



HERRERA

Meeting Notes
Regional Spill Hotline Feasibility Study
Meeting with Department of Ecology

Date: Nov. 4, 2019 **Location:** Ecology Headquarters (Lacey, WA)
Project Number 18-06919-000

Attendees

Brandi Lubliner (Ecology)	Todd Hunsdorfer (King County)
Karen Dinicola (Ecology)	Doug Navetski (King County)
Vince McGowan (Ecology)	Rebecca Dugopolski (Herrera)
Dave Byers (Ecology)	Jennifer Schmidt (Herrera)
Jeff Killelea (Ecology)	

Meeting Purpose

- Ecology wants to make sure that we know ERTs isn't the solution to a regional spill hotline.
- Let Ecology know that there is a large amount of existing misinformation about the purpose of ERTs

Meeting Agenda

Item	Lead	Approximate Duration (minutes)
Introduction and update of the project	Rebecca and Todd	15
Conversation about ERTS	All	15
A sample of findings related to ERTS	Todd	45
What types of recommendations would allow us to improve upon existing systems like ERTs?	Todd	45
	Total	120

Discussion

Discussion regarding project update

- Some jurisdictions operate this way:
 - Business hours – local hotline
 - After hours – defaults to ERTS
- Spill reporting tools may vary depending on jurisdiction size
- Confusion around how we talk about who is calling whom and how that might influence the work
- Permittees are currently using ERTS to meet permit requirements
- Weekend reports to ERTS/EMD – how many have been received over the weekend that haven't been responded to?
 - Consider polling Phase I's (and Phase II's?)
 - How could we research this to understand the extent of the need?

Discussion

Discussion regarding the current state of ERTS

- Genesis of ERTS
 - Ecology's enterprise wide IT system (Access database)
 - Created as an accountability tool for all environmental complaints and to record how the complaints were investigated internally for Ecology communication among the environmental programs.
 - ERTS is only staffed during business hours.
 - The Access database became too complex and wasn't meeting the needs of Ecology's Spill Program, so the Spills Program Integrated Information System (SPIIS) was created to collect additional information not included in ERTS
 - New spills are now collected in SPIIS and then a subset of that information is transferred to ERTS
- More than 50% of reports to ERTS are stormwater related
 - ERTS number is listed in Construction Stormwater Permit
 - ERTS is also used by municipalities to report illicit discharges to meet Municipal Stormwater Permit requirements
 - The ERTS number was removed from the latest Municipal Stormwater Permit
 - Currently intended to receive reports, but not provide referrals
- WA EMD
 - After hours – handles ERTS calls, screens them, and collects basic information to pass along to Ecology
 - Sometimes they make decisions regarding whether spills should be responded to after hours or not
 - Focused on oil (driven by WAC)
- This project's report needs to reflect where ERTS is currently
 - What is working well?
 - Works well for Ecology inspectors – Construction, Municipal
 - System is working to report a violation
 - What is not working well?
 - Not assigned to any program in particular
 - Referral piece (transferring information to local jurisdictions) is currently lacking support/staffing
 - Past ERTS functionality isn't the future ERTS functionality
 - Debbie DeFreece – PM of the project to redevelop ERTS, might be a good person to interview

Discussion regarding the future state of ERTS

- IF we wanted one number would Ecology manage it? How would it be used? What would be its function?
 - ERTS may not be the correct foundation for a regional hotline
 - Balancing risk vs responsibility
 - Would additional funding for WA EMD be helpful?
 - What will provide the same support to the municipal permittees that also provides support to the Ecology inspectors? Does it need to be the same thing?
 - What are the disadvantages to the no action alternative?
 - Matching expectations vs. reality. What does it mean if permittees continue to use ERTS as a notification tool for spill response?

Discussion

Discussion regarding the future state of ERTS (continued)

- Where does the spill response hotline fit within the regional construct?
 - How do I find out a spill has happened? Particularly between jurisdictions?
 - How does Ecology make their robust reporting process valuable to permittees?
 - Spills reporting is required by law and available to the public
- Technical report will provide a functionality matrix of various types of software researched
 - Benchmarking against alternatives will look at IT needs and requirements
 - Ecology is interested in this – especially related to ERTS
- Call volume would most likely increase with a regional spill hotline
 - WSDOT – survey to citizens; only 50% of spills being reported by citizens
 - DE webinar – doubled the number of calls after implementing new hotline
- A regional spill hotline could eliminate redundancy and result in time savings
 - A call to the regional spill hotline could integrate reporting requirements and response
 - Jurisdictions would not need to follow-up with a separate call/report to ERTS

Recommendations and further research

- Public Education and Outreach
 - Ecology may not be the correct group to organize statewide education; not very good at a unified message
 - STORM group has been more effective than Ecology
- Monitoring
 - Pooled resources for monitoring have been an effective approach to meeting the monitoring requirements in the permit
 - SAM group has been an effective example of how resources could be pooled
 - Are we considering pooling funds for the regional spill hotline?
- Consider researching 911 and how they operate
 - Do some additional research into this?
- Consider researching 311 and how they operate
 - Report a problem – derelict cars, etc.
 - It gets passed along to the appropriate jurisdiction

Action Items

Action	Due Date	Assigned To
Follow-up with Debbie DeFreece regarding an interview	11/6/19	Herrera
Provide WSDOT survey reference	12/31/19	Doug Navetski
Draft ERTS background and recent upgrade write-up	12/31/19	Herrera