

NTHMP Coordinating Committee Meeting

October 1, 2019

3:00pm EDT

1. Welcome and call meeting to order: Chair Grant Cooper
The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:00pm

2. Roll Call:

Alaska

Mr. Dan Belanger, Alaska DHS/Emergency Management, Anchorage, AK
Dr. Dmitry Nicolsky, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, AK

American Samoa

*Ms. Elinor Lutu-McMoore*³, American Samoa WSO, Pago Pago, American Samoa

California

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

Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands

Mr. Jonathan Villagomez, CNMI Dept. of Homeland Security, Saipan, MP
*Mr. Chip Guard*¹ (dual representation with Guam)

East Coast States

Mr. Ed Fratto, Northeast States Earthquake Consortium, Wakefield, MA
Dr. Jim Kirby, University of Delaware, Newark, DE

Guam

Mr. Leo Espia, Guam Dept. of Homeland Security, Tutuhan, GU
*Mr. Chip Guard*¹, NWS Forecast Office, GU

Gulf Coast States

Mr. Brad Baker, Santa Rosa County, Milton, FL
Dr. Juan Horrillo, Texas A&M University at Galveston, Galveston, TX

Hawaii

Dr. Kwok Fai Cheung, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI
Mr. Kevin Richards, Hawaii Emergency Management Agency, Honolulu, HI

Oregon

Dr. Jon Allan, Oregon Dept. of Minerals and Geology, Newport, OR
Dr. Althea Rizzo, Oregon Emergency Management, Salem, OR

Puerto Rico

Dr. Victor Huerfano, Univ. of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez, Mayagüez, PR
Mr. Carlos Irigoyen, Puerto Rico Emergency Management Bureau, San Juan, PR
*Dr. Liz Vanacore*², Univ. of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez, Mayagüez, PR

U.S. Virgin Islands

Ms. Denise Lewis, Virgin Islands Territorial EMA, St. Croix, VI
Mr. Roy Watlington, Professor Emeritus, St. Thomas, VI

Washington

Ms. Corina Forson, Washington Division of Natural Resources, Olympia, WA

NOAA

*Mr. Mike Angove*⁵, Tsunami Program, NOAA/NWS Headquarters, Silver Spring, MD
Dr. Diego Arcas, NOAA Pacific Marine Environmental Lab, Seattle, WA
Dr. Grant Cooper, NWS Western Region Director, Salt Lake City, UT
Ms. Marie Eblé, NOAA Pacific Marine Environmental Lab, Seattle, WA
*Dr. Rocky Lopes*⁵, NOAA/National Weather Service HQ, Silver Spring, MD
Ms. Christa von Hillebrandt, NOAA/NWS Caribbean Tsunami Warning Pgm, Mayagüez, PR

FEMA

Ms. Tamra Biasco, Guest, FEMA Region X, Lynnwood, WA
Mr. Mike Mahoney, FEMA Headquarters, Washington, DC
Ms. Amanda SioK, FEMA Region X, Lynnwood, WA

USGS

Ms. Stephanie Ross, U.S. Geological Survey, Moffett Field, CA
Dr. Nate Wood, U.S. Geological Survey, Portland, OR

34 present, 11 state votes (min 7); 7 Fed votes (min 4). Quorum requirement met.

¹ Coord. Comm member, NOAA employee, non-voting

² Guest, one-time, non-voting

³ Alternate for primary CC member (guest)

⁴ Regular guest, non-voting status

⁵ Ex-officio, non-voting member

3. Minutes of Coordinating Committee meeting of August 23, 2019.

The Chair called for approval of the minutes of the August 23, 2019 Coordinating Committee meeting. With no dissention, the minutes were approved by acclamation.

4. Chair's Announcements

The Chair asked Mike Angove to make an announcement.

a. NTHMP Administrator Position

Angove: Rocky Lopes has been working for us as a Contractor. The contract period of performance expires on October 21. Management has determined that the contract will not be renewed.

The agency is concerned about uncertainty with having contract positions and is reducing them agency-wide and creating Government positions for critical activities that Contractors were doing.

We are going through a hiring action to hire a Tsunami Program Coordinator as a Government employee. That position, when filled, will serve as the NTHMP Administrator. Rocky applied for the position, but the list of candidates from the DE list to which he applied was not referred by NOAA's workforce management office, so we were not able to interview him.

The hiring action is progressing. I have been notified by the leadership of the AFS Office (the part of the NWS where the Tsunami Program is on the table of organization) that Rocky's contract has been extended through the end of the calendar year to provide continuity.

I cannot talk about the hiring action, but am open to any other questions.

There were no questions for Mike Angove.

Cooper: this is not good news for us, and we rely on Rocky's proven capabilities, but we will get a lot of work done between now and the end of the contract period.

b. Change in Coordinating Committee Membership

Grant Cooper announced that Amanda Siok has been appointed to serve as a member of the NTHMP Coordinating Committee in place of Tamra Biasco who has stepped down after 10 years of service. Dr. Cooper thanked Tamra for her long tenure of service, serving as Co-Chair of the MES for 10 years, member of the Federal Grant Panel, Strategic Plan writing work group, and much more.

Dr. Cooper welcomed Amanda who said that she was excited to be part of the NTHMP.

c. Coordinating Committee vacancies

The Emergency management representative for American Samoa is open since Vinnie Atofau had to step down since he is filling a higher-level position in his agency. Until an appointment is made, American Samoa does not have a vote on NTHMP CC actions. As a NOAA employee, American Samoa Science Member Elinor Lutu-McMoore cannot vote.

Lopes added that the NWS Tsunami Program received notification of a change of Principal Investigator for the grant (change from Vinnie Atofau to Lisa Tuatoo), but the appointment designation for the Coordinating Committee is still pending. Lutu-McMoore said that she would follow up with American Samoa DHS.

Chip Guard announced that his retirement date is December 21, 2019. The Science Representative for Guam and CNMI is still pending.

5. NTHMP Updates – *Terms of Reference*

Lopes: Terms of Reference are like by-laws, or governing documents, for NTHMP groups under the Coordinating Committee – Subcommittees, Island Caucus, and Mitigation & Recovery Planning Work Group.

The *Terms of Reference* are referred to in the NTHMP *Rules of Procedure*. These are the governing by-laws for the NTHMP as a whole. As we proceed with updating the *Rules of Procedure*, we also need to have each entity's *Terms of Reference* updated too.

I have marked up each subcommittee's *Terms of Reference* with some potential changes to reflect decisions made, voted on, and adopted by the Coordinating Committee, such as leadership structure. I sent those marked-up documents to subcommittee leaders to request they review them, make any more changes they feel are necessary, and share them with the membership of their respective subcommittees. That review is in process.

I have also created templates for *Terms of Reference* for the Island Caucus and Mitigation & Recovery Planning Work Group and sent those templates to the leaders of these entities for them to complete.

We would like to have all "entity-approved" marked-up changes to respective *Terms of Reference* returned to me by November 5 at the latest so that I can provide them to the Coordinating Committee for review one week before the scheduled CC meeting

on November 12. That is the meeting when we would like to have a vote to approve all five of these documents.

Meanwhile, an update for the *NTHMP Rules of Procedure* is also under way. Dr. Cooper appointed a small task group (Biasco, von Hillebrandt, Wilson) to work on updating this governing document during the Coordinating Committee meeting of August 23. This small task group will meet on October 10 to review proposed tweaks and revisions. We anticipate also providing an updated version of the *Rules of Procedure* to the Coordinating Committee by November 5 for a vote to approve on November 12.

6. Updates from NTHMP entities

- Mitigation & Education Subcommittee

Kevin Miller announced that the MES Co-Chairs are meeting on October 2 to discuss the MES *Terms of Reference* and then schedule next MES meeting via conference call.

- Mapping & Modeling Subcommittee

Jon Allan said that the MMS met earlier today (October 1). He has worked on updating the MMS *Terms of Reference* with Marie and will coordinate a review by the full MMS by email. The MMS is updating elements of its 2019 MMS *Annual Work Plan*. Work on planning for a sediment transport workshop is proceeding. The MMS is moving forward well.

- Warning Coordination Subcommittee

Dan Belanger will join a meeting with Rocky Lopes and James Gridley at the NTWC on October 15 to discuss the WCS *Terms of Reference*.

- Island Caucus

Kevin Richards said that he and Denise Lewis are working on the Island Caucus *Terms of Reference* to target for November delivery.

- Mitigation & Recovery Planning Work Group

Rick Wilson thanked Rocky for developing a template for the MRPWG *Terms of Reference*. Rocky thanked Rick for his work on completing a first draft of this document that is now under review by the other Co-Chairs of this Work Group. He also intends to have it delivered for the November target date.

7. FY20 Grants Allowable Activities List

The “Allowable Activities List” provides information on what kinds of tasks and activities are permitted for NOAA grant funding, and what is not.

Dr. Cooper appointed Lewis Kozlosky, Tamra Biasco, and Marie Eble to work with Rocky on this update. It is due in October for incorporation by reference in the NWS Tsunami Program Grant Guidance.

8. Status of Talking Points regarding “East Coast megatsunami” film

Ed Fratto described the talking points document that was sent to CC members for review. This film is based on a worst-case scenario of a major flank collapse of the Cumbre Vieja volcano near the Canary Islands off the coast of Africa. If such a massive flank collapse happened, a major tsunami – the likes of which have never been seen before (in the U.S.) – could inundate the U.S. East Coast in 8 – 10 hours.

Kirby: in an event like this, there is no safe place to evacuate on foot.

Wilson: There will be 8 – 10 hours advance notice, so there is time to evacuate with proper warning.

Angove: I was interviewed by the producer (National Geographic) last week in Atlantic City. I anticipate the film will be released in 2 – 3 months.

Fratto: what did you gather from the interview?

Angove: their story is worst-case scenario of a Cumbre Vieja collapse. It is an unprecedented event. I reviewed what cues we would have for the warning process. Local officials might leverage hurricane evacuation plans. This is not really on our top 10 list of things to worry about, but the probability of this happening is not zero.

Fratto: Requested feedback on the talking points document by October 18 so they can be finalized before the film is available. (Email: efratto@nesec.org)

9. NOAA/NWS Grants

a. FY19 grants

Lopes said that all 10 FY19 NOAA Tsunami Activities Grants have been awarded. We know the awards were significantly delayed. That happened because NOAA Grants Management did not approve most of the grants until August 30, and two of them later once some questions were resolved. A “Congressional notification” law requires one week pre-notification of all Federal awards to Congress (by state and legislative district), and then after the

Congressional Hold is released, it takes about another week for the funds to be attached to the awards in the NOAA ASAP System. That is why the award notifications were delayed at least two weeks.

Mike Angove, Lewis Kozlosky, and Rocky Lopes participated in several face-to-face meetings with NOAA Grants Management representatives who have promised not to have such delays occur in the future.

b. FY20 grant round plans.

Lopes said that as of today, October 1, the first day of the Federal fiscal year 2020, we have not been informed if funding for financial assistance to NTHMP partners will be available. That is par for the course. Currently, the Federal Government is operating under a Continuing Budget Resolution that provides funding for Government operations through November 21. As a result, NOAA or NWS leadership cannot affirmatively state that funds for grants will be available.

However, since we know it takes a long time to develop grant proposals and we have no indication that financial assistance will not be available, we anticipate following the same schedule as in years past. That is, in short:

- Tsunami Program Grant Guidance will be released in November.
- First round of grant applications will be due in January.
- Discussion of those proposals will be conducted during a “Program Review” being held concurrently during the NTHMP Winter Meeting in Portland, Oregon.
- Applicants will be given an opportunity to make adjustments to proposals and send them to the NWS by a date to be set in February.
- The proposals will then undergo Federal Review.
- Provided official notice of funding being available, the Federal Grant Review Panel will make its recommendations to NWS Leadership in early April.
- Once Leadership approves the recommendations, then applicants will be informed what to include in a final grant proposal that will be due on Friday, May 29, 2020.

Note: this schedule may change at the discretion of the NWS Tsunami Program Lead who also serves as the Grant Program Officer based on a number of variables unknown at this time.

10. NTHMP 2019 Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City

Dr. Cooper asked for feedback about the most recent NTHMP Annual Meeting that was held August 19 – 23, 2019.

Note: these notes are more detailed in order to have a record to provide guidance for whoever plans future NTHMP Annual Meetings after Rocky Lopes is gone.

Miller: the meeting was one of our best meetings ever. I appreciated inclusion of some WCMs. (This happened because Dr. Cooper as Director of the NWS Western Region provided travel funds for two WCMs in his Region. WCMs are always welcome at the meetings; their participation has been limited by travel funding availability.) I also liked having grants staff be able to participate by remote.

Forson: enjoyed the keynote speaker (IAEM-USA President Marty Shaub who is a friend of Rocky Lopes through his extensive involvement in the IAEM. He invited her through that connection). I got a lot out of it. Appreciated the open dialogue with the Tsunami Warning Centers (as conducted with everyone invited to the Warning Coordination Subcommittee meeting).

Guard: thought the discussion on the Tsunami Advisory was really important. (This discussion was held because it was a “hot topic” for the NWS Hazards Simplification Project.)

Richards: Building access delays was a problem.

Cooper: I agree... coming back after lunch with lines out the door was a problem.

Lopes: Building security varies by the location where we meet. Meeting in a Government facility is nice because it is free space to meet, but the trade-off is the situation with delay as described. We should plan for that better.

Arcas: appreciated the opportunity to have a session for the NOAA Center for Tsunami Research at the meeting.

Lopes added for these notes: This relates to having an “all inclusive” sequence of presentations from everyone, including various NOAA entities, both colleagues from FEMA, the Navy JTWC, as well as our colleagues from Canada. In total, we had 22 presentations that when facilitated well, were accomplished without those at the end being truncated due to less time. Time management by the facilitator is critical.

In the past, we only heard from grant-funded partners at NTHMP meetings. Some people said that what we all do is more than “just grant-funded work.” The change that I made this year was to reach out to everyone who had registered to attend the meeting and invite all of them to participate. I heard a number of very positive

remarks about this “partners session” and recommend that this activity be continued again at future NTHMP Annual Meetings.

Denise Lewis: networking was very important and to learn from other colleagues and use their ideas. (Note: specific provisions for a full hour for lunch with no “working lunches” as well as no post-meeting structured activities were made to enable informal networking opportunities.)

Eblé: liked having cross-subcommittee time together, and also having WCMs there as well as participants from other agencies and organizations.

Cooper: is there anything that we didn’t do this year that you would like to see next year?

Siok: An introduction breakfast for new people/first timers would be helpful.

11. Evaluation of *NTHMP 2018-2023 Strategic Plan* Progress

Cooper: The strategic plan was published and approved in February, 2018. I like to measure things. How do we measure our success and progress against it? Ideas on how to evaluate our progress?

Wilson: it would be valuable to have some type of evaluation; keep it short. Perhaps a discussion of each strategy in the Strategic Plan with a couple sentences of how we are dealing with it.

Richards: measurement is important, perhaps by checklist or % of completion.

Cooper: the original Strategic Plan development team could do this. Thanked Rocky and approved having the original group do an evaluation as a plan moving forward.

12. Old Business

Wilson: I was wondering if I may serve on grant allowable activities list group?

Angove: need to discuss internally and get back to you.

Lopes: (added after the meeting for reference to this question) -- An email from NOAA Senior Counsel for Grants dated September 11, 2017 stated: *NOAA sets the grant eligibility and application requirements, so Principal Investigators and/or recipients, if different, should not be involved in reviewing or advising on grant application guidance.*

The “Allowable Activities List” is part of the overall grant application Guidance provided by the Tsunami Program. Therefore, participation by an applicant / Principal

Investigator such as Rick Wilson in reviewing the list has been deemed inappropriate by NOAA General Counsel.

13. New Business

There was no new business.

14. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 3:50pm EDT.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, November 12, at 3:00pm EST.

Respectfully submitted,

Rocky Lopes
NTHMP Administrator