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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The National Association of Remedial Project Managers (NARPM) promotes the exchange of information among Remedial Project Managers (RPM) from all U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regional offices. NARPM also provides a forum where RPMs discuss regional and national issues of concern, identifies ways that RPMs respond to those regional and national issues, and establishes a permanent line of communication between RPMs in the regions and the RPM advisory groups. NARPM serves as a formal mechanism to coordinate with EPA Headquarter (HQ) offices to promote national consistency in the Superfund remedial program. The annual training conference serves as the primary tool for promoting an exchange of information among RPMs; making training available about new technologies, policies, and guidance; and providing a forum that enables RPMs to share their experience and lessons learned.

Within EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER), the Office of Superfund Remediation and Technology Innovation (OSRTI), the Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse Office (FFRRO), OSRTI's Environmental Response Team (ERT), and other offices, including the Office of Research and Development (ORD), worked as a team with RPMs across the nation to develop and conduct the 18th Annual NARPM Training Conference (training conference) from July 7 through 11, 2008, in Portland, Oregon. In addition, the Technical Support Project (TSP) Forums developed and supported several training courses. The training conference consisted of 24 technical, legal, and administrative training courses; 20 panel and information sessions; daily plenary speakers; a Resource Area that featured 13 exhibits; and two field trips. The field trips included tours of the Superfund sites along the Portland Harbor and the Portland Wellfield - Cascade Corporation Ground Water Cleanup Site.

More than 400 people attended, representing EPA RPMs, EPA regional remedial support staff, branch chiefs, community involvement coordinators (CIC), regional attorneys, enforcement personnel, ERT members, and representatives from other federal, state, local, and tribal agencies. The TSP Forum meetings were held concurrently with the training conference to enhance networking opportunities for participants.

This report presents an overview of the training conference, summarizes the comments provided on the evaluation forms collected, and provides recommendations for the 2009 training conference. The report is divided into five sections, including this introduction:

- Section 2.0, *Overview of the 2008 NARPM Annual Training Conference*, provides background information about the training conference, an overview of activities conducted throughout the week, and details about the participants.
- Section 3.0, *Evaluations*, summarizes participants' observations about the overall training conference and individual training courses and sessions.
- Section 4.0, *Recommendations*, identifies suggestions to consider for the 2009 training conference.
- Section 5.0, *Conclusions*, provides the conclusion of the report.

In addition, this report includes several appendices.

- *Appendix A, Overall Training Conference Agenda At a Glance*
- *Appendix B, Acronyms and Abbreviations*

- *Appendix C, Summary of Comments about the Training Conference*
- *Appendix D, Comments about Individual Training Courses*
- *Appendix E, Comments about the Panel and Information Sessions*
- *Appendix F, List of Participants*

2.0 OVERVIEW OF THE 2008 NARPM ANNUAL TRAINING CONFERENCE

This section of the evaluation report provides a summary of the activities conducted during the week.

2.1 Preparation for the Annual Training Conference

The five NARPM Co-Chairs, with support and feedback from EPA HQ offices and the NARPM Council, planned and coordinated the training conference; the 2008 NARPM Co-Chairs are identified in Exhibit 1. Preparations for the 2008 training conference began immediately at the conclusion of the 2007 NARPM Annual Training Conference, which was held in May 2007 in Baltimore, Maryland. The Co-Chairs carefully reviewed the evaluations of the courses and sessions from the 2007 training conference to identify the courses and sessions that should be offered again, revised, or omitted, and new courses to address topics currently of interest to RPMs. Planning for the training conference included weekly conference calls, frequent communication with the NARPM Council and committees, meetings of the Co-Chairs, and communication with OSRTI, FFRRO, the TSP Forums, and EPA's regional and HQ management to ensure that the training needs of RPMs were addressed at this year's training conference.

Exhibit 1. 2008 NARPM Co-Chairs

The NARPM Co-Chairs are EPA RPMs, who are elected by NARPM for 1- and 2-year terms. The 2008 NARPM Co-Chairs were:

- Damian Duda, Region 2
- Nadia Hollan Burke, Region 9
- Robert Lim, Region 1
- Dion Novak, Region 5
- Robert Stites, Region 8

The Co-Chairs' selection of courses and sessions and the development of the agenda are driven by the objective of the training conference — to provide RPMs with opportunities to:

- Obtain relevant training designed especially for RPMs.
- Network and exchange information about policies, technologies, cleanup strategies, and lessons learned.
- Assist RPMs with their career development.

2.2 Overview of Activities

Details about the activities conducted during the training conference are described below. A copy of the overall training conference agenda is provided in Appendix A of this evaluation report.

2.2.1 Plenary Sessions

Plenary sessions at the training conference complement the in-depth training that occurs during the courses and panel and information sessions. By focusing on broad topics of interest to RPMs, the plenary sessions provide a forum where information about new policies and guidance relevant to the Superfund Program is presented, along with details about national and local initiatives. The sessions also are intended to maintain communication between the regions and EPA's HQ offices.

Plenary sessions were held each morning and during lunch on Monday, July 7, of the training conference. Topics addressed during the week included:

Opening Plenary Speakers, Monday, July 7:

- Regional Welcome, Mr. Dan Opalski, Division Director, Superfund Division, Office of Environmental Cleanup, EPA Region 10
- The state of the Superfund Program, Mr. Jim Woolford, Director, EPA OSRTI

Working Lunch Speaker, Monday, July 7:

- Assessment and Remediation Division (ARD) Update, Dr. Elizabeth Southerland, Division Director, ARD, EPA OSRTI

Daily Plenary Speaker, Tuesday, July 8:

- FFRRO Update, Mr. John Reeder, Director, EPA FFRRO

Daily Plenary Speaker, Wednesday, July 9:

- Puget Sound Partnership, Mr. Ron Kreizenbeck, former Deputy Regional Administrator and currently Senior Advisor, Puget Sound Partnership, EPA Region 10

Daily Plenary Speaker, Thursday, July 10:

- Being a NARPM Co-Chair – Expanding Your World, NARPM Co-Chairs

Closing Plenary Session, Friday, July 11:

- NARPM Business Meeting: Topics addressed during the closing plenary session focused on general business items, such as updates from the Co-Chairs, reports from the NARPM committees, plans to elect new Co-Chairs, a brainstorming session about training needs of RPMs, and a facilitated discussion about how to improve next year's NARPM training conference.

Copies of the plenary session presentations are provided on the NARPM training conference Web site at www.epanarpm.org/2008/.

2.2.2 Training Courses

Twenty-four training courses that covered technical, legal, and administrative topics were offered at this year's training conference. Eighteen of the 24 courses were new offerings. The methodologies for the courses varied and included case studies, lectures, and discussion. The courses offered included:

- A Systematic Approach for Evaluation of Capture Zones at Pump and Treat Systems
- A Year in the Life: Project Management for RPMs
- Advanced UXO – Wide Area Assessment
- Awake at the Wheel: Active Remedy Management

- Be Prepared: Know What to Say and How to Say It, An Advanced Media Training (*Offered twice*)
- Contracts Training (*Offered twice*)
- DNAPL Source Zone Treatment
- Federal Facility Remediation Short Course
- Green Remediation: Opening the Door to Field Use
- Know What to Say and How to Present It
- Leadership is an Inside Job
- Monitored Natural Attenuation and In-Situ Bioremediation for Organic Contaminants
- Monitored Natural Attenuation for Inorganics
- Multi-Increment Sampling/Decision Unit Sampling
- Nanotechnology: Practical Considerations for Use in Ground Water Remediation
- Negotiations – You Can Do It, We Can Help
- Risk Communication
- RPM Case Studies
- The Rapid Assessment Tools (*Offered twice*)
- Well Performance Problems due to Biofouling
- Working Redevelopment and Reuse Into the Superfund Process

Descriptions of each course and copies of the course materials presented are available on the NARPM training conference Web site at www.epanarpm.org/2008/.

2.2.3 Panel and Information Sessions

The NARPM Co-Chairs selected 20 panel and information sessions to conduct at the training conference. To continue the exchange of information between training conferences, the NARPM Co-Chairs introduced the concept of multi-year panels. Several of the panel topics below will be conducted again at the 2009 training conference to provide updates and identify progress made on that particular issue. These sessions provided opportunities for RPMs and other participants to participate in interactive discussions and sharing of lessons learned. The sessions included:

Information Sessions

- Developments in Remedial Design
- Integrating Water and Waste Programs to Restore Watersheds
- Response Support Corps – RPMs in Response
- Technical Assistance Services for Communities and The Superfund Job Training Initiative
- The Environmental Response Team Capabilities for RPMs
- Virtual Connection: Tools and Strategies for EPA Employees

Panel Sessions

- Asbestos Island
- Beneficial Use of Mining and Mineral Processing Waste

- Best Practices for Post-ROD Community Involvement
- Federal Facilities
- Ground Water/Surface Water Interaction – Concepts, Field Methods, and Site Management Challenges
- Institutional Controls: Current Issues
- Optimizing Five-Year Reviews
- OSC/RPM Interactions Synergy
- Passing the Baton: Better Document Management During Site Transitions
- Permeable Reactive Zones
- Remedy Rescue
- RPMs and CERCLIS – We Do Have a Future
- Vapor Intrusion
- Working Together: Aligning Communities, Academia, and EPA

Descriptions of each session and copies of the materials presented are available on the NARPM training conference Web site at www.epanarpm.org/2008/.

2.2.4 Resource Area

The Resource Area, available Monday through Thursday, featured 13 exhibits that showcased projects of interest to RPMs. The Resource Area provided an excellent opportunity for participants to network and learn about new initiatives and resources available to assist them with their jobs. Participants and topics in the Resource Area included:

- EPA Collaborative and Alternative Dispute Resolution
- EPA Environmental Response Team Technical Services and Internet Café
- EPA OSRTI's Technology Innovation and Field Services Division (TIFSD)
- EPA's Response Support Corps
- EPA Region 10 Dive Team
- National Institute of Environmental Health Science's (NIEHS)
- Renewable Energy on Contaminated Lands and Mining Sites
- Superfund Basic Research Program (SBRP)
- TSP Forums
- Tennessee Valley Authority's (TVA) Resource Management
- Training Exchange Web Site (Trainex)
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- U.S. Department of Defense's Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program (SERDP) and the Environmental Security Technology Certification Program (ESTCP)

Descriptions of the Resource Area exhibits are available on the NARPM training conference site at www.epanarpm.org/2008/.

2.2.5 Field Trips

Friday's closing plenary session was followed by two field trips: Superfund sites along the Portland Harbor tour and Portland Wellfield - Cascade Corporation Ground Water Cleanup tour. The Portland Harbor tour showcased a Superfund sediment site, including sources and affected sediments, and helped participants understand the complexities involved with a multi-party and multi-million dollar investigation, extensive tribal engagement, natural resource damage issues, and an active public. Specific features presented and discussed on the tour included the history of site development, stormwater discharges and other source control issues, discussions of key exposure pathways to be evaluated in the baseline risk assessment, key contaminant sources, the remedial action and restoration, early action cleanup areas, river dynamics, restoration opportunities, site boundary determination and potential disposal site locations.

The tour of the Portland Wellfield - Cascade Corporation Ground Water Cleanup Site provided participants with a geological overview of the Portland Basin and Pleistocene glacial flooding. Participants were then taken to the City of Portland Pump Station where a presentation was provided on the Portland Wellfield and related environmental issues. The final stop took participants to the Cascade Corporation, where participants were briefed on the site history, cleanup efforts in the Troutdale Gravel Aquifer, use of phytoremediation, diffusion bag sampling for ground water monitoring, and biostimulation. Participants also toured the main facility viewing the onsite cleanup area for the Troutdale Gravel Aquifer, treatment train using pump and treat, soil vapor extraction, and biostimulation.

2.2.6 TSP Forums

Business meetings of EPA's TSP Forums – the Engineering Forum, the Federal Facilities Forum, and the Ground Water Forum – were held to coincide with the training conference. The TSP Forums sponsored several training courses and sessions, and many members of the TSP Forums participated as instructors and presenters. This is the fifth time the TSP Forum meetings were included at the training conference and their involvement further enhances efforts to increase sharing of expertise and knowledge among RPMs and members of the TSP Forums.

2.2.7 After-Hour Activities

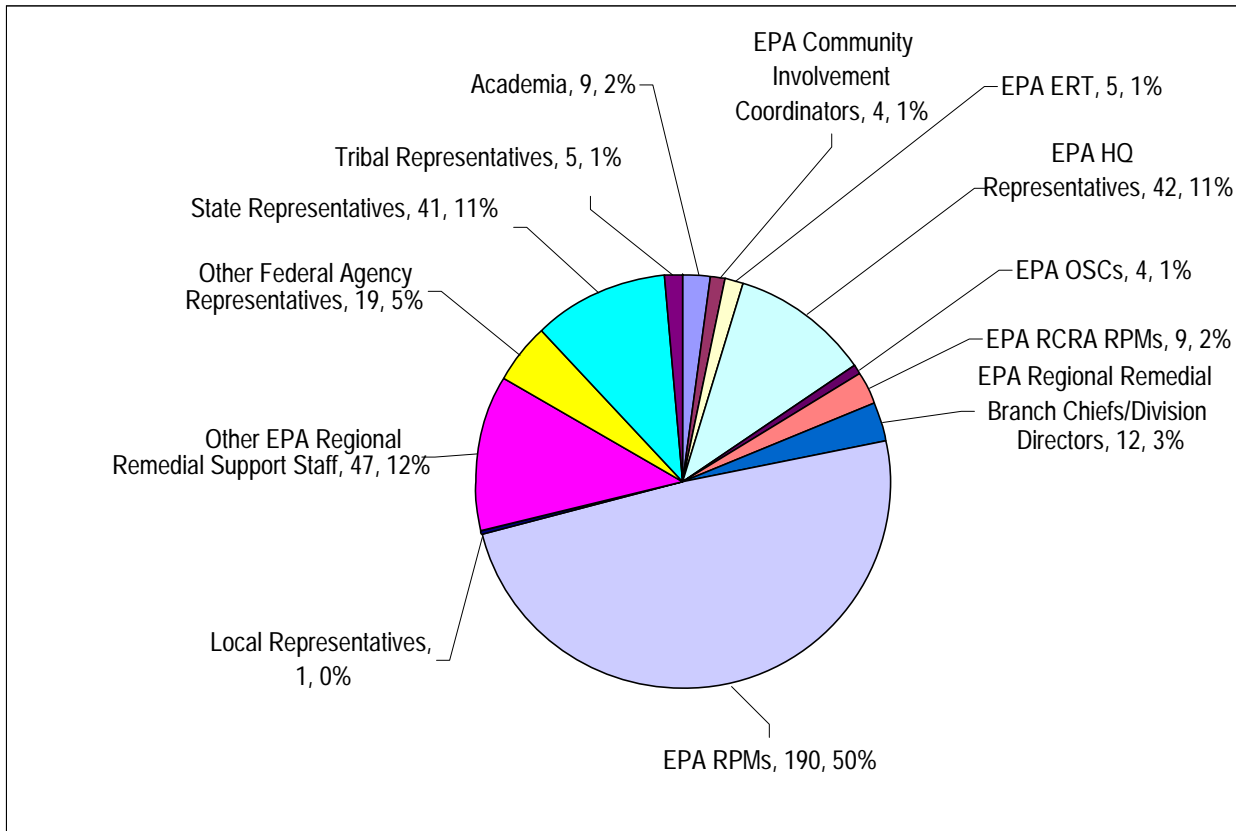
Several after-hour activities were planned by the EPA Region 10 Ground Crew members during the week to bring RPMs together in informal settings. These activities included a bike tour, Chinatown dinner and Underground tour, Willamette River kayaking tour, summer ice skating, and the annual volleyball game and picnic. Members of the Ground Crew Committee were led by Ravi Sanga, EPA RPM, and Ellie Hale, EPA RPM, EPA Region 10.

2.3 Participants of the 2008 NARPM Annual Training Conference

Approximately 383¹ attendees participated in the NARPM Annual Training Conference and the business meetings of the TSP Forums. Exhibit 2 identifies the attendees who participated in the NARPM Annual Training Conference. A total of 431 individuals pre-registered for all training conferences and meetings. Appendix F provides the final list of participants, arranged alphabetically by last name, and includes information about how to contact each participant.

¹ Consultants who helped facilitate the training conference and instruct training courses are not included in this number.

Exhibit 2. NARPM Annual Training Conference Attendees by Job Title



2.3.1 NARPM Participation

Attendees for the training conference and TSP Forums included: 190 EPA RPMs; 42 EPA HQ Representatives; 47 other EPA Regional Remedial Support Staff; 12 EPA Regional Remedial Branch Chiefs and Division Directors; 4 EPA CICs; 5 EPA ERT members; 4 EPA On-Scene Coordinators (OSC); and 9 EPA Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) RPMs. In addition, 19 other federal agency representatives, such as the USACE, TVA, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), SERDP, NIEHS, DoD, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA); 9 members of academia; 41 state representatives; 5 tribal representatives; and 1 local representative attended the training conference. Exhibit 3 illustrates the number of EPA RPMs by region. Exhibit 4 categorizes participants by affiliation, including EPA regional offices, EPA HQ, ERT, other federal agencies, state agencies, tribal agencies, academia, and local agency, who participated in the NARPM Annual Training Conference.

2.3.2 Students by Training Course and Session

Details about students at each of the training courses and sessions, including the number of students by job title, the total number of students, and the percentage of students who were EPA RPMs, is provided in the following tables. The information is based on the attendance sheets collected at the end of each course and session. The courses and sessions are grouped by type and sorted alphabetically. As shown in the tables 1 through 3, RPMs made up a majority of the students.

Exhibit 3. EPA RPMs by Region who attended the NARPM Annual Training Conference

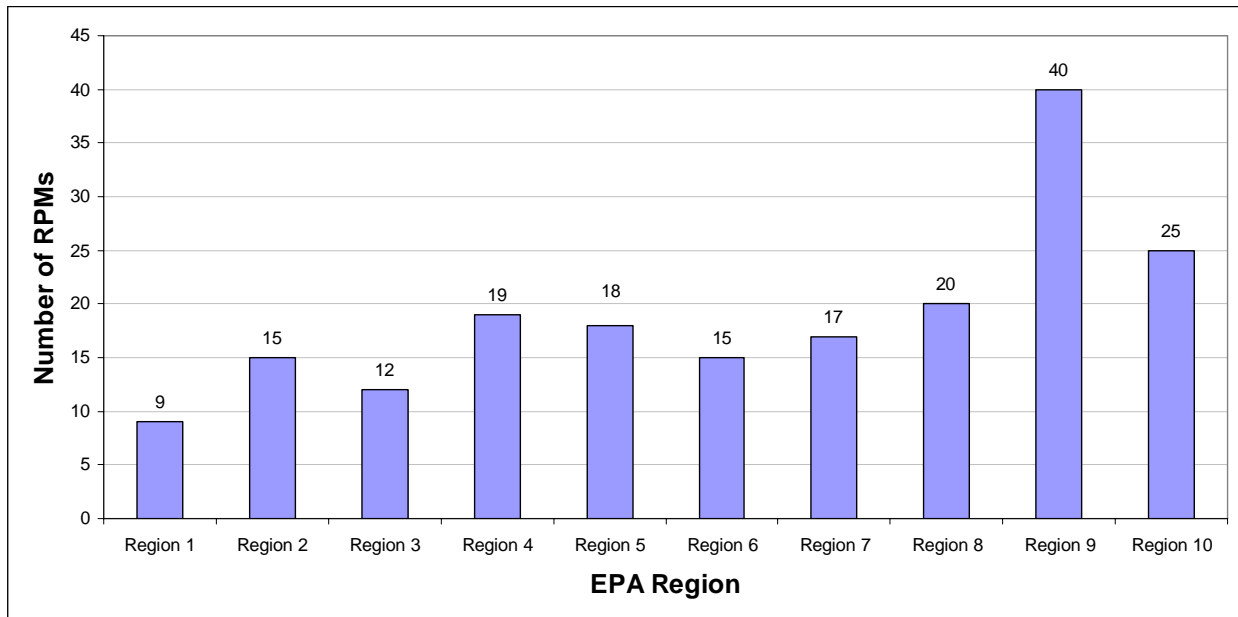


Exhibit 4. NARPM Annual Training Conference Participants by Affiliation

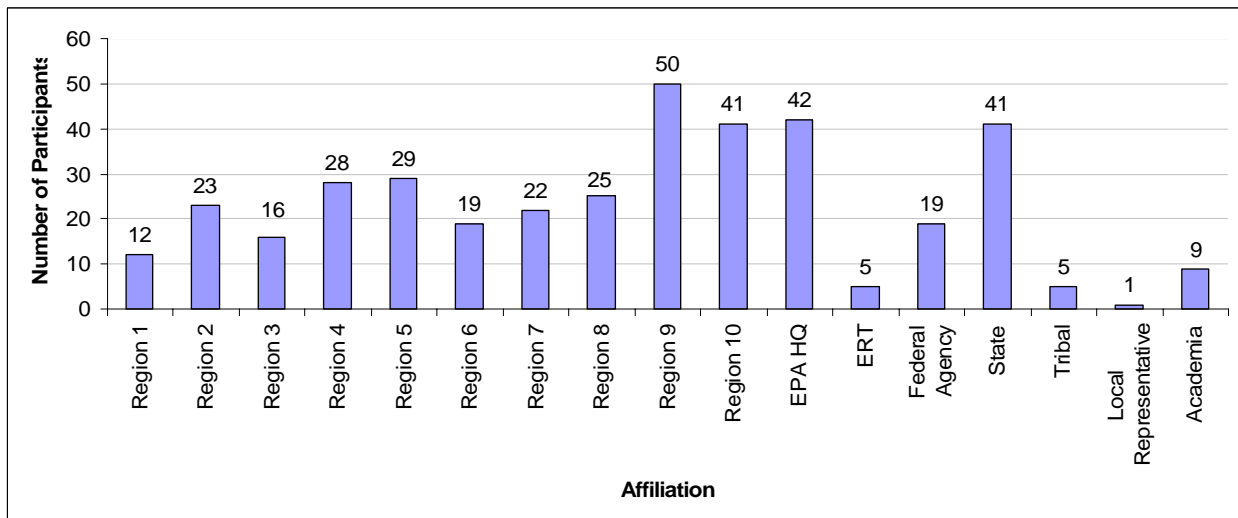


Table 1. Students by Job Title for Training Courses

Title	Total	Percent of Participants Who Were RPMs	EPA RPMs	EPA HQ Representatives	EPA ERT	Other EPA Regional Remedial Staff	EPA Regional Remedial Branch Chiefs/Division Directors	EPA Community Involvement Coordinators	EPA RCRA RPM	EPA OSCs	Other Federal Agency Representatives	State Representatives	Tribal Representatives	Local Representatives	Academia
A Systematic Approach for Evaluation of Capture Zones at Pump and Treat Systems	71	65%	46	2	1	2	2		3			12	3		
A Year in the Life: Project Management for RPMs	32	85%	27	1			2			1			1		
Advanced UXO - Wide Area Assessment	30	61%	18	1		1	1				3	6			
Awake at the Wheel: Active Remedy Management	60	68%	41	4		2	2	1			1	7	2		
Be Prepared: Know What to Say and How to Say It, An Advanced Media Training (Morning)*	16	81%	13					2				1			
Be Prepared: Know What to Say and How to Say It, An Advanced Media Training (Afternoon)*	12	92%	11					1							
Contracts Training (Morning)	44	63%	28	4		3	2			2	4	1			
Contracts Training (Afternoon)	28	68%	19	4	2	2				1					
DNAPL Source Zone Treatment	92	56%	51	3		17			4		3	12	1		1
Federal Facility Remediation Short Course	43	65%	28	5		3	2		1			3	1		
Green Remediation: Opening the Door to Field Use	84	52%	43	10	1	8	1		2	1	4	13			1

* Due to the instructional methodology of the training course, classroom size was limited.

Title	Total	Percent of Participants Who Were RPMs	EPA RPMs	EPA HQ Representatives	EPA ERT	Other EPA Regional Remedial Staff	EPA Regional Remedial Branch Chiefs/Division Directors	EPA Community Involvement Coordinators	EPA RCRA RPM	EPA OSCs	Other Federal Agency Representatives	State Representatives	Tribal Representatives	Local Representatives	Academia
Know What To Say and How to Present It	18	71%	13	1	1		1	1				1			
Leadership is an Inside Job	32	60%	19	3			3	2		1	1	2	1		
Monitored Natural Attenuation and In-Situ Bioremediation for Organic Contaminants	92	65%	59	4		11			4		4	9	1		
Monitored Natural Attenuation for Inorganics	64	62%	40	4		5			3		1	9	1		1
Multi-Increment Sampling/Decision Unit Sampling	32	51%	16	1		2	1		2		3	6	1		
Nanotechnology: Practical Considerations for Use in Ground Water Remediation	64	72%	47	2		5			1		1	7	1		
Negotiations - You Can Do It, We Can Help	26	68%	18	2		1			1	1		3			
Risk Communication	34	58%	20	2	1	2	2	1	1			1	1		3
RPM Case Studies	32	49%	16	1		4		1	1		4	4	1		
The Rapid Assessment Tools (Morning)	19	68%	13	1		2			3						
The Rapid Assessment Tools (Afternoon)	26	68%	18			3				1		2	2		
Well Performance Problems due to Biofouling	27	33%	9	1		7	1		2		1	6			
Working Redevelopment and Reuse Into The Superfund Process	91	59%	53	8		6	5	3	1	1	3	9	2		

Table 2. Students by Job Title for Panel Sessions

Title	Total	Percent of Participants Who Were RPMs	EPA RPMs	EPA HQ Representatives	EPA ERT	Other EPA Regional Remedial Staff	EPA Regional Remedial Branch Chiefs/Division Directors	EPA Community Involvement Coordinators	EPA RCRA RPM	EPA OSCs	Other Federal Agency Representatives	State Representatives	Tribal Representatives	Local Representatives	Academia
Asbestos Island	17	47%	8		1	5	1			1		1			
Beneficial Use of Mining and Mineral Processing Waste	42	61%	26	4		2	1	1	4			2	2		
Best Practices for Post-ROD Community Involvement	35	59%	21	3		5		2				2	2		
Federal Facilities	57	62%	36	4		3	2	2	1		1	8			
Ground Water/Surface Water Interaction - Concepts, Field Methods, and Site Management Challenges	112	57%	65	3		19			3	1	4	14	2		1
Institutional Controls: Current Issues	72	66%	48	5		5	2	1				9	2		
Optimizing Five-Year Reviews	42	67%	28	5		5	2				1	1			
OSC/RPM Interactions Synergy	35	62%	22	2		5				3	2		1		
Passing the Baton: Better Document Management During Site Transitions	13	68%	9			1				1		1	1		
Permeable Reactive Zones	41	64%	26	4		2			1			7	1		
Remedy Rescue	39	66%	26	4		3	1		2			2	1		
RPMs and CERCLIS - We Do Have a Future	32	66%	21	5		1	2					3			
Vapor Intrusion	64	66%	43	4		5	1		3			7	1		
Working Together: Aligning Communities, Academia, and EPA	32	57%	18	2			1	1				3	1		6

Table 3. Students by Job Title for Information Sessions

Title	Total	Percent of Participants Who Were RPMs	EPA RPMs	EPA HQ Representatives	EPA ERT	Other EPA Regional Remedial Staff	EPA Regional Remedial Branch Chiefs/Division Directors	EPA Community Involvement Coordinators	EPA RCRA RPM	EPA OSCs	Other Federal Agency Representatives	State Representatives	Tribal Representatives	Local Representatives	Academia
Developments in Remedial Design	52	75%	39	2		1			1			7	2		
Integrating Water and Waste Programs to Restore Watersheds	23	72%	17	1		1	1		2			1	1		
Response Support Corps - RPMs in Response	32	63%	20	1		4		1	2	3	1				
Technical Assistance Services for Communities and The Superfund Job Training Initiative	23	62%	14	4			1	2				1	1		
The Environmental Response Team Capabilities for RPMs	33	58%	19	4	1	1	2		1		2	2	1		
Virtual Connection: Tools and Strategies for EPA Employees	16	87%	14	2											

3.0 EVALUATIONS

The results presented in the following sections are based on comments received on the training conference evaluation forms and on the evaluation forms provided to students in each training course and session.

3.1 NARPM Annual Training Conference Evaluations

An evaluation form for the overall training conference was included in the participant materials. Participants also were offered the option of completing the evaluation form on-line. Participants were asked to evaluate six areas of the training conference on a scale from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” Evaluation forms were collected from 105 participants; 65 of the forms collected were from RPMs. Based on the 65 submitted evaluation forms, RPMs had an average of more than 11 years experience. More than half of those RPMs indicated they had participated in at least two NARPM training conferences. In addition, 21 of the 65 RPMs indicated that they had worked on federal facility sites.

A summary of the individual comments provided by participants is included in Appendix C of this evaluation report.

3.2 Training Courses

An evaluation form specifically tailored to the training courses was provided to all students. Students in each course were asked to complete the form, which included questions such as presentation materials, handouts, the pace of the session, and recommendations for improvement. Students also were asked to assign a number grade for each session, with 1 meaning poor and 5 meaning excellent. A total of 605 evaluation forms for the training courses were collected. Table 4 presents an overview of the grades received. Of the 24 courses held (three were offered twice), 6 courses received an average grade of 5, 17 courses received an average grade of 4, and 1 course received an average grade of 3. No training courses received an average grade of 2 or 1.

A summary of the individual comments provided by students for each training course is provided in Appendix D of this evaluation report.

3.3 Panel Sessions

A similar evaluation process used for the training courses was used for the panel sessions. A total of 356 evaluation forms for the panel sessions were collected. Table 5 presents an overview of the grades received. Of the 14 panel sessions offered, 1 session received an average grade of 5, 11 sessions received an average grade of 4, and 2 sessions received an average grade of 3. No session received an average grade of 2 or 1.

A summary of the individual comments provided by students for each panel session is provided in Appendix E of this evaluation report.

Table 4. Grades Received for Training Courses

Grade	Training Course Grades
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Systematic Approach for Evaluation of Capture Zones at Pump and Treat Systems • Be Prepared: Know What to Say and How to Say It, An Advanced Media Training (morning and afternoon sessions) • Green Remediation: Opening the Door to Field Use • Negotiations - You Can Do It, We Can Help • Risk Communication
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Year in the Life: Project Management for RPMs • Advanced UXO - Wide Area Assessment • Contracts Training (morning and afternoon sessions) • DNAPL Source Zone Treatment • Federal Facility Remediation Short Course • Know What To Say and How to Present It • Leadership is an Inside Job • Monitored Natural Attenuation and In-Situ Bioremediation for Organic Contaminants • Monitored Natural Attenuation for Inorganics • Multi-Increment Sampling/Decision Unit Sampling • Nanotechnology: Practical Considerations for Use in Ground Water Remediation • RPM Case Studies • The Rapid Assessment Tools (morning and afternoon sessions) • Well Performance Problems due to Biofouling • Working Redevelopment and Reuse Into The Superfund Process
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awake at the Wheel: Active Remedy Management

Table 5. Grades Received for Panel Sessions

Grade	Panel Session Grades
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Together: Aligning Communities, Academia, and EPA
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asbestos Island • Beneficial Use of Mining and Mineral Processing Waste • Federal Facilities • Ground Water/Surface Water Interaction - Concepts, Field Methods, and Site Management Challenges • Institutional Controls: Current Issues • Optimizing Five-Year Reviews • OSC/RPM Interactions Synergy • Passing the Baton: Better Document Management During Site Transitions • Permeable Reactive Zones • Remedy Rescue • Vapor Intrusion
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Practices for Post-ROD Community Involvement • RPMs and CERCLIS - We Do Have a Future

3.4 Information Sessions

Using the same process as for panel sessions, students evaluated the information sessions. A total of 108 evaluation forms for the information sessions were collected. Of the 6 information sessions offered, 2 received an average grade of 5 and 4 sessions received an average grade of 4. No session received a 3, 2, or 1. Table 6 presents an overview of the grades received.

A detailed report of the individual comments provided by students for each information session is provided in Appendix E of this evaluation report.

Table 6. Grades Received for Information Sessions

Grade	Information Session Grades
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating Water and Waste Programs to Restore Watersheds • Virtual Connection: Tools and Strategies for EPA Employees
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developments in Remedial Design • Response Support Corps - RPMs in Response • Technical Assistance Services for Communities and The Superfund Job Training Initiative • The Environmental Response Team Capabilities for RPMs

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations presented in this section are based on discussions with and correspondence among the NARPM Co-Chairs, the attendees at the closing plenary session, and EPA moderators, as well as observations made during the week. Highlights of the recommendations for the 2008 training conference are listed below.

Comments about the Overall Conference

- Continue to have the two-hour opening plenary session followed by panel and information sessions on Monday morning.
- Continue to have networking time in the morning and afternoon.
- Report the successes, accomplishments, and events of the training conference through e-mail or QuickPlace.
- Continue to conduct an activity to increase participation for the Resource Area.

Comments about Courses and Sessions

- Continue to hold hands-on training about tools that RPMs can use to facilitate their work, such as the Virtual Connection: Tools and Strategies for EPA Employees Information Session.
- Consider holding an instructor preparatory conference call or Internet seminar that includes: important presentation skills; how to create effective PowerPoint Presentations, and handouts; and reiterates the importance of incorporating interactive activities.
- Continue to increase the involvement of RPMs as either instructors or members of the training teams. This helps assure the courses offered at the training conference are relevant to RPMs.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

The training conference was a success, demonstrated by the ample opportunities provided for RPMs and other participants to enhance technical skills, network with other RPMs and attendees, and share information. That conclusion is bolstered by many other factors, such as the positive comments received from participants, the overwhelmingly good grades for the majority of the courses and sessions, the strong turnout, and because the event proceeded smoothly and efficiently. As described in Section 3.0, Evaluations, participants praised the variety of technical training that was available, appreciated the on-site support provided during the week, and enjoyed the variety of after-hour activities. In particular, a majority of attendees strongly agreed that their knowledge and skills were strengthened as a result of their participation in the program. A large number of participants also agreed they would recommend that others attend the upcoming training conference in 2009; further evidence that the training conference is considered a valuable tool the RPMs can use to obtain relevant training.

The recommendations identified in Section 4.0, Recommendations, are intended to enhance and improve the training conference. Sixty-six percent of the participants indicated that the training courses and sessions offered useful information and strengthened knowledge and skills essential for successful job performance. Several recommendations also will be implemented on how to improve networking opportunities at the conference. Once these recommendations have been enacted, it will ensure that the 2009 NARPM annual training conference will be successful, productive, and well-received.

At the conclusion of the week's activities, the objectives had been met: RPMs and other participants obtained relevant training; learned about and shared information about policies, technologies, and cleanup strategies, and lessons learned; and above all, departed the training conference with increased knowledge and stronger skills to help them more successfully carry out their jobs.