

NTHMP COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING -- September 16, 2014

1. Call to order – Aimee Devaris called the meeting to order at 3:01pm ET
2. Roll call – Rocky Lopes

NOAA

Mr. Mike Angove, Tsunami Program Manager, NWS HQ, Silver Spring, MD
Ms. Aimee Devaris, NTHMP Chair & Director, NWS Alaska Region, Anchorage, AK
Mr. Lewis Kozlosky, Tsunami Program, NWS HQ, Silver Spring, MD
Dr. Rocky Lopes, Tsunami Program Deputy Mgr., NWS HQ, Silver Spring, MD
Ms. Christa Rabenold (observer), Tsunami Program, NWS HQ, Silver Spring, MD
Dr. Vasily Titov, Pacific Marine Environmental Lab, Seattle, WA

FEMA

Ms. Tamra Biasco, FEMA Region 10, Lynwood, WA

USGS

Ms. Stephanie Ross, USGS Menlo Park, CA
Dr. Nate Wood, USGS, Portland, OR

Alaska

Mr. Erv Petty, Alaska Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

American Samoa

No representatives

California

Mr. Rick Wilson, California Geological Survey

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Mr. Juan Camacho, Emergency Management, CNMI

East Coast States

Mr. Ed Fratto, Northeast States Emergency Consortium
Dr. Jim Kirby, University of Delaware

Guam

Ms. Pilar Carbullido, Guam DHS

Gulf Coast States

Ms. Amy Godsey, Florida Emergency Management

Hawaii

Mr. Kevin Richards, Hawaii Civil Defense

Oregon

Mr. George Priest, Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries

Puerto Rico

No appointed representatives

U.S. Virgin Islands

Mr. Roy Watlington, USVI Science Representative

Washington

Mr. John Schelling, Washington Emergency Management
Dr. Tim Walsh, Washington Dept. of Natural Resources

3. [INFO] Selection of NTHMP annual meeting venue and meeting dates

Aimee Devaris confirmed that the NTHMP annual meeting will be in Portland, Oregon, February 9 – 13, 2015. She thanked the members for their input during the summer meeting and acknowledged that Rocky did a complete cost estimate for six suggested venues. The location in Portland provided the best choice considering cost, accessibility, and availability of free meeting space. Devaris thanked George Priest of Oregon DOGAMI for his help in securing the meeting space in the Oregon State Office Building.

Rocky pointed out the annual meeting page on the NTHMP website:
<http://nws.weather.gov/nthmp/2015annualmeeting/index.html>

Note: we must balance occupancy of two hotels, both walkable to the meeting site. Please register for the meeting and Rocky will reply with a hotel to book your room reservations and other logistic information.

4. TWERA Update

Mike Angove reported that TWERA (HR5309) passed the House of Representatives on September 9. Congress is not in session until after the elections on November 4. We do not expect action by the Senate during the lame duck session, so soonest action expected will not be the 114th Congress is convened in January.

George Priest: Does the amount of money indicated in TWERA represent an increase over previous year support?

Angove: Possibly, but we are unsure.

Priest: The amount of NTHMP support directly affects how we plan for our proposals for the next year.

Angove: I understand. Remember as it stands right now, the President's FY15 budget still doesn't include any funding for NTHMP.

Tim Walsh: We will go into a continuing resolution situation. The House appropriation includes significant funding for NTHMP grants.

Angove: Agreed on the CR situation, which will affect how/when/if we can offer NTHMP grants. There remain many unknowns. Once full Congress passes a budget bill (full appropriation), then we will have a better idea.

Lopes: We plan to follow the usual NTHMP grant cycle when it comes to developing project narratives, budget narratives, and supporting documentation. The Grant Guidance will be released in October, with first draft documents due in early January. We will review them together during the NTHMP Annual Meeting like we did last year. Then we will put them through the formal grant review process in March and present recommendations to the NTHMP Chair for approval in April. When approval is given by NWS Management to offer NTHMP grants, the hard work will already have been done. All grantees will need to do is upload the pre-reviewed and approved documents into Grants.gov.

5. [DISCUSSION] Offshore maritime depth recommendation – Rick Wilson

Wilson described the offshore maritime depth recommendation as presented at the summer meeting which was 30 fathoms for distant tsunamis, 100 for near-source tsunamis. He stated that a number of states still want to evaluate the offshore depth recommendation and said that he did not think that we're ready now to vote

He asked that states and territories still evaluating to plan to report at the NTHMP annual meeting.

Wilson also stated that we need to get input from the Navy and Coast Guard.

A work group will convene to develop a plan for the timing of data coming forward for an official national recommendation. Discuss it at the annual meeting and request a vote at that time.

Whitmore: I can understand why everyone would want to look at their own areas, but it would be very beneficial to have one number for the whole coast. Encourage to frame this for the recommended depth nationally for what to use.

Wilson: Agreed. Unless there was some compelling reason to have a variance, everyone should be the same.

Walsh: Agreed. Issue in Washington is not that 30 fathoms isn't the right number, but 30 fathoms is not available where they have boats afloat, such as state ferries.

Priest: Recommendation should really be for only open coastal sites, but not for inland waterways like the Puget Sound.

Kirby: Those numbers are problematic for the East Coast.

Devaris: Do you have enough people to represent the input you need?

Wilson: Work group participants who volunteered -- Priest, VonHillebrandt, Richards, Miller, Petty, Walsh, Wilson, Watlington, Titov

Titov: Is there material available to distribute to the work group before the meeting?

Wilson: Will set up a basecamp site to deposit the information.

Schelling: Caveat for inland waters – it will beg the question about what to do about inland waterways. We must continue to pursue development of guidance for inland areas.

Priest: Agreed – same in Oregon.

Wilson: Any suggestions on CG or USN representatives? (See item 8 below)

6. [ACTION] National Tsunami Education Plan – Christa Rabenold

Rabenold: The plan was included as an attachment on an email from Rocky Lopes sent on September 10. We offer it for acceptance by the Coordinating Committee as the MES has reviewed it and participated during its development.

Devaris: Does anyone have any questions?

Whitmore: Reviewed it. The actions look good.

Devaris: Called for acceptance by acclamation.

Without objection, the Coordinating Committee accepted the revised National Tsunami Education Plan.

7. [DISCUSSION] Consider invitation for USCG/US Navy representatives to participate on the NTHMP in some way – Mike Angove

Angove: How should we formalize the relationship with DOD and DHS to reach USN & USCG? It may not be appropriate for them to be involved at CC level as their role is advisory.

Whitmore: Navy is a member of WCS. (JWC)

Angove: Is level of Navy participation sufficient?

Whitmore: Yes, but they should be included in emails from other subcommittees.

Angove: Will try to solicit participation by USCG in the MMS. He knows who to talk to and will put together a request.

Wilson: Wants a name for USCG rep for the work group described above (item 6)

Devaris: Draft a letter for her signature and will send it as the NTHMP Chair.

8. [INFO] NTHMP Grants - Lewis Kozlosky

The FY09 – 12 grants ended 7/31/2014. We have received most semi-annual progress reports; 3 are delinquent. The NTHMP Co-Chairs comprise the committee to review the progress reports. Those we have received will be sent shortly.

Final reports closeout in process, due October 30. Rocky reported that a closeout reporting template is in process and will be sent soon.

9. [INFO] NTHMP Return on (grant) Investment Project Update – Rocky Lopes

Lopes: A work group met by phone on September 9. An outline for the overall report was developed. Input from each of the subcommittees is expected to be written by them.

State/territory/commonwealth and university partners will be asked questions to develop qualitative information that can be inserted in the report that will describe the impact of the NTHMP grants. Lopes will send these questions to grantees within a week and hopes to have initial replies by early October.

The work group will meet again by phone on September 30 to move forward with developing the comprehensive report.

Devaris: Spoke with Dr. Sullivan (NOAA Administrator) during a visit to Alaska. Also spoke with Dr. Uccellini (Director, NWS) about the NTHMP. She is doing what she can to talk about the successes of the NTHMP and work done by individual states through the NTHMP and successful interaction and coordination done in this way. An RoI report will be very effective.

10. [INFO] TsunamiReady Guidelines update – Rocky Lopes

Lopes described what was done with the Guidelines since the summer meeting. He worked closely with Troy Nicolini (WCM, Eureka) to revise and reorganize the proposed TsunamiReady Guidelines based on discussions during the TR Workshop at the meeting and comments received from many reviewers in advance.

Lopes needs to review them with Mike Angove, and then he will post the next version of the proposed TR Guidelines on the NTHMP website and ask people to review and comment on them. He assured everyone that their thoughts, ideas, concerns, and questions were thoughtfully considered and addressed in the forthcoming revisions. He thanked everyone for their help.

Devaris: It was an effective discussion of the proposed TR Guidelines at the summer meeting. It is a difficult process to adjudicate all of the comments. She thanked Lopes and Nicolini for their work.

11. WCS update – NOAA Social Science study for TWC messages – Paul Whitmore

Whitmore: Example NTWC messages have been created using both recommendations from the Social Science review of TWC messages and from the Complex Coast Team based on a meeting of WCS co-chairs in August. These examples are being reviewed by WCS co-chairs and, once complete, will be forwarded to the WCS for review and comment.

Handbooks and scenarios for the National Exercises on March 25, 2015 are nearing completion. Three exercises will be conducted based on the following scenarios:

- Magnitude 8.6 earthquake and tsunami in Kamchatka (US/Canada Pacific)
- Magnitude 8.5 earthquake and tsunami in Panama (Caribbean)
- Slump generated tsunami off the coast of Florida (US/Canada Atlantic with potential Caribbean impact)

Whitmore asked Kevin Richards -- will Hawaii be playing in a March 25 exercise?

Richards: Tentatively, yes.

Whitmore: then we will need to include PTWC messages.

12. Old Business

none

13. New Business

Priest: Oregon has produced state-sanctioned evacuation maps. Private groups are taking pieces of these products and producing new products with them, some of which have no scale or no directional orientation. Has anyone else had this happen to them?

Schelling: Has encountered similar things. How much time and effort do we want to dedicate to police this?

The issue of consistency is an issue. If it is difficult to obtain the products, then some may say, "thanks, but then we will do our own products."

Priest: School district in Newport OR did a great job with some of their products, so it works both ways.

Angove: Consistency with baseline and analysis is important. The information is in the public domain. We have responsibility to deliver across consistent parameters.

Schelling: Having a benchmark available is important. At the end of the day, it is good that people are using the information that is there.

Priest: For evacuation maps – should we provide minimum suggested rules for use?

Wilson: Steering committee in CA offers to review any tsunami products that go out. Encountered a group in San Diego that was about to produce a product, but got involved before printing and improved the product.

Devaris: Can this be taken up by MES?

Schelling: We have this in the MES work plan. We need to do a course check on existing usage guidelines.

Other new business

Rabenold: The Smithsonian is producing a documentary about 10th anniversary of the Indian Ocean tsunami. Has anyone been approached by them to be interviewed or filmed?

Whitmore: They are not coming to Alaska, but they are going to Hawaii. They have contacted PTWC.

Priest: Has been contacted in Portland.

Other new business not mentioned but requested to be included:

Nate Wood has developed "Pedestrian Evacuation Analyst" for tsunami. It is described here: http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article_pf.asp?ID=4002

And directly available here:

<http://geography.wr.usgs.gov/science/vulnerability/tools.html>

14. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 4:02pm ET.

Respectfully submitted,

Rocky Lopes
NTHMP Administrator

Approved by NTHMP Chair Aimee Devaris September 17, 2014.