# ecylogo-horiz-color.pngMeeting Minutes

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

Wednesday, November 13, 2024  
**Microsoft Teams and Ecology HQ Room R1S-16**

Call to Order: 9:08 AM

Introduction and Agenda Review

## Attendees

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Entity | Representative |
| RDA Committee, Chair Washington State Department of Ecology | Geoff Baran |
| RDA Committee, Chair Washington State Department of Ecology | Josh Weide |
| RDA Committee  Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife | Don Noviello |
| RDA Committee Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation | Rob Whitlam |
| RDA Committee Washington State Department of Natural Resources | Shayne Cothern |
| RDA Committee  Washington State Parks | Matt Niles |
| RDA Committee  Washington State Department of Health | Merita Trohimovich |
| Yakama Nation Fisheries, Superfund Section | Natalie Swan |
| US Fish and Wildlife Service | Michael Carlson |
| Washington State Attorney General’s Office | Julian Beatie |
| Baydelta Maritime | Paul Hendriks |
| Baydelta Maritime | Fred Ellingson |

## Minutes

### New Business

#### Preassessment Screenings

##### ERTS #731892 Tug *Delta Cathryn* Diesel Spill, Columbia River

* Incident Summary:  
  On June 30, 2024, Ecology received a report of a diesel spill to the Columbia River from the tug Delta Cathryn. The previous day, the Delta Cathryn received 30,000 gallons of fuel in anticipation of towing a new barge from Portland to California. While underway, at river mile 82.5, the Delta Cathryn Chief Engineer (CE) was transferring fuel to the day tank from the fuel storage tank. According to the CE, he noticed the level indicator on the settling tank was not changing as expected as the diesel level in the tank rose, so the fuel pump was shut off. After some time, the CE resumed the transfer to determine if the level indicator would work, but once again, it did not, and he halted the transfer. After another indeterminate time, the CE attempted the transfer once more, assuming that the high-level alarm would sound. Instead, a crew member gave the "all stop" signal and notified the CE of the spill to the deck. The day tank had overflowed containment and diesel had flowed across the deck and into the Columbia River creating a 300 foot by 50-foot sheen. Based on the transfer rate and size of the containment before the fuel spilled to the deck, Ecology estimates that approximately 43 gallons of diesel entered the Columbia River. The Delta Cathryn contracted US Ecology/Republic Services to provide cleanup of the river and the Delta Cathryn docked in Rainier for cleanup of the vessel.
* *Paul*: Bay Maritime contracted Republic Services to assess any downriver impacts. They were able to recover possibly a few gallons but found that the majority of the observed sheen had dissipated naturally. They did not observe any oiled wildlife.
* Paul and Fred confirmed that the report summary was accurate. They both felt that Baydelta Maritime responded quickly and appropriately; Ecology agreed.
* Preassessment Screening:
  + Are the damages quantifiable at a reasonable cost? 6 no.
  + Is restoration or enhancement technically feasible? 6 no.
  + Compensation schedule authorized to calculate damages.

##### ERTS #724213 Cheney Chevron Diesel Spill, Cheney

* Incident Summary:  
  On July 19, 2023, Ecology was contacted by Cheney Fire Department to assess an unknown oil-based product impacting the vegetation and sediment of Minnie Creek. 50 yards of the creek appeared to be impacted and Ecology hired GrayMar Environmental to conduct cleanup operations with a vac-truck and excavator. During cleanup, the GreyMar crew discovered red-dye diesel under vegetation at an upstream culvert that flows to Minnie Creek. Cheyney Public Works traced the diesel through the storm drain system to a Chevron fueling station with red-dye diesel pumps. Following further inspection, the crew observed diesel in the pump utility vault. Ecology advised the station owner to shut down the pumps, report the spill, and complete the cleanup. GrayMar expanded cleanup operations through the following month, bringing extra vac-trucks and supplying additional absorbents while they continued to remove red-dye diesel from the culvert to Minnie Creek and the drainage system. Sampling indicated that diesel contamination of Minnie Creek was found over a large area of the creek and adjacent wetlands, including 0.4 miles downstream of the outfall. This indicated that the flow of diesel predated the discovery of the oil. However, Ecology was unable to determine the date upon which the diesel began impacting Minnie Creek. Chevron hired Able Clean-up Technologies to pump the station vault, removing an estimated 2,402 gallons of diesel and water mix. GrayMar recovered an estimated 237 gallons of diesel from Minnie Creek and connected waterways in addition to 111 gallons of diesel collected in sorbent materials for a total spill volume to surface waters of 348 gallons. There were no observed wildlife impacts. Cleanup continued until August 30, 2023, at which point the case was transferred to Ecology's Toxics Cleanup Program.
* *Don*: Wanted to confirm that the estimated 348 gallons was the best estimate and that the spill occurred over a length of time.
* *Geoff*: As Ecology does not know at which point the spill started, the 348 gallons is likely a low estimate. There is also an estimated 700 gallons of diesel recovered from the storm system.
* Preassessment Screening:
  + Are the damages quantifiable at a reasonable cost? 6 no.
  + Is restoration or enhancement technically feasible? 6 no.
  + Compensation schedule authorized to calculate damages.

##### ERTS #725817 M/V *Liberty Peace* Waste Oil Spill, Yukon Harbor

* The scheduled preassessment screening for this incident has been postponed at the request of Liberty Maritime Corporation, owner of the M/V *Liberty Peace*, until the incident investigation determines a more accurate spill amount.

### Other Business

#### Approval of Minutes

* Motion to approve meeting minutes for the October 9, 2024, RDA Committee Meeting passed at 9:47 AM.

#### Open Case Updates

* ERTS #702694 Walstad P/C Sinking and Diesel Spill – 12/23/2020
  + The responsible party has been difficult to locate, and the Attorney General’s Office has already sent multiple demand letters. Geoff recommended that we drop the pursuit of the case in lieu of paying a collection agency.
  + *Shayne*: How successful has collections been?
  + *Matt*: What is the cost of sending a claim to collections?
  + *Julian*: Is unaware of the cost. Noted that collection agencies are typically only able to do what Ecology and the Attorney General’s Office have already done and are usually not much more successful.
  + *Josh*: Noted that the penalties sought by the Spill’s Enforcement team for this case were also sent to collections with no result.
  + *Matt*: Are there any administrative options available to mark the responsible party in case they attempt to register another vessel?
  + *Geoff*: We will note and look into what other remedies exist following a case being sent to collections.
* ERTS #716940 F/V *Aleutian Isle* Sinking and Oil Spill, San Juan Island – 8/13/2022
  + Ecology has been in contact with the responsible party and their attorney. They plan on presenting a proposal in December. The responsible party is looking at partnering with the Swinomish Tribe to work on a project.
  + *Michael*: Do they have a geographical location they are looking at for a project?
  + *Geoff*: We do not know at this point. We have made ourselves available for any assistance and have noted the committee priorities of “on-site” and “in-kind” projects.
* ERTS #727283 Olympic Pipeline Gasoline Spill, Conway – 12/10/2023
  + Trustees have developed a list of potential restoration projects. Geoff has reached out to project partners for further details of their specific projects and trustees will be evaluating the list soon.

### Announcements

* Next meeting: Wednesday, December 11, 2024 at 9:00 am via **Microsoft Teams** and in person at Ecology HQ, **Room R1S-16** (possibly).

Adjournment: 10:01 AM