

NTHMP COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING -- March 17, 2015
Via Conference Call

1. Call to order – NTHMP Chair Aimee Devaris called the meeting to order at 3:01pm EDST.

2. Roll call

NOAA

Ms. Aimee Devaris, NWS Alaska Region Director, Anchorage, AK
Ms. Marie Eblé*, Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory, Seattle, WA
Dr. Laura Kong*, International Tsunami Information Center, Honolulu, HI
Mr. Lewis Kozlosky*, Tsunami Program, NWS HQ, Silver Spring, MD
Dr. Rocky Lopes*, NTHMP Administrator, NWS HQ, Silver Spring, MD
Ms. Christa Rabenold*, Tsunami Program, NWS HQ, Silver Spring, MD
Dr. Vasily Titov, Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory, Seattle, WA
Mr. Paul Whitmore, NWS National Tsunami Warning Center, Palmer, AK

FEMA

Ms. Tamra Biasco, FEMA Region 10, Lynwood, WA
Mr. Mike Mahoney, FEMA Headquarters, Washington, DC

USGS

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

Alaska

Mr. Erv Petty, Alaska Department of Homeland Security & Emer. Mgmt, Anchorage, AK
Dr. Dmitry Nicolsky, University of Alaska at Fairbanks, Fairbanks, AK

American Samoa

Mr. Vinnie Atofau American Samoa Dept. of Homeland Security, Pago Pago, AS

California

Mr. Kevin Miller, California Office of Emergency Services, San Francisco, CA
Mr. Rick Wilson, California Geological Survey, Sacramento, CA

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

No representatives

East Coast States

Mr. Ed Fratto, Northeastern Emergency Services Consortium, Boston, MA
Dr. Jim Kirby, University of Delaware, Newark, DE

Guam

No representatives

Gulf Coast States

Dr. Juan Horillo, Texas A&M University at Galveston, Galveston, TX.

Hawaii

No representatives

Oregon

Dr. George Priest, Oregon Department of Geology & Mineral Industries, Newport, OR

Puerto Rico

No representatives

U.S. Virgin Islands

No representatives

Washington

Mr. Tim Walsh, Washington Division of Natural Resources, Olympia, WA
Ms. Brynne' Walker*, Washington State Emergency Management, Camp Murray, WA

*Non-voting; ex-officio or guest

3. Minutes of Coordinating Committee meeting of February 13, 2015
Call for approval: Aimee Devaris

Rick Wilson offered these changes to the February 13, 2015 minutes:

Addition, page 8: "Wilson: What action do we take now? Is the formation of a small work group possible? This work group could help coordinate NTHMP-related media outreach as well as help Mike Angove and the NOAA Tsunami Program with NTHMP messaging in Washington and with NOAA."

Correction, page 9: "Wilson: If membership or attendance in the TRAC is not viable, then would appreciate the opportunity to at least review and comment on existing and planned test-bed projects, and work with the Warning Centers/Tsunami Program to develop, recommend, and possibly conduct future test-bed projects."

Devaris: called for acceptance. Minutes as amended were approved unanimously.

4. FY15 NTHMP Grants, status

Rocky Lopes stated that the FY15 NTHMP Grants Federal Review Panel were closely reviewing revised Budget and Project Narratives and Forward Performance Outlooks submitted with the second round of grant pre-applications. The panel looks closely at how well the projected tasks align with the NTHMP Strategic Plan, subcommittee priorities, and overall NTHMP priorities, as well as grantee past performance and capacity issues.

Total requests from all pre-applicants exceeded \$6M, even after making some technical adjustments due to math errors or requests for personnel for more than a one-year interval which is not permitted.

Panel members have sent questions to some applicants to request clarifications on some issues and to negotiate where necessary.

The panel intends to follow the announced schedule, and will provide its recommendations to NTHMP Chair Aimee Devaris and NOAA Tsunami Program Manager Mike Angove by early April. In turn, they will review the recommendations and make adjustments as they deem necessary. Their grant recommendations then will be sent to NWS management for review and approval.

When NWS management provides the approval, then Lopes will communicate with each applicant to indicate what they may formally apply for via the regular method – by submitting a formal application via grants.gov.

Lopes will communicate with applicants if timing of the application process changes. Many steps in the process are not under the NWS Tsunami Program's control, and

may cause changes. However, we anticipate that the formal application period will be open in May with early June closing so that NTHMP applications will beat the rush of all other NOAA Grants which are entered in a large volume by the overall NOAA grant application deadline in early July.

Lopes added that once grants are submitted on-line, that is when Lewis Kozlosky takes over. Lewis handles the grants when they "go electronic" while Lopes manages the entire pre-application process and overall grants Guidance interpretations.

Lewis Kozlosky reaffirmed that the grant application process will be the same as before.

Petty: If a grantee has not received questions yet, could we expect any?

Lopes: Just because a grantee did not receive a question yet doesn't mean that he/she won't. However, be aware that the Grant Panel may make recommendations for funding that do not include each and every task in a pre-application, and just because the panel does not ask an applicant about it does not mean that a recommendation could be made that does not include all tasks for the total amount requested for each.

Wilson: Were all grantees asked to make budget cuts?

Lopes: Each pre-application is different, and each applicant is different. Most grantees were asked in different ways about potential areas where budgets could be cut where applicable.

Devaris: Having seen how the grant process works within NOAA, I wanted to commend Rocky, Marie, Tamra, and Lewis for getting these grants reviewed and managed on such a demanding schedule.

5. NTHMP summer meeting location and structure: Aimee Devaris and Rocky Lopes

- Meeting location: Lopes looked at potential meeting sites in Boulder, Honolulu, Menlo Park, San Diego, Seattle, and Silver Spring.

Location selection is determined by: 1) free meeting space meeting capacity requirements is available within walking or hotel-provided shuttle distance; 2) that an adequate number of hotel rooms is available at the Government per diem rate; and 3) overall cost based on transportation, housing, and allowable per diem.

The cost for having the meeting in Honolulu was the highest at \$72K. Ground transportation between hotels and the meeting venue is difficult and not free.

Meeting space was not available in Silver Spring.

No hotels in the areas near Boulder or Menlo Park would accept the Federal Government per diem rate applicable for the respective areas. Lopes made contact with dozens of properties and also via national hotel chain sales managers. All said that they honor the Government per diem rate in those locations on a limited basis during non-prime travel months.

That left Seattle and San Diego. Both locations had hotel space that would honor the per diem and free meeting space in a Government building.

However, because the Federal Government per diem rate in Seattle jumped from (last year) \$152 to \$190/night and their tax rate is 3% higher compared with San Diego, it made the overall cost for travel and related expenses for this meeting increase by more than \$3,000 over San Diego. So San Diego is the recommendation.

Kevin Miller stated that he got space in the California State Office Building in downtown San Diego, with one room on the sixth floor and another on the first floor. He said that the building was rather old, but its location is great, right in the heart of downtown San Diego.

Devaris: San Diego is the meeting location. She thanked Lopes and Miller for their work to secure facilities and work out logistics.

- Lopes provided the proposed meeting schedule:
Monday, July 13: MES only (means traveling on Sunday July 12)
Tuesday, July 14: MES and MMS separate
Wednesday, July 15: MES / MMS separate 1/2 day, combined 1/2 day
- MES done at end of day.
Thursday, July 16: MMS only
- MMS done at end of day.

Devaris: Is this meeting schedule what we want to do, including travel on Sunday?

No one raised any concerns or objections to traveling on Sunday.

Lopes: Will communicate more details as we move forward to plan the meeting.

6. Meteotsunami Brochure priority

Ed Fratto stated that the creation of a meteotsunami fact sheet has been included on the National Tsunami Education and Outreach Plan, and appreciates that. However, he was concerned about the priority of when a fact sheet would be done. He raised this issue before when the June 13, 2013, meteotsunami occurred.

A meteotsunami fact sheet is a public awareness companion. There is no start date for this fact sheet in the National Tsunami Education and Outreach Plan. He would like to see a fact sheet completed sometime during calendar year 2015.

Fratto requested the Coordinating Committee support establishment of at least a start date for the fact sheet. It is an electronic document – not a brochure. There is not a printing cost issue; it is a matter of labor.

Devaris: Is this something that should go to the MES for action? Or should it go to NOAA/NWS HQ for action?

Rabenold: We put the National Tsunami Education and Outreach Plan together last year and ranked each item in priority order. The meteotsunami fact sheet is now priority 16 out of 17, but she realizes that the priorities were weighted by the number of votes from participants who do not have a meteotsunami threat. Some activities in the National Tsunami Education and Outreach Plan have been completed. She does not see why we could not get a meteotsunami fact sheet done by the end of 2015. This is a task for me along with subject matter experts.

Christa Rabenold asked Paul Whitmore: When will we be able to talk about forecasting meteotsunamis publicly?

Whitmore: We know enough to put something together.

Rabenold: Can you talk about work being done to forecast them?

Whitmore: yes, somewhat.

Titov: Meteotsunamis are a very active area of research. There are more unknowns than knowns. I do not quite know what we can say. Establishing a short deadline is not reasonable.

Whitmore: We will learn as we go through this about what we want to say and what we can say. It wouldn't hurt to start moving that way.

Fratto: If we can't anticipate setting a completion date, I'd be happy to set a start date.

Rabenold: it would be my lead to create this. Key players would include Whitmore, Titov, Fratto, and Kozlosky.

Kozlosky: Basic meteotsunami information is different from creating a meteotsunami protocol. We want to refine that protocol, engage the NWS Storm Prediction Center and local forecast offices to develop a protocol. A fact sheet is an easier goal.

Rabenold: To what extent is a fact sheet useful? It could leave people begging for more info.

Fratto: When the June 13, 2013, event happened, no one knew what was going on. Talking about a basic fact sheet that explains what it is. What we know about and what causes them – very basic information.

Titov: Let's start looking into it and develop a draft to circulate to NTHMP. Volunteered to review it.

Rabenold: Target having a draft fact sheet available by summer MES meeting and schedule a kick-off call to discuss, then develop a plan and coordinate from there.

Devaris: Keep me in the loop, too, please. There is a process for having fact sheets on the state-of-the-science and a review process. I can help us make sure we follow the model and use a template.

7. NTHMP brochure status

Christa Rabenold stated that a small group of people worked together to develop a two-page (front and back) NTHMP fact sheet so we could have something available in time for Tsunami Preparedness Week and for Congress. All NTHMP subcommittees were represented during the fact sheet development process and the draft includes everyone's comments.

It will be sent for formal approval on March 18, with a tight deadline so it can be made available on or about March 19.

This is version 1 of the fact sheet. Another version may be needed once the NTHMP Return on Investment report comes out.

Rabenold has control over the fact sheet. It can be changed or updated as needed.

Wilson: Thanked Christa for getting this done so quickly.

Rabenold: Thanked all who helped with it.

Devaris: The draft looks great, thanks for your work on this. This will work well with possible companion documents.

8. TWERA status

The House Bill (H.R.34), sponsored by Representative Bonamici of Oregon was passed by the House of Representatives in January and referred to the Senate. Senator

Cantwell of Washington has also submitted S.533, which is a Senate version of the bill. As far as we know, no action by the full Senate on either bill has occurred.

Devaris: We will keep this on our list of business until action is taken.

Wilson: I think it passed one Committee.

Lopes: According to Congress.gov, both bills were discussed by the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee. On February 26, the bill was "ordered to be reported with an amendment in the nature of a substitute favorably."

This means that a marked-up version of the bill has passed the Committee (Wilson was correct) and is pending for action by the full Senate.

No copy of the substituted bill is available at the time of this meeting. NWS HQ has been asking for it. We do not know the nature of changes in the substituted bill.

Devaris: If action is taken by the Senate between now and our next meeting, we will communicate with the NTHMP Coordinating Committee as soon as we know anything.

9. Old Business

There was no old business.

10. New Business

- a. Stephanie Ross: She will be attending and presenting at the Seismological Society of America meeting, April 21 – 23, in Pasadena, California. Who else from the NTHMP will be there?

Wilson: I will be there. I am co-convening a session with Lori Dengler about tsunamis.

Lewis Kozlosky also stated that he will be attending.

No one else responded.

Devaris: Do you need anything else or participation in your session?

Ross: Participation in the session would be great. I am glad that Rick Wilson will be there.

- b. Laura Kong: Right before the Seismological Society of America meeting, the US is hosting the 50th PTWS anniversary Tsunami Symposium on April 20 – 21 in

Honolulu. Kevin Miller will be there and will make a presentation on marine preparedness.

164 people have registered to attend the symposium. If anyone has any materials to distribute at the symposium, Laura will be happy to put them out. She is looking forward to Kevin representing NTHMP.

Devaris: When should materials be shipped to you?

Kong: Send them to her before the symposium. (Mailing address is: Laura Kong, International Tsunami Information Center, NOAA Inouye Regional Center, 1845 Wasp Blvd, Honolulu, HI 96818).

Miller: Thanked Laura Kong for the invitation.

11. Adjourn

Devaris: I recognize how everyone is working together in new ways. Thank you for your dedication and your service.

Meeting adjourned at 3:54

Respectfully submitted,

Rocky Lopes
NTHMP Administrator