

NAVAL WEAPONS STATION (WPNSTA), SEAL BEACH
RESTORATION ADVISORY BOARD (RAB)
AND COMMUNITY MEETING
SEPTEMBER 8, 1999

Participants:

Bettencourt, Philip
Brenner, Jeff/Foster Wheeler
Bruno, Paul/Captain, WPNSTA Seal Beach Commanding Officer
Dick, Andrew/Southwest Division, Naval Facilities
Engineering Command (SWDIV)
Embree, Melody/CH2M HILL.
Hannon, Patricia/Regional Water Quality Control Board, Santa
Ana Region (RWQCB)
Harrison, Will
Heinle, Don/CH2M HILL
Lamond, Robert
Leibel, Katherine/Department of Toxic Substances Control
(DTSC)
Nguyen, Dien/Orange County Environmental Health
Saunders, Lee/SWDIV
Schmitt/Mike
Smith, Gregg/WPNSTA, Seal Beach Public Affairs Officer
Tamashiro, Pei-Fen/WPNSTA, Seal Beach and Navy Co-chair
Van Buskirk, K.
Vesely, R. Gene
Voce, Mario/Community Co-chair
Welz, Ed
Wong, Bryant/CH2M HILL

WELCOME

At 7:00 p.m., P. Tamashiro opened the meeting by welcoming the participants to the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) meeting and introducing herself as the Navy Co-chair. She also introduced G. Smith, the WPNSTA, Seal Beach Public Affairs Officer. M. Voce, the Community Co-chair also welcomed the participants and introduced Captain P. Bruno as the new Commanding Officer at the WPNSTA, Seal Beach. Capt. Bruno stated that he was a firm believer in protecting the environment and expressed his commitment to the base's environmental protection and the cleanup efforts. He expressed his willingness to participate and help the RAB and the cleanup process. Additionally, he thanked the RAB members for their participation.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

P. Tamashiro introduced A. Dick, the Remedial Project Manager (RPM) from SWDIV who provided the RAB with an overview of the WPNSTA, Seal Beach's Installation Restoration (IR) Program projects status. Copies of the slide presentation were made available as a handout at the meeting. Questions and answers made following the presentation are summarized below:

Slide 6 - Site 1 EE/CA and Action Memo/RAP:

Question: What is the definition of a "Non-Time-Critical Removal Action?"

Answer: A non-time-critical removal action is a removal action that is projected to exceed six months to implement.

Question: Has there ever been a time-critical removal action at WPNSTA, Seal Beach?

Answer: Yes, there was one time-critical removal action at Site 20. It is the base's current preference to go the Non-Time-Critical Removal Action route, if possible, to allow more public participation opportunities.

Slide 7 - Site 1 Removal Action:

Question: Where are the railroad cars being loaded for off-site disposal at Site 1?

Answer: The railroad cars are being directly loaded at the site. The railroad tracks run through Site 1, so there is no need for trucking excavated soils from the site to the railroad cars.

Slide 8 - Sites 4, 5, & 6 Removal Site Evaluation (RSE):

Question: Can you elaborate on the comment that there have been problems with the laboratory being used for these sites?

Answer: The basic problem is insufficient laboratory capacity to perform the dioxin-furan analyses. There are very few laboratories certified to perform these types of analyses, and thus our selection of qualified laboratories is limited. There is a concern with the current laboratory's ability to analyze for dioxin-furan and provide

results on time. In addition, the dioxin-furan analysis is very expensive (approximately \$1,400) per analysis. The Navy's Contractor is primarily dealing with these problems.

Question: Have you considered using another laboratory?

Answer: There are few laboratories with the necessary qualifications and certifications to perform the dioxin-furan analyses. Many laboratories have gone out of business. The backlog on these remaining laboratories is slowing down the turn-around of these test results.

Question: Are there any results yet?

Answer: There are preliminary data, however, they have not yet been validated. Preliminary data point to areas of concern at each of Sites 4, 5, and 6, but these preliminary findings need to be subjected to human and ecological risk assessments to determine whether a problem exists.

Comment: L. Saunders, from SWDIV, provided the following definition of a "non-time-critical removal action" as presented in DTSC's Public Participation Manual. "Those releases or threats of releases not requiring cleanup activities to begin onsite within 6 months after the lead agency's determination, based on the site evaluation, that a removal action is appropriate." (Source: *Public Participation Policy and Procedures Manual*, State of California Environmental Protection Agency Department of Toxic Substances Control, July 1994 [updated February 1997], page 500-40-4.)

AQUATIC ECOLOGICAL RISK ASSESSMENT WORK PLAN

P. Tamashiro introduced D. Heinle, Ph.D., from CH2M HILL who provided the RAB with a presentation on the Perimeter Pond Aquatic Ecological Risk Assessment Work Plan. Copies of the slide presentation were made available as a handout at the meeting. Questions and answers made during and following the presentation are summarized below:

Slide 9 - Questions Raised by Observations:

Question: Do biota include plants and animals?

Answer: Yes, biota includes both plants and animals.

Slide 10 - Blue Stained Area:

Question: Is this area submerged sometimes?

Answer: Yes, the area of the blue stain is inundated by tidal fluctuations. The precise frequency of flooding is not known, but we know the entire area is estimated to be flooded about 5% of the time. But lower elevations, where the staining was observed, may be flooded more frequently.

Slide 12 - Approach:

Question: Was the blue stain the only color stain observed?

Answer: No, a milky-white discoloration was also observed near "East Pond" in that same general area. Sediment will be collected from that area to try to characterize the origin of this white discoloration.

Question: Will the vegetation ever come back?

Answer: Yes, the vegetative cover will eventually recover on its own naturally.

Slide 17 - Schedule:

Question: What chemicals are you looking for?

Answer: We will analyze for pesticides, PCBs, metals, and semi-volatiles (i.e., polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons).

Question: What is the volume of refuse at the site?

Answer: The trenches containing the construction debris is approximately four to six feet deep, and, according to Figure A-2 in your handout, one trench is about 200 feet long and the other about 275 feet long.

Question: Why is the area next to Perimeter Pond not vegetated?

Answer: This area was previously disturbed by the truck traffic when Perimeter Pond was constructed. Vegetation re-growth was probably hindered by the salt buildup and sandy soils. Organic matter needs to build up in the soils before vegetation can be re-established. You can see that in the

lower elevations (see photograph in Slide 8), organic matter is building up again and vegetation is returning.

Question: Can we speed up the vegetation by transplanting?

Answer: We are not privy to the agreement between the Port of Long Beach, State of California, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with regards to the mitigation pond. It appears that it was decided to let the native vegetation grow back naturally at its natural rate.

Question: Would the refuse in the trenches be removed if the site were not located near sensitive receptors?

Answer: If there were no risks to human and/or ecological receptors, the area might not be excavated. An alternative cleanup method could be to install an approved cap over the area and/or provide continued monitoring.

SITE 14 BASELINE SURVEY REPORT

P. Tamashiro introduced J. Brenner, a geologist from Foster Wheeler, who provided the RAB with an overview of the upcoming Baseline Survey Report for Site 14. Copies of the slide presentation were made available as a handout at the meeting. Questions and answers made during the presentation are summarized below:

Slide 5 - Previous Investigations:

Question: Is the contamination in the groundwater?

Answer: Based on the report from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the contamination sits on top of the water table.

Slide 6 - Previous Investigations (Cont.):

Question: What was the extent of Stanford University's research?

Answer: Stanford University's research included monitoring the plume and demonstrating an advanced bioremediation technology.

Question: Did the gasoline evaporate? Where did it go?

Answer: The Stanford University showed that enhanced natural attenuation (via anaerobic bacteria) "ate up" some of the petroleum hydrocarbon contamination. Evaporation is not a major reason for the reduction of gasoline at the site.

Question: Is the bacteria aerobic or anaerobic?

Answer: The bacteria are anaerobic and naturally occur in the environment.

Slide 8 - Planned Activities at Site 14:

Question: Is the hydrogeology known at this site?

Answer: Yes, the hydrogeology has been well characterized at Site 14.

Slide 9 - Analytical Methods:

Question: The underground storage tank's (UST) use was discontinued in 1984; when was MTBE first used?

Answer: MTBE was first used as an additive to gasoline in the 1970's.

Question: If, during your investigations, you discover substantial contamination, what are the next steps to be taken?

Answer: It's really too early to develop any corrective action plans. We first need to determine the extent and types of contamination and then determine the appropriate corrective action, if needed.

Question: Does MTBE have an affinity to water?

Answer: Yes, MTBE does have an affinity to water.

Question: Is the old UST still below ground surface?

Answer: No, all the USTs have been removed.

Question: Will the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) review and issue a permit for this baseline survey at Site 14?

Answer: The RWQCB will review the Baseline Survey Report for Site 14, but they will not issue a permit because no new discharges are expected.

Question: Has there been any penetration to the groundwater?

Answer: Additional sampling needs to be conducted to determine the extent of the contamination. At this early stage, we do not have enough data to suggest any corrective action.

Question: What is the difference between the Stanford University study and the Navy's study?

Answer: Stanford University's research studied how the bacteria broke down and consumed the petroleum contamination. The Navy's study is directed at cleanup.

COMMUNITY FORUM

P. Tamashiro introduced RAB member, E. Welz. E. Welz said he has several years' worth of past reports at home. He offered to give them to any new RAB member. He felt they would be beneficial to newer RAB members because they provide valuable background and historical information about the WPNSTA, Seal Beach IR Program. If any new RAB member would like these reports, please contact E. Welz after the meeting.

G. Smith announced that the base's Perimeter Road is scheduled to have another application of dust suppressant applied to it. A discussion ensued among RAB members who expressed concern about the potential environmental impacts associated with the application of the product. Mr. Voce indicated that he had read the material safety data sheet (MSDS) for the dust suppressant product but it was not informative about describing its ecological effects. The RAB expressed its desire to have the base hold-off on the application of the product until further information could be obtained about its contents. Based on these concerns, Captain P. Bruno stated that the Navy would not apply the dust suppressant until further information is obtained. As an **Action Item**, P. Tamashiro and G. Smith will follow-up in obtaining additional data to determine the dust suppressant's ecological effects before the application is performed. (**Action completed;** a copy of the updated MSDS was mailed to Mr. Voce on September 9 and confirmed received by Mr. Voce on September 13. The MSDS revealed that the material to be applied on the perimeter roads is consistent with asphalt used on ordinary streets.)

A. Dick indicated that the Engineering Evaluation/Cost Assessment (EE/CA) for Site 4, which overlays much of Perimeter Road, will be considering stabilization in-place as a cleanup alternative.

FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS

No future agenda topics were suggested. The next RAB meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 17, 1999, at 7:00 p.m. in Building 110.

ADJOURNMENT

P. Tamashiro adjourned the meeting at 8:50 p.m.