

Geographic Response Plan Development Project – Blackstone River in Massachusetts **September 22, 2020 – 1:00 – 2:15 PM**
Held virtually via Zoom Meeting

Blackstone River Final Work Group Meeting

Nuka Research and Planning Group, LLC, has been contracted by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 1 to develop ten (10) Geographic Response Plans or GRPs, for the Blackstone River in Massachusetts. GRPs are map-based plans tailored to protect specific sensitive areas from oil spill impacts. They show first responders where sensitive areas are located and where to place oil spill protection resources to protect those areas. GRPs can save time during the critical first few hours of an oil spill response.

A multi-agency, multijurisdictional workgroup consisting of Federal, State, and local environmental emergency response partners have identified the candidate area(s) for the development of these GRPs. Nuka Research will facilitate the Work Group and the GRP development process. This project will be completed in September 2020, and we anticipate two (2) Work Group meetings and one (1) Sub-Group meeting to be held over the life of this project.

This meeting was the last of the Blackstone River GRP Work Group. The purpose of this meeting was to review the 10 Blackstone River draft tactic maps with the entire Work Group, examine each tactic carefully, and gather any additional information to capture on the tactic maps or in the GRPs.

Participants

- MassDEP
- Millbury Conservation Commission
- Millbury Emergency Management
- Moran Environmental Recovery
- Northbridge Fire Department
- Nuka Research
- US EPA
- Worcester Fire Department

For a complete list of participants, contact Olivia Norton at Olivia@nukaresearch.com or Mike Popovich at Popovich@nukaresearch.com.

Agenda

Introduction and Opening Comments: Mike Popovich briefly explained the overall objectives of this project and the plan for reviewing and finalizing these GRPs. Following this final review and a brief post-review comment period, the final GRP documents and all associated GIS data will be delivered to Karen Way with EPA Region 1 on September 30, 2020, the project end date. These GRPs will then be integrated into the inland Area Contingency Plan (ACP) and available on the RRT1 website here: https://nrt.org/site/doc_list.aspx?site_id=38.

Karen Way mentioned that the numbering for the Blackstone River GRPs in Massachusetts and Rhode Island need to be reviewed and potentially revised to be sequential or state-specific. Nuka Research and the EPA will discuss this after this meeting. **Note:** See "GRP Numbering" section below for overview of post-meeting discussion on this topic.

Project/Tactic Review Process Overview: Site surveys were conducted on June 25, 2020 with a small group of experienced spill responders including personnel from EPA Region 1, MassDEP, Moran Environmental Recovery, the Worcester Fire Department, and Millbury EMA. A tactics sub-group was convened on August 18, 2020 to review draft tactics developed after the site surveys and begin preparation of initial drafts of each GRP.

Blackstone River Draft GRP Review Comments:
BR-07a: Worcester:



- No comments

BR-07b: Walmart:

- Dino, MassDEP, mentioned that he has looked at the FEMA flood zones and noticed the flood zone reaches to the parking lot. It would be useful to represent this in the GRPs.
 - Consider putting a note under implementation to be cognizant of the potential flood zones. The group agreed to add a note to the GRP to reflect this.

BR-08: Millbury North:

- No comments

BR-09a: Gorretti's Supermarket:

- No comments

BR-09b: Millbury Sewer Dept.:

- No comments

BR-10: Sutton/TriCentennial Park:

- No comments

BR-11: Grafton:

- No comments

BR-12: Riverdale Dam:

- No comments

BR-13: Plummers Landing:

- David White, NFD mentioned a canal pictured outside of the current tactic map that becomes flooded with heavy rainfall. There have always been problems with this area when flooded. Mike to take a look on Google Earth.

BR-14: Rice City Pond:

- No comments

BR-15: Uxbridge/Stanley Woolen Mill:

- No comments

BR-16: Uxbridge South/ River Road:

- Rich, Nuka Research, mentioned that it might be useful to highlight the stretch of the river where you can implement the boom strategies versus having it in the implementation notes.
 - The group agreed, Nuka to add colored shading along the river.
- Nuka to reach out to the DPW to see if the dirt road is maintained. Nuka to add to the GRP.

GRP Development Process & Project Timeline

Following the review of the draft tactic maps, Mike Popovich indicated that the next phase in the GRP development process is to allow until Thursday, September 24, 2020, for group feedback and make the final edits to the GRP draft documents. The project end-date is September 30, 2020. This will allow Nuka Research time to implement any additional changes identified during the final Work Group meeting. EPA and Nuka Research will finalize these documents, and EPA will post them on the RRT1 website for public access.

Comments and Suggestions

Mike and Karen thanked the group for participating throughout this project.

Next Steps:

Nuka Research will:

- a. Post the meeting summary on the project website and accept feedback until Thursday, September 24, 2020.
- b. Post documents and presentations used in this meeting on the project website.
- c. Make final edits to the draft tactic maps identified at this final Work Group meeting.
- d. Prepare the Final Blackstone River GRP documents and submit them to the US EPA by September 30, 2020.

GRP Numbering Convention (Post meeting activity)



Geographic Response Plans for the Blackstone River



Following the final work group meeting, and as noted above, Karen Way and Mike Popovich discussed the need to revise the current GRP numbering scheme. In order to avoid numbering confusion for GRPs developed for river systems that cross state borders (like the Blackstone River), and to facilitate further GRP development throughout EPA Region 1 (71 GRPs have already been developed for 14 New England river systems and Lake Champlain), EPA Region 1 will add a two-letter state designator to each GRP identifier with numbering being exclusive to each state. The Blackstone River GRPs will be renumbered as follows:

Current GRP #	New GRP #	GRP Name
BR-07	BR-MA-01	Worcester
BR-08	BR-MA-02	Millbury North
BR-09	BR-MA-03	Millbury South
BR-10	BR-MA-04	Sutton/Tricentennial Park
BR-11	BR-MA-05	Grafton
BR-12	BR-MA-06	Riverdale Dam
BR-13	BR-MA-07	Plummer's Landing
BR-14	BR-MA-08	Rice City Pond
BR-15	BR-MA-09	Uxbridge/Stanley Woolen Mill
BR-16	BR-MA-10	Uxbridge South/River Rd.

Project Website: <https://www.inlandgrpne.com/blackstonema>

Contact person for additional information: Mike Popovich: popovich@nukaresearch.com 508-524-8015