



## 2021 Annual Meeting

### SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

---

#### **Sara Bacic**

##### **Emergency Planning Analyst, Environmental Emergency Program, British Columbia Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy**

Sara has worked for the Ministry for the past 16 years as a Waste Discharge Authorization Permit Officer, Fees Analyst, Logistics Officer and for the past 5 years as an Emergency Planning Analyst with the Environmental Emergency Program. Sara works with industry, federal, provincial and Indigenous Communities to plan for and coordinate provincial participation in spill exercises. She is also a subject matter expert on the BC Spill Contingency Planning Regulation and works with stakeholders to understand their requirement to hold and maintain a spill contingency plan. Sara is also the BC alternate coordination committee member for the OSTF. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with family, friends and walking her dog.

#### **Carlos Clements**

##### **Program Manager, Washington State Department of Ecology, Spill Prevention, Preparedness & Response Program**

Carlos was appointed Program Manager for the Washington State Department of Ecology, Spill Prevention, Preparedness, and Response Program in August 2021. The Spills Program is a statewide program responsible for activities that include: spill prevention, preparedness, response, and natural resource damage assessment. There are approximately 91 FTEs and 27 after-hours responders located at four regional offices, two field offices, and headquarters, with a two-year budget of about \$45 million. Prior to state service, Carlos was an instructor aviator for the United States Air Force Special Operations Command. He has 5000+ hours on C-130E Hercules/ HC-130 Combat King /MC-130P Combat Shadow aircraft. He is a certified Combat Search and Rescue Instructor for downed aircrew and personnel. Later Carlos became a Crisis Response Team Chief which represented the Department of Defense's 911 response to Global emergencies. He assembled and led a 40 person multi-million dollar package to both assist and bring aid around the world often in austere environments. Carlos was born in Colorado Springs, Co. but grew up in Tennessee and now lives in Lacey, with his wife Jennifer. They have two children. Carlos has a degree in Political Science with a minor in Psychology from Austin Peay State University in Tennessee. He enjoys spending time outdoors, fishing, hiking, and grilling with friends and family. He loves video games and is an avid gamer. Carlos places importance on establishing and maintaining good stakeholder relationships, and a high priority on partnerships to protect the environment. He believes if we hold our regulated community to a high standard, we need to hold ourselves to that same standard. Accountability and performance are essential to our shared success.



## 2021 Annual Meeting

### **Lena Collins, Marine and Shipping Technical Coordinator, Wuikinuxv First Nation**

Lena has previously held the role of Marine Use Planning Coordinator for the Wuikinuxv Band Stewardship Office and been part of the Indigenous Coastal Guardian Watchmen stewardship program. Lena lives in the Traditional Territories of the Wuikinuxv Nation, encompassing Rivers Inlet and Owikeno Lake on BC's Central Coast. The Wuikinuxv Nation has existed here since time immemorial and are dependent upon the important cultural and ecological resources that are critical to the health and well-being of the Wuikinuxv people. In her role, Lena has first-hand experience of the impact that oil spills have on these important resources and is pleased to share her experiences in providing response preparedness and capability for the Wuikinuxv community.

### **Thomas Cullen**

#### **Administrator, Office of Spill Prevention & Response, California Department of Fish and Wildlife**

Thomas Cullen was appointed by Governor Jerry Brown as the Administrator of the California Office of Spill Prevention & Response (OSPR) in June 2012. Captain Cullen directs a team of scientists, environmental specialists, game wardens, and support personnel in protecting and preserving 3,427 miles of shoreline and 7,734 square miles of State waters from oil and other deleterious substances. In 2014, Administrator Cullen oversaw the statutory expansion of his office's jurisdiction and responsibilities to protect all state surface waters from the effects of oil spills, not just the waters in the marine zone. This was the largest growth in the 24-year history of OSPR and has further cemented its place as one of the nation's most progressive and effective oil spill programs.

Prior to his appointment, Captain Cullen served in the United States Coast Guard for 31 years. From 2008 to 2010 he served as Deputy Commander of Coast Guard Sector San Francisco, CA, where he performed a wide-range of federal authorities in the San Francisco Bay region including Captain of the Port, Federal Maritime Security Coordinator, Federal On-Scene Coordinator, Officer-in-Charge of Maritime Inspections, and Search & Rescue Mission Coordinator in our nation's busiest and most diverse coastal region. He led 775 active duty, reserve & civilian personnel in protecting a strategic multi-port complex with the U.S.'s 4th largest container port, 9 other commercial ports, and 6 major refineries. Captain Cullen received a Bachelor of Science in Ocean Engineering from the Coast Guard Academy and a Master of Science in Industrial Administration from Purdue University. A native of West Hartford, Connecticut, and currently living in Novato California, Administrator Cullen is married to the former Mary Marmaud of St. Petersburg, Florida, and are the proud parents of five children and two granddaughters.



## 2021 Annual Meeting

### **Steve Diggon, Regional Marine Planning/Implementation Program Manager, Coastal First Nations - Great Bear Initiative**

Steve is the Regional Marine Planning/Implementation Program Manager for Coastal First Nations-Great Bear Initiative in British Columbia, Canada. Steve holds a Master's of Science degree in International Rural Planning and Development and a Bachelor of Environmental Studies and Resource Management with a particular focus on ecosystem-based management in coastal and marine environments. He has worked for over ten years on marine spatial planning and ocean issues in British Columbia. He has focused on technical aspects of marine spatial planning, marine protected areas, policy development, marine incident preparedness- planning and response, Indigenous governance, and building local capacity. He lives with his family in the Gulf Islands of British Columbia and enjoys kiteboarding, sailing and other outdoor pursuits.

### **Lydia Emer**

#### **Administrator for Land Quality, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality**

Lydia Emer is the Administrator for Land Quality programs with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. She has served as an administrator since 2014. The division focuses on leadership and direction for coordinated short and long range planning for programs and services provided by Cleanup and Emergency Response, Materials Management, and Hazardous Waste and Tanks to support our DEQ's mission to be a leader in restoring, maintaining and enhancing the quality of Oregon's air, land and water. Prior to finding a home in environmental quality programs, Lydia performed various roles over 14 years with the Oregon Public Health Division. Her primary focuses were on agency-wide performance improvement and accreditation, and leading efforts to reduce the incidence of vaccine-preventable disease in Oregon. Lydia received a M.S. in Public Administration and Development from the University of Birmingham (2009), United Kingdom.

### **Michael Greenburg**

#### **Acting Emergency Response Program Lead, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality**

Michael Greenburg is the acting program lead for DEQ's Emergency Response Program and the State On-Scene coordinator for DEQ's Northwest Region. Master's Degree in Environmental Science. 28 years of experience in emergency response and environmental cleanup.



## 2021 Annual Meeting

### **Kathleen Ho**

#### **Deputy Director for Environmental Health, Hawaii Department of Health**

Kathleen Ho is the deputy director, Environmental Health Administration at DOH, effective July 1, 2021. Ho has served as deputy attorney general of the Health Division, Department of the Attorney General since 1992. She earned her J.D. from the University of California Hastings College of Law in San Francisco, her LL.M in environmental law from Lewis and Clark Law School in Oregon, and a B.S. in Biology from the University of San Francisco.

### **Nhi Irwin**

#### **Statewide Resources Section Manager, Washington Department of Ecology**

Nhi Irwin has been with Washington State Department of Ecology for 14 years and has been involved in the development of legislation, rule writing and implementation of many of the oil spill regulations in Washington State. She is involved in local, state and cross border issues as a member of the Northwest Area Committee and Pacific States/British Columbia Oil Spill Task Force. Nhi currently supervises areas of work in enforcement, investigations, research and data management, performance measurement and training. Nhi's education background includes degrees in political science and economics.

### **Kelli Kryzanowski**

#### **Preparedness for the Environmental Emergency Program Manager, British Columbia Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy**

Kelli has been working in emergency management for almost 30 years and greatly enjoys this fast-paced, dynamic and exciting field that continually offers new challenges and opportunities. She started in emergency management at the ground level, literally, as a BC Ministry of Forests Forest Fire Fighter in the early '90s and spent 5 summers in the field. After completing her Master of Arts, Kelli worked for the Canadian Red Cross in the international humanitarian issues and disaster management portfolios with a specific focus on international humanitarian law. She spent 12 years working at Emergency Management British Columbia with career highlights including leading the Tsunami Integrated Preparedness Project, developing the community disaster recovery/resilience centre concept, was lead planner for the development and implementation of the Integrated Response and Recovery Deployment Teams (iRRAD) and led the development of the BC Earthquake Immediate Response Plan. Kelli has also worked for the BC Ministry of Health as Director of the Emergency Management Unit. She is currently the Manager of Preparedness for the Environmental Emergency Program, with the BC Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy.



## 2021 Annual Meeting

### **Tiffany Larson**

#### **Director of Spill Prevention and Response, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation**

Tiffany Larson has been with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation for more than 15 years, with a diverse background in the Clean Air Act, Spill Prevention & Response, and the Clean Water Act. Tiffany was appointed in Director for the Division of Spill Prevention & Response in March 2021. Mrs. Larson directs a team of administrative staff, contingency plan reviewers, spill responders, technical experts, and contaminated sites professionals. Tiffany has spent much of her life in Alaska and Fairbanks has been her home for 22 years.

### **Laurel Nash**

#### **Assistant Deputy Minister, British Columbia Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy**

Laurel has worked for the BC provincial government, in the Natural Resources Sector, for over 25 years, including roles in BC Parks, the Ministries of Forests, Energy Mines and Petroleum Resources, Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation and most recently Environment and Climate Change Strategy. She has held senior leadership and statutory roles such roles as the Director of Petroleum Lands and the Chief Gold Commissioner and Chief Negotiator. Laurel has been an Assistant Deputy Minister since 2014, first in the Strategic Initiatives Division of the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, and currently as Assistant Deputy Minister of the Environmental Protection Division of Environment and Climate Change Strategy. Laurel brings strong leadership, innovation and collaboration to this role and looks forward to working with all levels of government, Indigenous Nations, industry and other partners to find opportunities to improve our stewardship in the province. Laurel grew up in in the Northwest Territories, before coming to B.C., where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Geography from the University of Victoria. She currently lives in Victoria with her husband and two children.

### **Wes Risher**

#### **Emergency Response Manager, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality**

Wes Risher is the Emergency Response Manager with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. Prior to joining the Land Quality Division, Wes worked for 30 years in DEQ's Air Quality program. During this same time Wes maintained a parallel career in the Oregon Air National Guard and United State Air Force, serving state and nation, as a Communications Officer. In September of 2020, following the completion of his third Middle East deployment, Wes retired from the USAF and the Oregon Air National Guard with 30 years of service. To pursue a management position Wes transitioned to the Land Quality Division last December enabling him to apply his National Guard experience to his civilian employer's emergency response program. Wes earned a Masters of Public Administration and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Drake University.