

## **The Cooperative Assessment Pilot Project (CAPP)**

The Cooperative Assessment Pilot Project (CAPP) is a new partnership between industry and government to restore natural resources injured by chronic releases of oil or hazardous substances and the services they provide (e.g. recreation). The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is leading the development of this initiative.

CAPP provides incentives for parties with pollution liability to assume responsibility for restoring natural resources. CAPP offers responsible parties more control over the timing of restoration actions without undermining the natural resource trustee responsibilities assigned to governmental agencies.

While developing CAPP, NOAA convened five discussions with industry representatives; environmental groups; and federal, state and Indian tribal trustees. High interest and support led to the formation of a broad-based work group to assist NOAA with implementation. The work group will meet for the first time on May 7 and 8 in Silver Spring, signaling NOAA's decision to move forward with implementation of CAPP.

CAPP responds to industry requests for increased involvement in assessment and restoration efforts. This new approach evolved out of the current regulatory paradigm for natural resource damage assessments (NRDAs), which requires responsible parties to be invited to participate in natural resource damage assessment and restoration activities.

This initiative will benefit industry partners with:

- a streamlined NRDA process,
- reduced costs and risk of litigation, and
- opportunities for constructive involvement in the process to resolve their liability under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) and the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA).

CAPP should produce innovative approaches to injury assessment and restoration, and expedite the restoration of injured natural resources. CAPP should also strengthen partnerships with the responsible parties and other stakeholders, and provide public involvement opportunities early in the process.

NOAA will test the feasibility of expanded cooperative assessment and restoration activities through CAPP at selected pilot project sites. NOAA is currently in the process of identifying potential CAPP sites.

**For more information**, please contact:

Eli Reinharz

NOAA Damage Assessment Center

1305 East-West Highway, SSMC-4, N/ORR3

Ph (301) 713-3038, ext. 193

Fax (301) 713-4387

Email: [eli.reinharz@noaa.gov](mailto:eli.reinharz@noaa.gov)