

Geographic Response Plan Development August 18, 2020 – 1:00 - 1:45 PM
Project – Blackstone River in Massachusetts
Held virtually via Zoom Meeting

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

Participants

- MassDEP
- Nuka Research
- Moran Environmental Recovery
- US EPA

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 (Nuka Research) opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending the site surveys.

Project/Tactic Review Process Overview: Mike Popovich then provided a general project overview of all the sites selected during the site survey process on Google Earth. He then presented to the group the draft tactic maps for review.

Review of Site Survey Delineation, Priorities & Resources at Risk: 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. Following the site surveys draft tactics maps were developed and the following changes were made to the previously identified mapping areas. The original mapping areas were:

- BR-07 Worcester (2 map GRP)
- BR-08 Millbury North
- BR-09 Millbury South (2 map GRP)
- BR-10 Sutton Tricentennial Park
- BR-11 Grafton
- BR-12 Riverdale Dam
- BR-13 Plummer's Landing
- BR-14 Rice City Pond
- BR-15 Uxbridge/Stanley Woolen Mill



- BR-16 Uxbridge South/River Road

While drafting the tactics maps, especially the BR-09 Millbury South/Sutton mapping area (which was originally broken up into two mapping areas BR-09A and BR-09B), it became apparent that because we needed to create smaller inset maps for the river areas near Goretti's Supermarket, Millbury Sewer Department (both initially identified for inclusion on BR-09A), and Tricentennial Park (BR-09B), we decided to separate BR-09 into two different mapping areas as follows:

- BR-09 has been renamed Millbury South and remains a two map GRP
 - BR-09A: Goretti's Supermarket area
 - BR-09B: Millbury Sewer Department Area
- BR-10 (formerly BR-09B covering the Tricentennial Park area in Sutton) has been renamed Sutton/Tricentennial Park

By creating this new mapping area, we no longer need to identify a new mapping area after discovering that the Millville site (initially identified as BR-16) was not feasible for tactics development (this was the last site visited during site surveys). We initially drafted a new mapping area in the Blackstone Village area but members of the site survey team expressed safety concerns related to tactics deployment within the village area.

Identifying the Sutton/Tricentennial Park site as a separate map required renumbering the remaining mapping areas as follows:

- BR-11 Grafton (ex BR-10)
- BR-12 Riverdale Dam (ex BR-11)
- BR-13 Plummer's Landing (ex BR-12)
- BR-14 Rice City Pond (ex BR-13)
- BR-15 Uxbridge/Stanley Woolen Mill (ex BR-14 Uxbridge/Mumford River) See note below re: new mapping area
- BR-16 Uxbridge South/River Road (ex BR-14 Uxbridge South/Public Works)

Due to the concerns raised surrounding the prospective Blackstone Village site, we identified a new mapping location in the Uxbridge/Mumford River area (initially identified as BR-14). Our site survey at the Uxbridge Public Works facility revealed that access to the river was problematic (heavily vegetated banks) and the river itself was very narrow and shallow with little flow. This area is located approx. 6/10 of a mile upstream from Uxbridge Public Works at the Stanley Woolen Mill kayak/canoe access location just south of the Mendon St. bridge (Route 16). This site offers easy access to the river for deployment of diversion and shoreside recovery tactics. As indicated above, we changed the mapping area name to Uxbridge/Stanley Woolen Mill.

NOTE: All current GRP names remain tentative and subject to change up to the conclusion of the final work group meeting

Blackstone River Draft Tactic Map Comments:

BR-07a: Worcester:

- Kevin Daoust (MassDEP) mentioned that there is a large outfall in the area where the Middle River becomes the Blackstone River along the eastern bank near the Worcester-Providence Turnpike. Nuka to add an outfall icon at this location.
- Nuka to adjust the Passive Recovery (PR) line to hug the shoreline.
- Nuka to identify (on the GRP map and within the tactics tables) of additional staging areas in the vicinity of the Blackstone Heritage Corridor Visitors Center

BR-07b: Walmart:



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- Nuka to adjust the Blackstone River demarcation line (blue on maps) to align with the center axis of the river
- Nuka to note the presence of homeless “encampments” on the eastern side of the river near Paul Clancy Way in the GRP
- Nuka to note the locked gate by the outfall in the GRP

BR-08: Millbury North

- Nuka to note of the locked gate in the GRP

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:

- No comments

BR-14: Rice City Pond:

- No comments

BR-15: Uxbridge/Stanley Woolen Mill:

- No comments

BR-16: Uxbridge South/ River Road:

- The group decided to keep the identified staging area icon location on the map

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 draft the GRP documents and prepare for a final Work Group meeting. Nuka Research will draft these documents within the next few weeks and send them to the work group for feedback. The final Work Group meeting will occur virtually sometime during mid/late September. 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.

He concluded by asking the group to provide any additional contact information, agencies, and NGOs to include on these GRPs.

Comments and Suggestions

There were no additional comments made by the sub-group.

Next Steps:

Nuka Research will:



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- a. Post the meeting summary on the project website and accept feedback within a set comment period.
- b. Post documents and presentations used in this meeting on the project website.
- c. Make edits to the draft tactic maps identified at this sub-group meeting.
- d. Determine a final Work Group meeting timeframe (September 2020) based on Work Group feedback and schedule the virtual Zoom meeting accordingly.
- e. Prepare the draft Blackstone River GRP documents and send them to the entire Work Group for feedback prior to the final Work Group meeting.

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

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