



## **Dr. John Whitney**

Scientific Support Coordinator Alaska Region

Office of Response and Restoration, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration

Leadership in Arctic Maritime Stewardship

Bridging the Gap

Thursday 1500-1600

John Whitney has served as the Alaskan Scientific Support Coordinator for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of Response and Restoration (OR&R) for over 25 years. His responsibilities include primary scientific support to the United States Coast Guard, as well as to industry, government agencies, and stakeholders for oil spills and other hazardous materials response in the offshore waters of Alaska. His response tenure has overlapped with the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill in Prince William Sound through recent service at the 2010 Deep Water Horizon spill in the Gulf of Mexico. Recently he has been tasked with evaluating NOAA's overall preparedness for oil spill response in the Arctic.

John's background is in physics and geophysics, having earned a BA in physics from Occidental College in Pasadena, California in 1968, and later a PhD in geophysics from the University of Washington in Seattle, Washington in 1975. John taught geophysics for a year at Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington, while doing graduate work and prior to coming to Alaska in 1975 to evaluate the Alaskan Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) for petroleum potential and related geohazards for the U.S. Geological Survey. John interrupted government work to spend five years in the oil industry, working for Arco Alaska evaluating the plate tectonic interactions in Alaska and the subsequent evolution of petroleum basins within the Alaskan OCS. This work involved considerable interaction with academic institutions, oil company research labs, and government agencies, while building a high degree of familiarity with Alaska's geography, northern Arctic environments, and offshore waters.

Currently, John participates in deliberations with the Arctic Council Emergency Preparedness, Prevention, and Response (EPPR) working group. He chairs the dispersant working group of the Alaska Regional Response Team (ARRT) and is an ex-officio member of both the Cook Inlet and the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens Advisory Councils (RCAC) formed by the OPA-90 Congressional legislation post Exxon Valdez.



