



OFFICE OF RESPONSE & RESTORATION

highlights

The OFFICE OF RESPONSE AND RESTORATION (OR&R) works to prevent and mitigate harm to coastal resources. It is the primary NOAA office that responds to oil spills and hazardous material releases. OR&R also works with Federal, State, and tribal natural resource trustees to restore damaged coastal resources.

Throughout fiscal year 2008, OR&R continued important response and restoration efforts for major oil spills, education on marine debris, and provided international technical expertise.

RESPONSE TO MAJOR OIL SPILLS

On November 7, 2007, the container ship M/V *Cosco Busan* struck the Bay Bridge in San Francisco Bay, California. A 100-foot gash in the hull of the vessel caused the release of an estimated 58,000 gallons of fuel oil into the water. During the spill, OR&R deployed scientists to the spill site to carry out overflights, coordinate beach surveys, evaluate oil recovery options, develop cleanup standards and protocols, and support the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG). In addition, OR&R provided trajectory and oil behavior modeling, information on natural resources at risk, and toxicity assessment data.

OR&R also supported the response to the estimated 419,000 gallons of #6 fuel oil spilled early on the morning of July 23, 2008, when a 600-foot chemical tanker and 200-foot fuel barge collided on the Mississippi River just north of the Crescent City Connector Bridge in New Orleans, Louisiana. OR&R provided trajectory and oil behavior modeling, information on natural resources at risk, and toxicity assessment data for this incident as well. The NOAA Scientific Support Coordinator for the Gulf of Mexico region was on-site to support the response from the Incident Command Center.



“KEEP OCEANS CLEAN ALLIANCE” RELEASES PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

NOAA and The Walt Disney Company, along with the Ad Council, National Marine Sanctuaries Foundation, U.S. Department of the Interior, and Environmental Defense, entered into a partnership to form the “Keep Oceans Clean Alliance” through the release of the prequel to the popular Disney movie *The Little Mermaid*. The project used the characters of the movie *Ariel’s Beginnings* to provide a central focus on the importance of keeping our oceans clean of marine debris by putting trash in its proper place, using reusable items, and recycling. The campaign included DVD inserts with specially produced educational information linking directly to the NOAA Marine Debris Program Web site (<http://marinedebris.noaa.gov>); billboard, radio, and television public service announcements; and an updated Web site and video game (<http://www.keeпоceansclean.org/intro/>).

COASTAL RESPONSE RESEARCH CENTER HOLDS ARCTIC ICE WORKSHOP

In March, the Coastal Response Research Center at the University of New Hampshire hosted a workshop, “Opening the Arctic Seas: Envisioning Disasters and Framing Solutions,” to discuss risks to human health and safety, the environment, and Arctic communities. Co-sponsored by OR&R, the U.S. Coast Guard Office of Spill Management and Preparedness, and the U.S. Arctic Research Commission, the three-day meeting united various experts from a range of disciplines to discuss the most probable oil spill threats for the fragile Arctic; strategies for coordinating and funding a holistic risk assessment in the Bering, Beaufort, and Chukchi Seas; potential resources at risk and other baseline needs (e.g., real-time data); training requirements; and research and development needs.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE AND RESTORATION EFFORTS

In December, NOAA scientists joined the U.S. National Response Team (NRT) and the Panama Canal Authority (ACP) to simulate a major oil spill and emergency response exercise in the Panama Canal Zone. The exercise simulated a tank barge grounding and spill of more than 50,000 gallons of oil near the Culebra Cut, the narrowest portion of the canal. OR&R scientists, together with U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency personnel, helped organize, control, coach, and evaluate the command post exercise. In July, OR&R also participated in a training seminar on oil spill response for the nation of Mozambique. In the Mozambique training, participants learned about the characteristics of oil, cleanup methods, sensitive areas, and organizing for response operations.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO SOUTH KOREA FOR THE M/T *HEBEI SPIRIT* OIL SPILL

In fiscal year 2008, OR&R, the National Ocean Service International Program Office, and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Restoration Center supported the Republic of Korea in its assessment and restoration planning activities after the 3.3-million gallon *Hebei Spirit* oil spill on December 7, 2007, which was the largest spill on record in South Korea. NOAA initially responded to a request from the South Korean Government for technical assistance by sending a Technical Assistance Team composed of the NOAA Scientific Support Coordinator along with three other members of the USCG Pacific Strike Team. In April, OR&R and NMFS staff members were invited back to South Korea to tour spill locations and provide additional assistance and advice for the next steps of response operations and the reopening of beaches and fisheries. During the trip, NOAA experts recommended strategies for assessing spill-related impacts and provided examples of restoration projects that could be implemented to restore damaged natural resources.

response.restoration.noaa.gov

