

NTHMP COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING
September 17, 2013

1. Call to order -- Aimee Devaris, Chair

Aimee Devaris called the meeting to order at 3:01pm ET and welcomed everyone. She thanked those who attended the NTHMP MMS/MES subcommittee meetings and workshop held in Seattle in August and said that she was happy to meet many of the members face-to-face.

2. Roll call

NOAA

Mr. Mike Angove, Tsunami Program Acting Director, NWS HQ, Silver Spring, MD
Ms. Aimee Devaris, NTHMP Chair & Director, NWS Alaska Region, Anchorage, AK
Ms. Marie Eble, Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory, Seattle, WA
Dr. Christa von Hillebrandt-Andrade, Caribbean Tsunami Warning Program, PR
Dr. Laura Kong, International Tsunami Information Center, Honolulu, HI
Mr. Lewis Kozlosky, Tsunami Program, NWS HQ, Silver Spring, MD
Dr. Rocky Lopes, Tsunami Program Contractor Support, NWS HQ, Silver Spring, MD
Dr. Vasily Titov, Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory, Seattle, WA
Mr. Paul Whitmore, West Coast/Alaska Tsunami Warning Center, Palmer, AK

FEMA

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

USGS

No representatives

Alaska

Mr. Ervin Petty, Alaska Division of Emergency Management
Dr. Dmitry Nicolsky, Alaska Earthquake Information Center

California

Mr. Kevin Miller, California Office of Emergency Services
Mr. Rick Wilson, California Geological Survey

East Coast States

Dr. Jim Kirby, University of Delaware

Gulf Coast States

No representatives

Hawaii

Kevin Richards, Hawaii State Civil Defense

Oregon

Dr. Althea Rizzo, Oregon Emergency Management
Dr. George Priest, Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries

Pacific Islands

Mr. Vinnie Atofau, American Samoa

Puerto Rico

Dr. Victor Huerfano, University of Puerto Rico Mayaguez

U.S. Virgin Islands

No representatives

Washington

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

3. [ACTION] Confirmation of election of Kara Gately as Co-Chair of Mapping & Modeling Subcommittee -- Rick Wilson.

Approved unanimously

4. [ACTION] Discussion/review and approval of Vertical Evacuation signage (see images sent with meeting notice)

John Schelling said that there are no approved vertical evacuation sites in the U.S. yet. The proposed signage is approved by ISO. Adopting that signage would allow us to come into ISO conformance before it becomes an international issue. The proposed signage was discussed at the NTHMP annual meeting in Portland in February, 2013, and at the NTHMP subcommittee meetings in Seattle in August, 2013. Signs can have text with it to reinforce that it is for tsunami area of refuge. The proposed graphics are in alignment with FEMA P-646.

Rick Wilson asked if guidance could go with it. John said yes. Rick suggested that the NTHMP devise a standard four word phrase to go with the guidance, which should be used if funds from NTHMP grants were used to pay for the signage.

Dmitry Nicolsky stated that other tsunami signs are self-explanatory. These proposed signs do not seem to be clear that someone should go up and into a building. John Schelling said that education and training through outreach will be required to help people know what the sign means.

Erv Petty said that the sign could look like someone is running past a building rather than into it.

George Priest said that every tsunami sign in Washington is blue & white. Now this one is in green & white. Could this be a conflict with a state policy that requires using blue & white?

There was some discussion about what it means for the NTHMP to "approve" the signage. Does it mean NTHMP will not provide funding for signs that are different (color, etc.)? Tim Walsh said that since the NTHMP has no regulatory authority, whatever we adopt are recommendations only and that states can do what they want and conform with their own state sign regulations and standards.

Erv Petty has concerns about changing color to green since there are many existing signs that are blue.

Laura Kong explained that international signs were approved in 2008 have an ISO standard that dictates color of green & white. Green & white means "safety." ISO standards are guidance, not required. Half the world has ISO green & white signs and half have blue & white. U.S. can do whatever it wants.

Dmitry Nicolsky: change to figure running toward the building.

Victor Huerfano: currently he sees advice for people taking vertical refuge from tsunami to move four floors or higher. He sees three floors in the proposed signs. What is correct?

Aimee Devaris said that there are two concerns: color and clarity of the symbology in the signs. She suggested that more discussion is needed to determine what it means if the NTHMP approves a sign.

John Schelling said that the MES will take these suggestions, work on them, and bring them back to the CC. He asked for input by September 30 and promised to turn it around quickly for review perhaps by electronic poll.

5. [DISCUSSION] Representatives on NTHMP CC from Pacific Islands.

Aimee Devaris reviewed the discussion we had at the impromptu CC meeting in Seattle in August as not all CC members were in attendance. We will await the results of the tsunami hazard assessment being done by Dunbar/Goldfinger to determine whether we need to broaden the CC membership.

Rick Wilson: said that the new tsunami hazard assessment should be available in January.

Kevin Richards: concurred with Rick Wilson. To make it valid, the assessment results are required.

No action taken – tabled until the tsunami hazard assessment is released and the NTHMP CC has the time to review it and make a decision.

6. [ACTION] Selection of location and dates for the NTHMP Annual Meeting

Looking at January. What about the week of January 20? It is MLK holiday week. Consider start at noon on Tuesday and end noon on Friday so we don't require people to travel on holidays and weekends.

Week of January 27th? No conflicts.

Where? What about Menlo Park, CA, at USGS facility? San Francisco, San Jose, and Oakland airports serve the area. Weather is more mild than further north. Meeting there can help to build a deeper partnership with the USGS. Lodging is good nearby, but not within walking distance.

Agreed: Menlo Park, CA, week of January 27.

Aimee Devaris tasked Rocky Lopes to gather information to share with her and Mike Angove for them to make a confirming decision soon, so we can begin the task of requesting group travel approval.

7. [INFORMATION] FY13 Grant Status -- Mike Angove

Mike Angove said that all FY13 grants have been through our process. Lewis Kozlosky said that some of the recipients have not accepted them yet. Some of the grants are still in the

ASAP office (which connects the funding to the awards and provides notification). Notifications for any who have not received notice of award yet should go out shortly.

8. [INFORMATION] NTHMP Grants -- information about future grants and grant cycle -- Mike Angove and Rocky Lopes

Mike Angove said that we have a program spend plan for FY14 that does include NTHMP grants along the lines of what was obligated for FY13. In the most conservative scenario, we should look at a similar top-line for what was requested for FY13 to go into FY14. This is \$2M – not more.

We will not ask for multiyear grants because we don't know if there will be funding consistency year-to-year. We will ask for proposals that have long-term deliverables that build on each other as we look down range.

Rocky Lopes described the schedule in general – call for proposals in November, due at NWS HQ in early January for first technical review. Each requestor will present at the NTHMP annual meeting where collaboration and synergies can be developed. Requestors will then revise proposals as may be necessary and resubmit in February. The NTHMP Grant Review Panel will conduct its review in February/March and provide results to NTHMP Chair by April. The Chair will review the report and approve what each requestor should submit for a grant through the on-line system in May. The period of performance looks like it will be September 1, 2014 – August 31, 2015, so it will not overlap with approved FY13 grants and not oversubscribe the P.I.s.

George Priest asked, “should we state priorities for tasks?” Angove: Yes! That will be very helpful.

Rocky is working on grant guidance for FY14 grants which will be distributed with the call for grants in November.

9. New business

a) Rick Wilson asked that the CC confirm a new representative position on the MMS from PMEL. The MMS recommends that Marie Eble be that initial representative.

Rick Wilson explained and endorsed the MMS recommendation. It will benefit from collaborations and cost-savings. This position would be helpful to the MMS. The MMS voted on this; outcome positive. Marie suggested as initial rep – she has been very helpful over time.

Kevin Richards asked if this is an added position to the subcommittee? Wilson: yes.

Request approved by unanimous consent.

b) MMS would like to confirm an ad hoc, non-voting member that will take the lead on the new guidance and workshops we need to plan/hold with regard to tsunami current modeling validation and maritime planning. This first member recommended is Stephan Grilli.

Rick Wilson: described above. Asked for confirmation.

Kevin Richards: why adhoc, not a main member? Rick Wilson said that this position may not be from someone affiliated with a state or federal agency. They can travel to MMS meetings and contribute. Perhaps in the future could be someone outside the NTHMP.

Rick Wilson: call them a non-voting member, but a permanent position at the discretion of the MMS. The CC should approve who will fill the position.

Vasily Titov asked why a permanent membership is required since this only for a task assignment?

Rick Wilson said that the goal is that they can travel to MMS meetings.

Approving this position would require NTHMP to fund travel for this person to attend MMS meetings.

Rick Wilson said that he wants to bring him to the Validation Workshop. In the future may be a different workshop.

Mike Angove: not sure growing the size of the NTHMP fits with the budget.

Kevin Richards: suggested a limited membership for short-term.

Mike Angove: Concern about adding to program's budget for this position to be funded for travel. Perhaps have a grant request come in for funding travel for this person rather than NTHMP.

Aimee Devaris suggested that we lay out the cost and benefits and bring it to a virtual vote. Wants to know if we have grown NTHMP subcommittees and what the costs are.

Rocky Lopes offered to gather that information and share it.

George Priest suggested that we table this to the annual meeting.

Aimee Devaris asked when is a decision required? Rick Wilson: soon.

Aimee Devaris: we will do a cost-benefit analysis and re-visit this matter at a future CC meeting or virtual vote, if required.

Mike Angove did not have time to bring this up, but he wanted the CC members to have a short briefing with information discussed at a recent Intergovernmental Working Group -- Pacific Tsunami Warning System (PTWC) meeting that he, Laura Kong, and a few others attended. He will provide that briefing via email to the CC members.

10. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 4:07pm ET.