



Around The Region In Homeland Security November 2010

The Northwest Regional Technology Center (NWRTC) is a virtual resource center, operated by the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL), to support regional preparedness, resiliency, response, and recovery. The center enables homeland security solutions for emergency responder communities and federal, state, and local stakeholders in the Northwest. This monthly newsletter summarizes activities related to homeland security in the region, and this issue highlights

- Idaho's approach to developing an information-sharing viewer
- Lessons learned from an exercise series on earthquakes
- An online replay of the Interagency Biological Restoration Demonstration Capstone meeting

Idaho Leaps Forward With an Information-Sharing Viewer

The Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security joined with four other states to participate in what has become known as the Pacific Northwest (PNW) Pilot Project, one of the regional pilots under the Virtual USA Initiative. The goal of the PNW Pilot is for the states of Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington to share timely operational information. Regardless of the information's source, it will be visible in a map format, akin to using GIS to view maps. Two hazards, severe flooding and winter storms, are the primary focus for information sharing in this pilot.

Idaho's use of this kind of viewer was only conceptual when the pilot started in September 2009. Utilizing technical assistance from U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) contractors, Idaho began to work with its state and local emergency management partners to define the information sources it relies on during activation of the Idaho Emergency Operations Center. An Idaho Capabilities Plan was developed during a multi-day data-gathering session. Once the Idaho Capability Plan was finalized, PNNL hosted a mapping flex viewer for Idaho's use. Being able to utilize PNNL's hosting

capabilities allowed Idaho to experiment with the technology, further develop a needs assessment based on the real "touch and feel" of the viewer, and begin prioritizing the datasets, tools, and feeds the state felt to be critical.

The most difficult aspect of the pilot project has been taking a conceptual model of a dynamic decision-making tool and presenting it to staff for day-to-day operations. Idaho has had GIS capabilities for many years, and staff are familiar and comfortable with using hard copy maps during planning and actual events. Users are now beginning to embrace the change and see how it can improve their workflow. The "if it works, don't fix it" approach is quickly being overcome by a "what else can we get this to do?" level of excitement. The agency's progression toward the integration of dynamic and static information used for real-time decision making is allowing the state to make more intelligent, more efficient, and more timely decisions. For more information, contact [Patrick Frischmuth](#) at the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security.

Editor's Note: This article marks the first in a series from Northwest states. Thanks to the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security for starting us off!

Earthquake Exercise Series Increases Preparedness

While each year this region faces threats from wind storms, flooding, summer heat waves, and severe winter weather, a catastrophic earthquake is the highest-risk, highest-impact natural disaster facing Puget Sound communities. In fact, scientists warn that the area is overdue for a major quake. Through the 2010 “Sound Shake: the Aftershock” Earthquake Exercise Series, the area’s public, private, and non-profit agencies are becoming better prepared for the potential impacts of such a disaster.

Culminating in the 2-day full-function exercise on October 6 and 7, Sound Shake 2010 included more than 25 public and private agencies from across King County. One of the key goals of Sound Shake was to facilitate communication and joint planning among area partners. To this end, participating agencies were involved in an ongoing series of meetings, seminars, and drills to test communications and systems and learn best practices for disaster response and recovery.

Sound Shake Exercise Director Heather Kelly (King County Office of Emergency Management) led the effort. “During disaster response and recovery, we know that communications and shared planning among agencies is critical to success,” said Kelly. “Through Sound Shake, partner agencies worked together to test new sheltering plans, improve communications and resource sharing, practice hospital evacuation and mass feeding, and coordinate regional transportation options. The participating agencies came away with a list of improvements and actions to become even more prepared, and, as always, we are asking the public to do the same in their personal, family, and business preparedness.”

For summaries of Sound Shake events, including blog entries, video, and audio interviews of participants, please visit [their website](#).

IBRD Capstone Available On Demand

Key presentations from the Interagency Biological Restoration Demonstration (IBRD) Capstone event, held in September, are now [available online](#). IBRD was a joint effort between the U.S. Departments of Defense and Homeland Security, in coordination with the Seattle Urban Area Security Initiative, to provide biological event recovery and remediation methods and approaches.

The event show-cased and helped transition to use the technical work to evaluate and demonstrate sampling and decontamination technologies and methods, research and development on the fate and transport of anthrax, national guidelines for restoration and recovery of an outdoor area, a recovery framework for the UASI and military installations, and responses to the private sector for community resilience as it relates to recovery from a terrorist attack with anthrax.

Upcoming Events

December 13-16, 2010

[Shared Strategies for Homeland Security](#) Conference
by the Denver Urban Area Security Initiative
Denver, Colorado

April 26 and 27, 2011

[Partnerships in Emergency Preparedness](#) Conference
Tacoma, Washington

Around the Region in Homeland Security is a monthly report from PNNL’s Northwest Regional Technology Center for Homeland Security. For more information, contact Director Steve Stein at steve.stein@pnl.gov or 206-528-3340, Deputy Director Ryan Eddy at ryan.eddy@pnl.gov or 509-372-6622, or Deputy Director Regional Programs Ann Lesperance at ann.lesperance@pnl.gov or 206-528-3223, or see the website at <http://nwrtec.pnl.gov>.



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