

Central Kansas Wetlands Subarea Committee Meeting

Quivira National Wildlife Refuge

Stafford, Kansas – September 08, 2022

The Central Kansas Wetlands (CKW) Subarea (SA) Committee convened at 1300 hours on September 8, 2022, at Quivira National Wildlife Refuge (QNWR) in Stafford, Kansas (KS). Twenty-two individuals attended the meeting with 12 members participating remotely, including U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) Daniel O’Crowley who had deployed to a train derailment in Iowa earlier in the week. A listing of meeting participants is on page 2. Eric Deselich of Tetra Tech, Inc. (Tetra Tech) facilitated the meeting on behalf of O’Crowley and Nick Goeke of Tetra Tech recorded the minutes. After self-introductions, attendees were directed to the first agenda item.

Subarea Contingency Plan Update. Deselich indicated that a plan update was completed in February 2022 and thanked SA members for providing updated content. The subarea’s spill contingency plan provides guidance and emergency contact information that help to expedite response actions. Deselich reminded members that the finalized plans—a public version and a restricted version—can be accessed at the [CKWSA website](#). The restricted version of the plan contains sensitive information only available to individuals who are listed in the subarea contacts list and registered for an account at response.epa.gov. SA members can contact Deselich or Goeke for assistance accessing the site.

Exercise and Training Discussion. EPA continues to support training and exercise events throughout the region and can assist SA member agencies with training/exercise design and delivery. As an example, Deselich reviewed a spill assessment and communications exercise delivered at QNWR in October 2018. The exercise was well attended with responding organizations coming together to implement mobile data collection tools for oil spill assessment. Deselich indicated that assistance is available for wide variety of hazards and emergency scenarios, not just oil spill response. Goeke indicated that he had served as Exercise & Training Officer at Missouri State Emergency Management Agency and would be available to assist with exercises.

The group also discussed Transportation Rail Incident Preparedness and Response (TRIPR) trainings that have been well received in other subareas. Typically, TRIPR is delivered in a collaborative manner by EPA and partner organizations that include railroad operators, local public safety agencies, and state-level responders. It is important to choose a location where a rail siding and suitable classroom are in proximity. This allows for an easy transition from the classroom to field activities using training railcars and other props. The group mentioned several locations that may be appropriate for TRIPR training, and a few agencies expressed interest in holding the training in 2023.

CKWSA Web Map Application Training. Deselich logged into the subarea’s web map application and provided a quick tutorial on some its key features. Training on the application, both virtual and in-person, was discussed with intent to deliver a training in the SA in late 2022 or spring 2023. The group decided that face-to-face training was preferable and Goeke said that venues would be explored to provide such a training in conjunction with SA meeting.

Case Study: Rosebud Creek Oil Spill. O’Crowley briefed the group on an oil discharge incident to Rosebud Creek in Kingman County, KS where he was assigned to oversee cleanup operations. On April 1, 2021, EPA was notified of an estimated 100 barrels (4,200 gallons) of crude oil discharged to the waterway. A significant amount of oil was also found in two ponds near Rosebud Creek. EPA noted that the potentially responsible party (PRP), the owner-operator of an adjacent oil lease, had constructed straw-bale dams in an attempted to contain the oil, although the PRP did not claim responsibility for the spill. After some discussion, it became apparent that the PRP did not possess the resources needed to continue

cleanup operations. Consequently, EPA determined that the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund be accessed to fund the cleanup. The cause of the discharge was determined to be a malfunctioning valve that allowed oil to backfill into an inactive pipeline. Cleanup activities were completed in May 2021 with an estimated 20,328 gallons of crude oil and 252,420 gallons of wastewater recovered. About 1,100 tons of oil-impacted soil and debris were also removed from the site.

Upcoming Events. Oil Spill Response Training: Kansas Corporation Commission, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, and EPA Region 7 are hosting the course in Hays, KS on September 27, 2022. The course is designed to assist environmental responders and incident managers to respond effectively to the types of oil spills that are common in Kansas.

Incidents. While no significant spills/discharges had recently occurred in the CKWSA, Bill Waln of U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service briefed the group on incidences of avian influenza in the wild bird population at QNWR. Waln explained that current draught conditions in KS tend to exacerbate spread of the disease, which has become more prevalent in recent weeks. QNWR staff are advising visitors to not handle dead birds encountered on the refuge and to report the location of such findings.

Other Reports. Joe Dom of Kansas Department of Health & Environment reported on a new state statute (KSA 65-171[v]) involving spill reporting and cleanup operations. The statute requires the responsible party to report the release of a pollutant and codifies responsibilities of the party for cleanup. Penalties for violators are also established under the statute.

Next Meeting. The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for early December and will focus on training (i.e., TRIPR, spill response, spill assessment using web map) development and delivery.

Meeting Attendee List

Name	Organization	Phone	E-mail
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Deselich, Eric	START	816-665-9088	eric.deselich@tetrattech.com
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Notes:

- * Participated remotely by phone
- EMA Emergency Management Agency
- EPA U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- DOI U.S. Department of the Interior
- KCC Kansas Corporation Commission
- KDHE Kansas Department of Health and Environment
- START Superfund Technical Assistance Response Team / Tetra Tech, Inc.
- USFWS U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service