



**EAST CENTRAL TASK FORCE (ECTF)
RIVERSTOCK TRIATHLON
PRESS RELEASE
(FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE)**

The athletes participating in the First Annual RiverStock triathlon weren't the only ones getting exercise on Sunday, August 30, 2009 at Shikellamy State Park. Supporting the efforts of the swimmers, bikers, and runners stood the East Central Task Force Incident Management Team, whose skills were exercised throughout the planning and the staging of the actual event.



According to Arthur D. Kaplan, Chair of the ECTF, "The IMT exercised its capabilities by providing logistical, safety, and response services to the 75 participants registered for the event. Planned events such as the Triathlon provide important opportunities for the team to utilize and fine-tune the skills acquired during extensive and rigorous training. Our team is comprised of highly-qualified and dedicated professionals from a wide variety of fields, such as Fire, Law Enforcement, and EMS. More than 20 members of our regional IMT participated in this event, working as a cohesive unit to ensure the health and safety of all those involved in a large public event, such as the Triathlon completed this weekend."



Although the IMT is trained and prepared to support large scale public events, its primary mission is to provide immediate response to regional emergencies, either until the situation is resolved, or until state and or federal aid can arrive.

The East Central Team is a Type IV (local) IMT, which can be activated to manage major or complex regional events requiring a significant number of local and mutual aid resources.

“Since state or federal aid may take hours or even days to arrive on-scene, our region is best served initially by the local IMT. The team can respond to emergencies in a timelier manner, thereby helping all of our emergency responders in the 7 county region,” continued Mr. Kaplan.

According to the Event Coordinator, Mark Cox, the IMT played a critical role in the RiverStock Triathlon. "The assistance of the ECTF IMT provided me with one less thing to think about. There are a thousand details to worry about on race day. I knew that the team assembled there on site would be able to handle anything that was thrown at them. It was great to have this highly qualified group looking over my shoulder, knowing they were concerned with both those competing and those on the planning team. Their insights will aid in the preparation of and planning for the event in 2010." He continued by saying, "I would not have wanted to sponsor this event without having the quality back-up from the Task Force IMT."



Dr. Joseph A. Cocciardi, Program Professional for the East Central Task Force, emphasized the benefits of participation in events such as the Triathlon. “One of the most valuable outcomes of exercises such as this is that they provide an opportunity to identify potential issues of concern. At the conclusion of activities, all participants gather to discuss the experience, providing feedback regarding those areas that worked as anticipated, and perhaps more importantly, identifying areas for improvement that may have surfaced during the

event. Adjustments can then be made ahead of a true emergency situation, thereby enhancing the team’s capabilities and response effectiveness.”

The IMT will continue to engage in year-round training and exercise experiences, and will partner with other Pennsylvania IMTs to increase overall effectiveness across the Commonwealth.



