia is working with the Department of Natural Resources on this. Ms. Maynard explained that their boat lift has been used to help remove derelict vessels, which are then demolished and sent to landfills after scrap metal is recovered and toxic materials are removed.
- Mr. Martin explained that his marina also has staff monitoring the condition of boats on site at all times. They monitor waterlines and check bilges if necessary. They also have a response trailer and keep spill kits dockside for boat owners to access; these include pads, gloves, boom, and instructions. The marina staff also ensures that registrations and insurance are up-to-date for all boats on site.
- A common cause of spills is overfilling the tanks so that fuels spill out of the vents. Apathy is also a problem - many boat operators think "it's just a small spill" and don't take action to clean it up or even report it. Such apathy or negligence means that marina staff must take responsibility to prevent spills and respond when necessary. It was recommended that marina staff be trained in spill prevention and response for that role.
- Ms. Maynard didn't think that the public was using the 1-800-OILS-911 number much. This led to a discussion regarding reporting requirements. State and federal laws require reporting any spill that causes a sheen, but noted that "responders would have to live there" (at any marina with a fuel dock). Maintaining a logbook of spills and targeting repeat offenders were both suggested. They agreed that collars for fuel nozzles are expensive, so recommend using pads as collars. Both operators will dispose of used pads. It was also recommended that the *Spills Aren't Slick* and fueling tips signs be hung directly on the fuel hose so they can't be missed.
- Automatic bilge pumps are the primary source of spills, they noted, more than fueling spills. These tend to be heavier oils; more stress needs to be put on preventive maintenance. Sheens also develop around pilings treated with creosote.
- Mr. Martin noted that his marina accepts contaminated bilge waters for their hazmat recycling. Regarding recycling of used oil, the Port of Olympia has two recycling tanks for marina customers only. The Health Department contracts for removal of both used oil and hazardous wastes. Mr. Martin reported that the used oil and hazmat tanks at the Des Moines marina are kept locked; their primary problem is that other hazardous materials, such as solvents, can contaminate the oil.
- Ms. Maynard concluded that citizens are "getting smarter about their impacts on the environment," so the continuing emphasis should be on education. POSPET members suggested sending clean boating tips out with monthly bills. Mr. Martin mentioned that his

marina sponsors an annual safety fair that includes pollution prevention demonstrations and information.

- Ms. Maynard had to leave at the end of this discussion, but Mr. Martin stayed for the rest of the meeting and agreed to become a POSPET member.

Issues of Concern

- Eric noted that the Boat U.S. website has good information on absorbents. He also noted that the NW Marine Trade Association is interested in working with POSPET.
- He further noted that rain increases spills when it washes oily residues off boats. Mary Ellen suggested that the Washington members initiate a "good housekeeping" campaign for boat owners that would include this concept of "Don't Blame the Rain."
- The need to include pollution prevention messages in boater certification programs was also noted again.

Next Meeting

The fall 2008 POSPET meeting was tentatively scheduled for October 7th.