



## JTMD (Japan Tsunami Marine Debris) Task Force 10:00 am – 12:00 pm on Thursday, November 14, 2013

Chairman Dave Stuckey (Director, Office of Emergency Management) called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

Introduction of attendees, in alphabetical order (\*participating via phone):

- Art Ayre, Oregon Department of Administrative Services
- Tom Banse, Oregon Public Broadcasting\*
- Nir Barnea, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
- Nick Batz, on behalf of Congressman DeFazio's office
- Rick Boatner, Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife
- Stephen Bomar, Oregon Military Department
- John Borden, Legislative Fiscal Office
- Scott Brewan, Oregon State Marine Board
- Sam Chan, Oregon State University
- John Chapman, Oregon State University
- Cherie Cline, Office of Emergency Management
- Rob Davis, Oregonian
- Dave Ferre, Oregon Military Department
- Gus Gates, Surfrider Foundation
- Katie Gauthier, on behalf of Senator Merkley's office
- Gabriela Goldfarb, Governor's Policy Advisor, Natural Resources
- Fritz Graham, on behalf of Senator Wyden's Office
- Mike Harryman, Oregon Health Authority
- Chris Havel, Oregon Parks & Recreation Department
- Joy Irby, SOLVE
- Meg Kenagy, Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife
- Jennifer Lam, Oregon State University, Oregon Sea Grant

- Chuck Leonard, Oregon Department of Agriculture
- Kim Lippert, Office of Emergency Management
- Tracy Loew, Statesman Journal
- Matt Marheine, Office of Emergency Management
- Ashley Massey, Oregon State Marine Board
- Sean McCormick , Office of Emergency Management
- Megan McKibben, on behalf of Congressman Schrader's office
- Tracy Miller, Office of Emergency Management
- Geoff Ostrove, Oregon State University, Oregon Sea Grant
- Dean Perez, Clatsop County Emergency Management
- Charlie Plybon, Surfrider Foundation
- John Prigmore, Oregon Military Department
- Ryan Scholz, Oregon Department of Agriculture
- Debbie Stratman, Oregon Military Department
- Dave Stuckey, Office of Emergency Management
- Terry Thompson, Lincoln County Commissioner
- Laura Todd, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- Laurie Van Leuven, Office of Emergency Management
- Susan Wickstrom, Oregon Health Authority
- Mike Zollitsch, Department of Environmental Quality

## **RECAP – OPERATIONS BY AGENCY:**

1. Oregon Parks & Recreation Department – Chris Havel (*See PowerPoint*)  
*Other points shared/discussed:*

- Most debris collected during organized cleanups.
- Concerns expressed regarding Styrofoam flecks possibly being ingested by small birds, illustrates increased awareness of challenges created by marine debris.
- Another POC for cleanup supplies is Shirley Stense, Coastal Manager out of Newport.
- Reports are usually for items suspected to be hazardous – respond to reports of plastic barrels, propane tanks and biological sightings.
- Plastics have been described as an oil spill, that's just solid – more of a problem because of their ability to resist degradation.

- Microplastics are plastics too small to be seen.
- The news coverage regarding an island of debris the size of Texas was a misunderstanding.
- RE: concerns about radiation – radioactive debris/contamination, very unlikely.
  - Charlie Plybon thanked OHA for the messaging regarding the publication of radioactive testing results, also suggested that OPRD should publish the results of cleanup responses.
  - John Chapman commented on challenges with answering questions RE: invasive species, because of not always having access to samples.
  - Chris Havel agreed, if that's a problem, it needs to be fixed.

2. Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife – Rick Boatner

*Other points shared/discussed:*

- Samples of biologicals (potential invasive species) - sent to John Chapman.
- Currently a very slow season.
- Commit to sharing information with OPRD.

3. Oregon State University – John Chapman (Scientist, Hatfield Marine Science Center) and Terry Thompson (Lincoln County Commissioner) - *(See PowerPoint Slides)*

*Other points shared/discussed:*

- Terry discussed details related to their joint trip to Japan:
- Explained dock differences in Misawa compared to Oregon.
- Japan boats are shallow – 4 feet deep vs. 20 feet average depth in OR.
- Japan seawalls are made of concrete – Oregon's are made of rocks.
- Need to determine how to prioritize insurance claims for the boats and recover/repair infrastructure after a disaster – otherwise, the coastal economy is seriously impacted.
- Japanese people think Americans are mad at them, but John and Terry reminded them that wasn't the case, that we want to help.

- Tension exists between Japan and China over marine debris – they don't have the public involvement that we do.
- Everywhere in Japan (even on boats) are Styrofoam storage boxes.
- Everything inside the buildings in Misawa was washed away.

*Please note: Due to technical difficulties, this presentation was interrupted; a five minute break was taken before the JTMD Task Force meeting was resumed. Some agenda items were taken out of order before the technical difficulty was repaired; however, for purposes of consistency with these meeting notes, John Chapman's points shared/discussed are stated below:*

- Specializing in invasion ecology - the first presumption was that it wouldn't be an issue, which was wrong.
- 165+ species from Japan/Asia have now been recorded in Oregon.
- 30% of these species have never been seen in Oregon before now.
- Remains hopeful that a method or mechanism will be developed to fund staffing for the collection and sharing of data in a coordinated way.
- Invasive species is a problem – not a disaster.
- More fully explained the research purposes of the joint trip to Japan.
- Nir Barnea inquired if floating marine debris has been an issue for a long time.
  - John Chapman explained that it wasn't seen as prevalent until the tsunami. John further explained that a true risk assessment can't be measured without more data, but it doesn't seem to be an ecological disaster yet.

4. National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration – Nir Barnea (*See PowerPoint*) – *Other points shared/discussed:*

- NOAA set up a blog to provide information and counteract the 'Toxic Monster' report, which was very misleading.
- Two docks are still missing/floating somewhere.
  - Dock removal in Oregon – cost \$85,000
  - Dock in Washington was more expensive to move, since it landed in a more remote, isolated area.

- Oregon is doing a fantastic job of addressing the marine debris.
  - Recommends review of NOAA's Marine Debris Clearinghouse webpage – for listing of eligible projects – to research and/or to request funding.
- Gabriela Goldfarb inquired about current trends and rates of reports for JTMD.
  - Nir Barnea confirmed that the rate of reports has diminished; most of the reports were in 2012. The occasional reports now are mostly from fishing vessels.
- Dave Stuckey inquired about the timing of marine debris landing on shorelines.
  - Nir Barnea explained that summer is a lighter season. October through May is when storms with westerly wind components bring more marine debris on shore.

5. NGO Update – Gus Gates, Oregon Marine Debris Team (representing 5 groups: Surfrider Foundation, Washed Ashore, SOLVE, Sea Grant Oregon and Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition) -- (*See PowerPoint Slides*)

*Other points shared/discussed:*

- Worked closely with Cyndi Burnes RE: Rapid Response Cleanups
  - Dealt with approx. 40 – in the last 6 months
- Partnered with Pacific States Grange Fisheries Commission – for additional debris bag distribution – from Astoria to Brookings (for private access beaches)
- Willing to provide training for shoreline monitoring
  - Application deadline = December 1, 2013
- Full scope of the issue – all the general marine debris, not just JTMD
  - Challenges with fishing equipment/debris washing ashore from recent sunken boat incident (difficulty with contacting the captain of that ship) – 3,000+ volunteer hours to cleanup

- Sam Chen commented on Japan's challenges in trying to determine what to do with all the derelict fishing gear; Charlie Plybon mentioned that some of it can be recycled.
- Dave Stuckey discussed the development of Oregon's Resilience Plan Implementation Task Force, which was created through the passage of SB 33 during the 2013 Legislative Session, and encouraged review of the Plan (created by OSSPAC), posted on OEM's website. Dave asked attendees to consider joining; Scott Ashford of Oregon State University is Chair and Jeff Rubin of Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue is Vice-Chair of this new task force. *(For more detailed information, See below link:)*  
<http://www.oregon.gov/OMD/OEM/Pages/Resilience-Taskforce.aspx>

6. Senator Jeff Merkley's Office – Katie Gauthier

- Marine Debris Emergency Management Bills were introduced in the House and the Senate at the end of August; neither bill has moved yet.

7. Governor Kitzhaber's Office – Gabriela Goldfarb, Natural Resources Advisor

- Acknowledged continuing collaborative efforts of the JTMD Task Force.
  - Commitments/accomplishments appreciated – great systems in place; will evaluate how frequent future meetings of the JTMD Task Force will need to occur.
- Emphasized the importance of the Oregon Resilience Plan – encourage review of the report/executive summary.
- Commented on West Coast Governor's Alliance on Public Health – working on efforts to coordinate data collection and sharing.

**NEXT STEPS FOR JTMD TASK FORCE:**

1. Closing Comments – Dave Stuckey, Chair

- **Capturing Issues:** Will continue to be responsive to coordination efforts and capture lessons learned; not exactly an AAR, but documentation prior to reconvening the next JTMD task force meeting.
  - Monitoring of radiation levels will continue to be reported back out publicly to increase transparency.

- Improve access/systems to survey debris for invasive species. Need well-coordinated systems to take advantage of the unique opportunities presented to understand invasions of species.
- More fully develop plans and alternate protocols for notification systems and responsibilities for cleanup when fishing vessels are involved.

## 2. Additional Question/Answer/Roundtable Discussions

- Terry Thompson inquired regarding the gift funds from Japan that are to be distributed through NOAA.
  - Megan McKibben provided a quick recap/outline of the breakdown for the \$5 million gift amount distributions.
    - Approx. \$2.2 million were obligated>
      - \$250,000 each to AK, WA, OR and HI
      - \$750,000 to Alaska
      - \$478,000 to remove the WA Dock
    - Approx. \$350,000 are committed:
      - \$250,000 for California
      - \$50,000 each to Guam and CNMI
    - Balance remaining for future removals, as needed: \$2,422,000
  - Gabriela Goldfarb explained that the obligated amount is a fund that can be tapped for eligible expenses and stressed the purpose and intent to keep the fund as a reserve for large expense events; each State has negotiated eligible expenses.
  - Chris Havel confirmed that 3 state agencies (OPRD, OFWD and DEQ) meet to validate, before requests are presented to OEM.

Dave Stuckey thanked everyone and expressed appreciation for participation with the JTMD Task Force Meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:14 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Cherie Cline

Executive Assistant

OEM Director's Office