# ecylogo-horiz-color.pngMeeting Minutes

**Resource Damage Assessment Committee (RDA)
Committee Meeting**

Wednesday, February 14, 2024
**Microsoft Teams and Ecology HQ Room R1S-16**

Call to Order: 9:00 AM

Introduction and Agenda Review

Approval of Minutes: 9:13

* Motion to approve meeting minutes for the January 10, 2024, RDA Committee Meeting passed.

Adjournment: 10:03 AM

## Attendees

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Entity | Representative |
| RDA Committee, ChairWashington State Department of Ecology | Geoff Baran |
| RDA Committee, ChairWashington State Department of Ecology | Josh Weide |
| RDA CommitteeWashington State Department of Fish and Wildlife | Travis Washburn |
| RDA CommitteeWashington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation | Rob Whitlam |
| RDA CommitteeWashington State Department of Health | Merita Trohimovich |
| RDA CommitteeWashington State Department of Natural Resources | Shayne Cothern |
| Washington State Assistant Attorney General’s Office | Julian Beattie |
| Regional Resource Coordinator, NOAA | Kait Lieb |
| United States Fish and Wildlife Service | Jeff Krausman |
| United States Fish and Wildlife Service | Valerie Chu |
| Yakama Nation Fisheries | Natalie Swan |
| Environmental Manager, Inland Empire Paper Company  | Doug Krapas |
| Marten Law, on behalf of Inland Empire Paper Company | James Tupper |
| GeoEngineers, on behalf of Inland Empire Paper Company | Justin Orr |
| GeoEngineers, on behalf of Inland Empire Paper Company | Scott Lathen |
| Washington Department of Ecology | Tami Neilson |

## Minutes

### New Business

#### Preassessment Screenings:

##### ERTS #727657 Inland Empire Paper Company Lube Oil Spill

* Incident Summary:
On December 26, 2023, Ecology received multiple reports of a continuous unknown sheen observed on the Spokane River in the vicinity of North Argonne Road with no obvious source. GrayMar and the Department of Ecology responded to investigate and commence containment and cleanup actions, placing hard and soft boom at Upriver Dam, the Spokane Falls Dam, and 9 Mile Dam. An analysis of samples determined that the sheen was a lube oil. No sheen was observed upstream from Inland Empire Paper Company and an investigation into the facility resulted in the discovery of a faulty heat exchanger as the source. After being identified as the responsible party, Inland Empire hired GeoEngineers to assist in cleanup. At this time, an estimated 926 gallons of product has been recovered with possibly 1,500 gallons released in total. GrayMar and Ecology continue to monitor absorbents and boom, which has now been removed downriver from Upriver Dam. WDFW is working with local tribes to determine whether the spill was the cause of multiple fish mortality incidents below Long Lake Dam, where a light sheen had been recorded.
* Doug noted that Inland Empire Paper (IEP) had taken on the GrayMar contract once they were identified as the responsible party. The source was determined to be a faulty heat exchanger and the oil was identified as a light, mineral-oil-based lube oil (not motor oil) that was difficult to recover. The sheen did not manifest on the surface of the Spokane River until a few hundred yards, causing some delay in identifying the source.
* Scott noted that GrayMar and IEP have been very responsive and thorough with cleanup efforts.
* Geoff noted that Ecology is still working to determine an accurate amount released. A report from IEP pointed to a conservative estimate of 363 gallons that were possibly released.
* Travis spoke on the recent fish kills at Long Lake Dam, noting that the spill has not been ruled out as a cause. Fish tissue samples are currently being analyzed. Travis requested that we re-visit this incident when more details are known.
* Shayne also recommended that we hold off on voting until after we have more data on whether the fish kills could have been caused by this spill. Shayne asked if there were any lessons learned from this incident to minimize chance of such a release in the future, more quickly identify when a release has occurred, and more accurately determine volume spilled.
* Doug replied that IEP is looking at minimizing potential for future releases with engineering controls.
* Shayne requested a copy of report documenting these changes.
* Doug replied that he would provide this report once complete.
* Preassessment Screening:
	+ Vote postponed until the next RDA meeting (March 13) to allow for the gathering of additional data and information.

##### ERTS #727996 P/C *Naphtali* Sinking and Diesel Spill

* Incident Summary:
On January 12, 2024, West Bay Marina in Olympia reported that the 49-foot P/C *Naphali* was sinking at its moorage. Marina staff placed boom around the vessel and attempted to keep it afloat with a pump. The vessel owner was confident that about 300 gallons of diesel was in the fuel tank. As the vessel continued to take on water, he worked with his insurance to contract Resolve to raise the vessel while the Department of Ecology hired Republic Services to manage pollution removal once the vessel was raised. On January 18, Republic Services removed approximately 270 gallons of fuel and water mix, 40 gallons of which was estimated to be diesel. Of the 300 gallons of diesel on board, 260 gallons was unaccounted for and assumed spilled to the environment. Together, Resolve and Republic Services removed over 850 pounds of contaminated absorbents from the water along with the vessel. Ecology estimates that Resolve recovered about 89 gallons of diesel in the first 24 hours through sorbent boom, sweep, and pads. Republic was unable to provide an estimate of fuel recovery by sorbents.
* Preassessment Screening:
	+ Are the damages quantifiable at a reasonable cost? 5 no.
	+ Is restoration or enhancement technically feasible? 5 no.
	+ Compensation schedule authorized to calculate damages.

##### ERTS #728048 M/V *Oz* Sinking and Diesel Spill

* Incident Summary:
On January 16, 2024, Ecology received a report from the Coast Guard of the 30-foot motor vessel *Oz* aground on the north side of Spieden Island. The vessel owner attempted to float the vessel, but it ended up sinking. The vessel is now located about 110 feet deep in the channel between Spieden and Cactus Islands. The vessel's fuel tank holds a maximum of 190 gallons of diesel, but the owner estimates that 120 gallons was on board. The USCG reported that they were not concerned with removing the fuel from the vessel because most of the fuel will have been released by the time recovery operations would take place. The vessel owner is currently working with his insurance and Global Diving to salvage the vessel. However, Global Diving is concerned with the safety of the operation given the depth of the vessel and the strong currents in the area. No fuel is expected to be recovered.
* Preassessment Screening:
	+ Are the damages quantifiable at a reasonable cost? 5 no.
	+ Is restoration or enhancement technically feasible? 5 no.
	+ Compensation schedule authorized to calculate damages.

### Other Business

#### Open Case Updates:

* ERTS #712895 P/C *Kokua* Spill
	+ Ecology has been attempting to reach the responsible party without success and recommends dropping the case. The enforcement team has dropped the penalty as they have had similar difficulties.
	+ The committee voted to drop the case due to continued difficulties in reaching the responsible party with no other foreseeable outcome.
* ERTS #706269 F/V *Let’s Go* Diesel Spill
	+ The responsible party had been making payments as late as September 2023. However, they are now deceased, and Ecology is writing off the remaining balance in lieu of pursuing collecting payments from their estate.
* ERTS #724213 Cheney Chevron Diesel to Minnie Creek Spill
	+ This case update will be covered in the March committee meeting.
* ERTS #727283 Olympic Pipeline Gasoline Spill
	+ Sheet piling is now in place to isolate the Hill Ditch shoreline from the surface water. The volume spilled is still under investigation. Ecology continues to work with other agencies and local tribes to determine possible damage assessment and to identify viable restoration projects. Also, the property owner has requested that their property be returned to how it was before the mitigation and removal of contaminated soils and shoreline.

### Announcements

* Next meeting: Wednesday, March 13, 2024 at 9:00am via **Microsoft Teams** and in person at Ecology HQ, **Room R1S-16**.