



Chesapeake Bay Program
SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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Mr. J. Edward & Mr. R. Wood
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Dear Jim and Rob:

The recent oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico and its unknown impact upon the Gulf's ecosystem prompted concern in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed that a similar event could disrupt the Bay's fragile ecosystem. Following the initial Deep Water Horizon spill, through your comments at the last STAC meeting, we in the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) were preparing a series of recommendations and facts that you might use to respond to queries posed to you and your staff on what potential impacts leaking oil from the Gulf might have on the Chesapeake Bay. With the Gulf Oil Spill now contained, there is no longer a need to address this initial question. However, STAC feels it is important that the Chesapeake Bay Program has an understanding of the resources available for monitoring the Bay's ecosystem in the event of a future oil spill or other disaster.

Chesapeake Bay Program partners, led by the Chesapeake Research Consortium, met in 2007 to compile a list of resources that could be mobilized in the watershed in the event of a disaster. This meeting resulted in the publication of a disaster response document listing contacts available for emergency response, monitoring and research, and communications. The draft report and its appendixes are attached. While this list provides a foundation for watershed-wide response, Ms. Katie Foreman detailed at the CBP from UMCES, has updated basin-wide monitoring capacities with substantially more resources potentially available for use in a regional emergency. The 2007 list provides capacities with agencies and contacts agreeing to participate in a regional event; Ms. Foreman's new list represents programs whose representatives would need to agree to participate. Please see Appendix A from the attached "Monitoring Needs and Partnership Opportunities Assessment" to view this new list. Hence, the Chesapeake Bay Program should consider expanding the 2007 partners with the programs recently identified, perhaps through a regional workshop where representatives of all identified programs could re-engage and decide on participation in a basin-wide response capability.

In addition to this list of contacts, there are several other formal programs in place for possible cooperation and integration. The State of Maryland now has an oil spill response team headed up by Mr. Allen Williams. Mr. Williams can be contacted at 410-537-3994. The State of Virginia also has response capabilities. For information regarding Virginia's oil spill response capabilities, you can contact Mr. Shawn Weimer at 804-698-4307. Petroleum hydrocarbons, now of high concern from the recent Gulf

experience as well as the earlier decisions to open the mid-Atlantic to offshore drilling, are also to be included; water column sampling and funding mechanisms for fish tissue and sediment PAH monitoring are being explored. Detailing the precise mechanisms for fiscal distributions to mobilize some of these capacities during major 'events' should be another high priority for the CBP. All of these efforts are now under the Chesapeake Bay Program Monitoring Coordinator, Dr. Peter Tango, who was instrumental in crafting the 2007 disaster response document with CRC and the contributors to that 2007 effort and has been identified by Mr. R. Batiuk as the coordinator for emergency monitoring mobilization.

In conclusion, the CBP and region is fairly well prepared for any future major events that might impact the waters and living resources of the basin. An existing response capacity is in place for most of the region, a coordinator on-board for assuming implementation of any needed response, and possible additional monitoring programs have been identified that could be brought into the regional event response capacity should they be needed.

STAC is pleased to provide this overview and could assist you and the CBP in exploring the additional capacities should your staff examine the list of response partners and find specific areas lacking. We look forward to your response.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Denice H. Wardrop".

Denice H. Wardrop
STAC Chair