



To: ARRT Dispersants Working Group

From: Mark Swanson, Executive Director

Date: July 20, 2012

Subject: Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council (PWSRCAC) comments on Revision 3 Draft Annex F dated July 15, 2012

The Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council (PWSRCAC) recognizes and appreciates that many of our comments submitted on the June 12, 2012 preliminary draft ARRT Oil Dispersant Guidelines/Preauthorization Plan for Alaska were incorporated into the Revision 3 draft. We are aware of the significant effort and improvements that have been put into the Revision 3 draft of this important decision-making process document. We also recognize that there is still considerable work to be done to complete this effort. We offer the following general and specific comments on the Revision 3 draft as well as on the overall process going forward to complete the guideline updates.

General Comments:

PWSRCAC requests that information be provided regarding agency plans for facilitating broad public input on the updated guidelines, including any pending updates to the SMART protocols.

It is crucial that both the guidelines and decision to use dispersants be based on the best available science, and specific to the regional and circumstances of the incident. PWSRCAC strongly recommend that a full scientific review be conducted by outside entities (such as the National Research Council) and that updated scientific evidence regarding the impacts of dispersants be included and referenced in the final guidelines. Appropriate scientific references on the impacts of dispersant use should be identified and incorporated into the guidelines in conjunction with to the next phase of this effort, namely updating the various dispersant use zones, since updated scientific information is critical to appropriately defining the zones. A full scientific review, the inclusion of scientific references and the updated SMART protocols are needed prior to completion of this revision process. Both the continued development of these revised guidelines and the updating of the SMART protocols must be done in an open and transparent public process.

Our last general comment at this time is that the monitoring of impacts to biological productivity is missing from the guidelines. The best available science for Alaska-specific ecosystem dynamics should be referenced and incorporated into the revised guidance document.

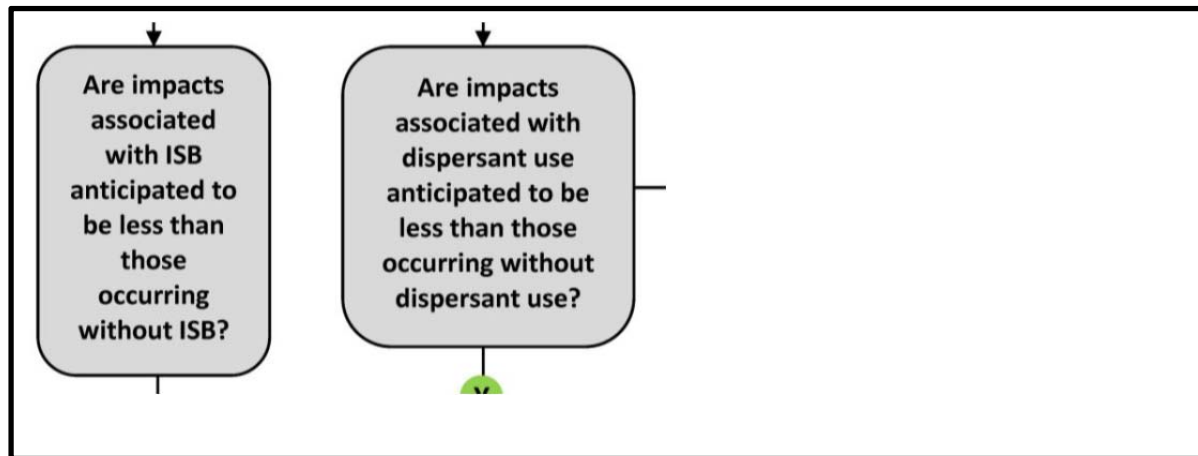
Specific Comments:

Page 3, 3rd Bullet: See above general comments on the need to include updated scientific information as citations, especially on environmental trade-offs, since this is referenced as a key question to be answered during the decision-making process. Scientific information on the environmental trade-offs should be cited with this bullet.

Key questions to answer during the dispersant use decision-making process:

- Will the selected dispersant work effectively on the oil spilled and in the given circumstances?
- Can the dispersant be safely applied to the oil without interfering with other response actions?
- Do the environmental trade-offs support the use of the dispersant in the given circumstance?

Page 5, Figure 1: Add “ecosystem” before the word “impacts” on the flow chart as indicated in the boxes below:



Page 10, Wildlife Information: Reference the need to monitor lower levels of the food chain in order to assess impacts to harder to observe species such as migrating herring.

<p>WILDLIFE INFORMATION</p> <p>Have fish swarms, birds, and/or marine mammals been observed near the oil slick? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>If yes, please answer the following:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 70%;"><i>Type observed (e.g., birds, sea otters, seals, whales, fish)</i></th> <th><i>Estimated Number</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>(The proximity of the above observed fish and wildlife should be included in the chart being submitted as Attachment 2)</i></p>	<i>Type observed (e.g., birds, sea otters, seals, whales, fish)</i>	<i>Estimated Number</i>					<p>✓ Attachment 2: Provide a chart with a distance scale. Chart must include: 1) estimated spill trajectory and landfalls with time; 2) location and distance of proposed dispersant application relative to zone boundaries, proposed field test location, and other response activities; 3) dispersant tactic summary and how it will augment the mechanical response; and 4) fish and wildlife locations relative to the oil slick.</p> <p>SAFETY PLAN FOR DISPERSANTS</p> <p>Does your health and safety plan cover the dispersant use plan? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>✓ Attachment 3: Relevant portion of Safety Plan, including MSDS.</p>
<i>Type observed (e.g., birds, sea otters, seals, whales, fish)</i>	<i>Estimated Number</i>						

Page 12. B. Biological Species: Under the “Fish” heading, “Rustacea” should read “Crustacea”. Request to add a row at the bottom of this table for “Other” species. Because near surface plankton usually includes larval forms of invertebrates as well as larval fish, request adding the phrase “including larval species” next to Plankton. Include an overall note that this is not a complete list of potentially impacted species or resources at risk.

<i>Fish:</i>			
Pelagic and larval			
Bottomfish			
Intertidal mullusks			
Rustacea			
<i>Plankton</i>			

Page 16, Item 17: “...representative son the dispersant request” should read “representatives on the dispersant request”

17.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>State OSC, EPA, DOI, and DOC Input:</i> Has the Federal and State OSC received input from the State OSC and the concurrence from the EPA, DOI, and DOC ARRT representatives on the dispersant request? (see Part 4)
-----	--------------------------	--------------------------	--

Page 19, No. 3: Include parenthetical equivalent meter references in addition to fathoms. It is our understanding that the NOAA charts are gradually moving to meters. If this is indeed the case, keeping both measurements in the document will allow for consistency until such time as all charts are converted to meters. If there is a hesitance to include meters, please consider adding measurements in feet in addition to fathoms.

3) Dispersants will only be applied in areas where the water depth is \geq ~~20 meters~~ 10 fathoms (with the exception of special 5 fathom contour in certain locations in Cook Inlet).

Page 19, No. 8: Remove “if possible” from strongly recommending Tier 2 monitoring, since it would not occur if it were not possible. Add “required” after “visual” when referring to Tier 1. Also, we recommend that the guidelines are consistent throughout when referring to Tier 1 and Tier 2 so that all references read: “Tier I (visual - required) and Tier 2 (water column – strongly recommended)” on pages 6, 17, 19 and 37.

8) SMART Tier 1 (visual) and Tier 2 (water column—strongly recommended, if possible) monitoring will occur during any dispersant application.

Page 21, 1st Bullet: Delete the word “around” when referencing salinity less than 15 parts per thousand, since less than 15 parts per thousand is scientifically defensible and not necessary in this reference.

- Salinity - most dispersants are made for use in saltwater and are not effective in fresh water, e.g., less than around 15 parts per thousand.

####