

# Volunteer Coordination in North Carolina after an Oil Spill



# Agenda

- Gulf Coast observations: Deepwater Horizon
- Volunteers: natural hazards event vs. oil spill
- NC's disaster volunteer coordination strategies
  - natural hazards events
  - oil spill events
- Engaging CERT teams and MRC units



# Observations: DHI - Gulf Coast

- State Volunteer and Donations Manager
- Conversations with LA, MS, AL and FL
- Weekly conference calls
- BP determines overarching rules for volunteer involvement in clean-up activities; BP Volunteer Coordinator
- Thousands of volunteers have registered to help; limited volunteer opportunities
- “Residual” opportunities are beginning to surface



# BP Guidance - Volunteers

- Volunteers will **not** engage in any activity in which they come into direct contact with oil-contaminated materials
- BP's Qualified Community Responder Program
  - unemployed, local people
  - trained by BP contractor
  - hired by BP for beach clean-up (\$18/hr - \$32/hr)
  - drug and alcohol testing; background check
  - photo ID, proof of residency; eligibility to work in US



# Volunteers...

## Natural Hazards Event vs. Oil Spill

- Through the years, the role of volunteers have become familiar and are “straightforward”
- Health & safety concerns of volunteers are somewhat limited and immediate
- Volunteer liability
- The need for volunteers is great
- Likewise, many volunteers want to help



# Volunteers...

## Natural Hazards Event vs. Oil Spill

- Clean-up is complex
- Health & safety concerns; immediate and long-term due to
- Volunteer liability
- The need for volunteers is **not** great
- Many volunteers want to help



# NC's Volunteer Coordination Plan (*Natural Hazards Event*)

- **Disseminate** clear, concise public message re: need for volunteers via press releases, media briefings, and Governor's Emergency Hotline
- **Coordinate** with statewide network of designated "volunteer connector organizations"
- **Activate** the state's Volunteer and Donations Management Coordination Team
- **Request** EMAC volunteer coordination support, if necessary
- **Coordinate** with local Emergency Managers

*(continued)*



# NC's Volunteer Coordination Plan *(Natural Hazards Event)*

- **Activate** (Open) Emergency Volunteer Centers
  - Spontaneous volunteers can register on-site
  - Organizations that need volunteers call EVC to request assistance
  - EVC staff match volunteers with the needs
- **Activate** on-line registration system for volunteers
  - Volunteers can register
  - Organizations that need volunteers can request them
  - Volunteers are matched with requesting organizations and NC Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster



# NC's Volunteer Coordination Plan (Oil Spill – DHI Event)

- Met with Coast Guard Sector NC re: Area Contingency Plan, Section 4000, Volunteer Management, to determine the state's role
- If event occurs, volunteers will be coordinated by a local **Volunteer Connector Organization** in 5 counties (aligned with pre-designated operational sectors as described in the ACP)
  - Brunswick
  - Carteret
  - Dare
  - New Hanover
  - Onslow

*(continued)*



# NC's Volunteer Coordination Plan *(Oil Spill – DHI Event)*

- **Volunteer Connector Organizations** will:
  - Register volunteers who want to help
  - Communicate with coastal organizations that have identified volunteer needs as a result of the oil spill
  - Match registered volunteers with identified needs
  - Communicate, as necessary, with local Emergency Management

*(continued)*



# NC's Volunteer Coordination Strategy

## *(Oil Spill – DHI Event)*

- Volunteers in NC will **not** engage in any activity in which they come into direct contact with oil-contaminated materials
- Website messaging currently provides information for volunteers
  - To register, contact one of the designated 5 Volunteer Connector Organizations
  - To search for a volunteer opportunity, visit
    - [www.serve.gov](http://www.serve.gov)
    - [www.1-800.volunteer.org](http://www.1-800.volunteer.org)



# NC's Volunteer Coordination Strategy

## *(Oil Spill – DHI Event)*

- Because volunteer opportunities will be limited, the strategy provides suggested ways in which people can help:
  - Participate in pre-impact beach clean-ups to help minimize the amount of debris that could become contaminated
  - Participate in pre-impact shoreline surveys
  - Volunteer to meet needs of local responding organizations
  - Monitor shoreline by becoming a Coast Watcher
  - Get disaster volunteer training so they can help after the next disaster



# NC's Volunteer Coordination Strategy

## *(Oil Spill – DHI Event)*

- It is expected there will be many more volunteers than oil-spill volunteer opportunities in NC
- CHALLENGE: harness the desire of volunteers who want to help when there is little opportunity
- Inform volunteers that volunteer needs are available year-round; encourage on-line searches
- Encourage volunteers to join a CERT team or MRC unit



# Engaging CERT Teams and MRC Units

- CERT teams and MRC units in the 5 coastal counties (pre-designated operational sectors as defined by the ACP) will be asked to be on standby, if necessary.
  - Volunteer support for Coast Guard Sector NC
    - Requirement: completion of FEMA's Independent Study Courses, IS100 and IS700



# In Summary...

- Weekly communication with Gulf Coast States for 3 months has been invaluable
  - Lessons learned; what worked – what didn't
  - BP's role in the volunteer effort
- NC has a volunteer coordination strategy in place
- Volunteers will want to help
- Volunteer opportunities will be limited



# QUESTIONS?



**Deepwater Horizon - Volunteers in NC  
information may be found at:**

**[www.nccrimecontrol.org](http://www.nccrimecontrol.org)**

**[www.volunteernc.org](http://www.volunteernc.org)**

